

Alternative Fuels Key to Making India Self-reliant: Gadkari

Mumbai: Transitioning to alternatives like bio-fuels and electric, among others, is critical for pursuing sustainable development and making India self-reliant said minister for road transport and highways Nitin Gadkari.

India's transport sector accounts for 40% of air pollution and fossil fuel worth ₹22 lakh crore is imported every year, Gadkari said Wednesday in his address at the 'Times Drive Green Conclave & Awards 2024'. The event honoured winners across over 20 categories in the electric mobility and sustainability sectors. "India is the fastest-growing economy in the world and our mission is to make India Aatmanirbhar Bharat — and pursue sustainable development," Gadkari added.

CNG-powered vehicles are gaining popularity in regions like Punjab, Haryana, Western Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, and Maharashtra, and over 400 bio-CNG projects underway, the minister noted, adding that he has supported the transition to electric and biofuels for tractors. Initiatives like the municipal waste-to-bio-CNG projects in Nagpur show the potential of a green economy to drive sustainability, create jobs, boost exports, and make India self-reliant, he said. —**Our Bureau**

Auto sector should move to cleaner fuel: Gadkari

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Road transport minister Nitin Gadkari govt is seeking to make the Indian auto industry the world's largest in five years, while underlining the need to transition to clear fuel as the sector accounts for nearly 40% of air pollution.

"India is the fastest-growing economy in the world and our mission is to make India Atmanirbhar Bharat — and pursue sustainable development. With the transport sector accounting for 40% of air pollution and annual fossil fuel imports worth Rs 22 lakh crore, transitioning to alternatives like biofuels is essential. CNG-powered vehicles are gaining popularity in regions like Punjab, Haryana, western Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, and Maharashtra, with over 400 bio-CNG projects underway.

"I have supported the transition to electric and biofuels for tractors, as this shift is crucial for reducing pollution and saving costs. Several companies are working on electric tractors, as CNG-powered tractors are becoming popular. Biofuels like ethanol, methanol, biodiesel, and hydrogen are the fuels of the future," Gadkari said at Times Drive Conclave Green Awards 2024 organised by Times Network Digital. The minister said that the auto sector is among the top exporters and the largest GST contributor, generating close to 4.5 crore jobs.

Core sector growth at 3-mnth high

But remains subdued at 3.1% in Oct

SHIVA RAJORA

New Delhi, 29 November

Despite a high base effect, growth in the output of eight key infrastructure industries — known as the core sector — further recovered to 3.1 per cent (Y-o-Y) in October from an upwardly revised figure of 2.4 per cent in September.

In August, the output of the core sector had contracted (-1.6 per cent) for the first time in 42 months. In October 2023, the core sector had clocked 12.7 per cent growth.

According to the data released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry on Friday, the sequential recovery was driven by the acceleration in the output of coal (7.8 per cent), steel (4.2 per cent), and electricity (0.6 per cent), even as the output of fertilisers (0.4 per cent), refinery products (5.2 per cent), and cement (3.3 per cent) decelerated.

On the other hand, the output of crude oil (-4.8 per cent) and natural gas (-1.2 per cent) contracted during the month.

“The production of coal, refinery products, steel, cement, electricity and fertilisers recorded positive growth in October 2024,” said the commerce ministry in a statement.

Rahul Agarwal, senior economist at ICRA Ratings, said the performance of the constituent industries was mixed. While the growth in electricity generation improved marginally in October, it remained quite



RECOVERY PATH



Oct '24* sectoral growth (in %)

Coal	7.8
Crude oil	-4.8
Natural gas	-1.2
Refinery products	5.2
Fertilisers	0.4
Steel	4.2
Cement	3.3
Electricity	0.6

*Provisional

Source: Ministry of Commerce & Industry

weak and continued to weigh upon the growth in core sector output during the month.

“Construction-related indicators reported mixed trends, with the growth in steel production improving, while that in cement output deteriorating, although both remained muted,” he added.

Core sector growth rises to 2-month high of 3.1% in Oct

IN POSITIVE ZONE. Steel, cement output pick up even as coal growth remains robust

KR Srivats
New Delhi

The eight core industries' output growth hit a two-month high of 3.1 per cent in October, sharply lower than the 12.7 per cent growth seen in same month last year.

The latest reading was, however, higher than the revised 2.4 per cent growth recorded in September. In August, the core sector industries had contracted 1.6 per cent.

Six of the eight core industries' output were in the positive territory in October.

For April-October 2024, the aggregate core industries output grew 4.1 per cent, substantially lower than 8.8 per cent growth recorded in same period last fiscal, official data released by the Commerce and Industry Ministry showed.

KEY INDUSTRIES

The eight core industries — coal, natural gas, crude oil, refinery products, fertilizers, cement, steel and electricity — comprise 40.27 per cent

Base effect

Sector	October 2024	September 2024	October 2023
Coal	7.8	2.6	18.4
Crude oil	-4.8	-3.9	1.3
Natural gas	-1.2	-1.3	10.0
Refinery products	5.2	5.8	4.3
Fertilizers	0.4	1.9	5.3
Cement	3.3	7.2	16.9
Steel	4.2	1.6	13.6
Electricity	0.6	0.5	20.4
Total	3.1	2.4	12.7

of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).

The sectors that showed positive growth in October are coal (7.8 per cent), refinery products (5.2 per cent), fertilizers (0.4 per cent), cement (3.3 per cent), steel (4.2 per cent) and electricity (0.6 per cent). The two industries that saw output contraction are crude oil (-4.8 per cent) and natural gas (-1.2 per cent).

In the first half this fiscal, core industries' output grew 4.2 per cent, lower than 8.2 per cent growth witnessed in same period last year.

Commenting on the latest core industries data, Madan

Sabnavis, Chief Economist, Bank of Baroda, said that core sector growth while modest does indicate that government spending has picked up as seen in steel and cement.

POWER PRODUCTION

"High base effect has affected power production. IIP growth will be around 4 per cent this month. We can expect core growth to pick up in coming months," Sabnavis added.

Meanwhile, the Centre has now revised upwards the July core data growth to 6.3 per cent from 6.1 per cent earlier.

In May this year, core in-

dustries recorded 6.9 per cent growth. Last month, the government pegged final growth rate for June 2024 at 5 per cent.

Rahul Agrawal, Senior Economist, ICRA Ltd, said, "The year-on-year (y-o-y) growth in the core sector inched up to 3.1 per cent in October 2024 from 2.4 per cent in the previous month, despite an adverse base. The performance of the constituent industries was mixed, with four reporting an improvement in their growth between these months and an equal number witnessing a slowdown."

While the growth in electricity generation improved marginally in October vis-à-vis September, it remained quite weak at sub-1 per cent, continuing to weigh upon the growth in core sector output in the month, he said.

"The construction related indicators reported mixed trends, with the growth in steel production improving, while that in cement output deteriorating between these months, although both remained muted," Agrawal said.

'Empire to nationalism, coal mirrors the 20th century — in India, it shows the West's failure'

Matthew Shutzer teaches history at the University of California, Berkeley. Speaking to Srijana Mitra Das at Times Evoke, he discusses coal's path in India:

What is the core of your research?
 I am an environmental historian. I'm completing a book about India's fossil fuel economy from the 19th century to the 1980s. I study how environmental, social and economic transformations created fossil fuel dependency in South Asia under empire and through the postcolonial period. I also write about how fossil fuels themselves, particularly in the postcolonial era, became not just sources of energy but also social and political contestation. I focus particularly on land issues in coal-bearing areas, primarily central and eastern India.



Does coal also have a precolonial history?
 Yes — mining and metallurgy have an ancient place in South Asia, not only in terms of knowledge about these but also hereditary occupations, money and minting coinage and kingship, which was tied to sovereign subsurface wealth. Precolonial petroleum is richly documented, used in veterinary medicine, boat caulking, manuscript preservation, etc.
 However, the colonial period changed the scale and intensity of coal use specifically — this resource was very much a part of the colonial story, beginning with the East India Company.

In the colonial era, what was India's coal used for — and whom did it enrich?
 The story of colonial extraction happened in phases. The first one is a late 18th century attempt by the East India Company to claim coal in Burdwan, Bengal. There wasn't much financial backing for this though. Coal exploration and capitalisation happened after 1810, driven by European and Indian merchants in Kolkata — Dwarkanath Tagore actually became a central figure in creating this early 19th century energy geography.
 At this time, the colonial state had minor interests in India's coal, which was mainly used to refuel British steam-powered ships. Coal really took off with the advent of the railways in the 1850s — huge public finance opened up with a real intensification of extraction in India.



LOST IN SMOKE: Mining families suffer



FROM DAY TO NIGHT: Dhanbad tells a story of ecological destruction — over centuries, its ground has been torn apart to get at coal, leaving streams of toxins and fires emitting through the cracks, coal power meanwhile smoothening metropolitan life

Importantly, while coal in 19th century Britain was about the rise of factory-based industrialisation, replacing human labour with machines, in India, coal was about fuelling the railways and creating circuits for sending agricultural commodities and labour from the hinterland into port cities and out. So, coal started as enriching European and Indian merchants — then, it became associated with European-managed agencies and the British colonial state.

FIFTY SHADES OF BLACK

What role did coal play in decolonisation?
 There are two aspects here, both related to ideas of sovereignty. Fossil fuels were at the centre of postcolonial understandings of economic independence and national development. These were not only energy sources to power India — they were also seen as patrimonial national wealth, embedded in the nation's geology, which had been unjustly appropriated by empire. Between 1947 to 1951, the Indian state swiftly constructed a series of policy frameworks for expanding state control over fossil fuels.
 It then encountered a difficult reality — many of the most valuable coal-bearing lands were claimed by Indian landowners, particularly zamindars in the former Permanent Settlement areas. The Indian state realised that to exert its sovereignty over subsurface resources, particularly coal, it had to confront the legacies of zamindari alongside capitalist mining firms — this set the Indian state in confrontation with such social forces. The state's attempt wasn't very successful then though, partly because of existing property protections and battles starting over land reforms in the 1950s.
 The story of petroleum is different — the Indian state here engaged in exerting its economic sovereignty not down-

wards, into the social body of the nation, but outwards, into the world economy of petroleum firms. In the mid-20th century, in South Asia, almost all petroleum resources were controlled by British companies which would become British Petroleum (BP). The Indian state created a state capitalist apparatus, the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), under KD Malaviya, a bureaucrat — this basically expropriated British oil assets and built a nationally-owned oil economy. This was couched as the centrality of the state claiming petroleum in the name of national sovereignty — it was also the construction of Indian state socialism, with fossil fuels playing a central role.

You've studied water shaping the mining town of Dhanbad — could you elaborate?
 It's not incidental that the area of the eastern Chota Nagpur Plateau, which became the coal-bearing regions of Dhanbad, Jharia and Raniganj, was also a river valley. That entire region was caught up in controlling flows of energy — this meant coal but also water and



HER HEAVY BURDEN: Women work in coal

labour, these places earlier termed a 'labour catchment area', sending tribal workers to tea gardens in the northeast.
 I specifically highlight inter-war urbanising in Dhanbad — this was a time of huge coal expansion. The intense growth of the coal fields around Dhanbad created mining settlement areas where workers, many from nearby farming or forested areas, were sent into the coal fields. This new concentration of people produced public health problems for mine owners, including cholera outbreaks linked to contaminated water.
 The coal mining companies and zamindars thus combined to form a municipal authority, first in Jharia, later in Dhanbad, to control water supply — they made the Jharia Water Board, a trust given profound statutory powers to control water moving from higher elevations down to the West Bengal floodplains. This created the first urban geography of Dhanbad and Jharia township — we see the same model in the 1930s, with the establishment of the Damodar Valley Corporation which controlled water.

What were the most profound environmental impacts of this extractive economy?
 One of the examples I write about is mine fires in Jharia — these are a special form of historical evidence. They speak directly to long-term environmental impacts. These fires began breaking out in the early 20th century and still exist — the Modi government has actually made significant progress in reducing their spread. However, the fact that they burnt in this destructive continuity

across the 20th century speaks to the uncontained ecological costs of fossil fuel dependency. These fires are an outcome of incredibly destructive mining practices by European and Indian firms — they also indicate how communities and ecologies of mining were disregarded.
 In these places today, you can also see cracks in soil where smoke and heat rise, communities living in the ruins of burnt-out minefields, people who work as coal scavengers, rooting through officially closed mines which have some remains inside them. These people go into those abandoned galleries, seeking coal to sell in the black market. These events show the long reach of the 20th century — they also show how environmental destruction isn't only about landscapes and resources but the degradation of people.

The West critiques India for using coal — India points to the West's history of doing so and argues this is necessary for its growth now. How do you see this situation?

Fossil fuel dependency was part of a global imperial project. It was not discovered in, say, the 1970s. India is absolutely correct to claim a question of historical



HOLDING UP: Colonial pit workers roofing mines to coal labour now (L)

justice here — the United States and the European Union have had 150 years to develop on the basis of fossil fuels. Sustained fossil fuel dependency today also doesn't show the Indian government holding some unique regard for coal — it's because there is an absence of international transformations which could allow for a global transition away from fossil fuels, in the same way the movement towards these happened earlier.
 I see this as a failure of the international context, not India. Fossil fuel intensity in India does seem to be causing unequal growth, with great environmental destruction — but in terms of historical justice, we have to understand the total gap of international responsibility by the West in allowing this crisis to carry on. The recent COP29 summit is also evidence of this — the international arena lacks fundamental leadership coming from the wealthiest nations. And that spells a catastrophe for the future of this planet.



Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) has bagged three prestigious awards at the FIPI Oil and Gas Awards 2023 in categories including Sustainably Growing Corporate of the Year, Innovator of the Year (Team) and Women Executive of the Year. The awards were presented by Union Petroleum & Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, in the presence of Minister of State, Petroleum & Natural Gas Suresh Gopi, Secretary MoPNG Pankaj Jain, and leaders from the Oil & Gas industry.



प्रमुख बुनियादी उद्योगों की वृद्धि अक्टूबर में घटकर 3.1 प्रतिशत पर

नई दिल्ली (भाषा)। आठ प्रमुख बुनियादी उद्योगों का उत्पादन अक्टूबर 2024 में घटकर 3.1 प्रतिशत रहा। पिछले साल के इसी महीने में यह 12.7 प्रतिशत था। शुक्रवार को जारी आधिकारिक आंकड़ों में यह जानकारी दी गई। अक्टूबर 2024 की वृद्धि दर हालांकि इससे पिछले महीने सितंबर 2024 में दर्ज 2.4 प्रतिशत के मुकाबले अधिक है। अक्टूबर में कच्चे तेल और प्राकृतिक गैस के उत्पादन में कमी आई है। कोयला, उर्वरक, इस्पात, सीमेंट और बिजली के उत्पादन में वृद्धि क्रमशः 7.8 प्रतिशत, 0.4 प्रतिशत, 4.2 प्रतिशत और 0.6 प्रतिशत रही। पिछले साल अक्टूबर में यह आंकड़ा क्रमशः 18.4 प्रतिशत, 5.3 प्रतिशत, 16.9 प्रतिशत और 20.4 प्रतिशत था। समीक्षाधीन महीने में रिफाइनरी उत्पादों का उत्पादन बढ़कर 5.2 प्रतिशत हो गया। चालू वित्त वर्ष में अप्रैल-अक्टूबर के दौरान प्रमुख बुनियादी ढांचा क्षेत्रों - कोयला, कच्चा तेल, प्राकृतिक गैस, रिफाइनरी उत्पाद, उर्वरक, इस्पात, सीमेंट और बिजली - की वृद्धि दर 4.1 प्रतिशत रही। पिछले वित्त वर्ष की समान अवधि में यह 8.8 प्रतिशत थी। ये आठ प्रमुख बुनियादी ढांचा क्षेत्र औद्योगिक उत्पादन सूचकांक (आईआईपी) में 40.27 प्रतिशत का योगदान करते हैं।



स्वच्छ ईंधन रैली में लोगों ने बढ़चढ़कर लिया हिस्सा

नई दिल्ली। डॉ. वर्गीस कुरियन की जयंती के उपलक्ष्य अमूल ने देशभर में स्वच्छ ईंधन रैलियां आयोजित की। इन रैलियों का उद्देश्य सर्कुलर इकोनॉमी और बायोसीएनजी के लाभों के बारे में जागरूकता बढ़ाना था। इस दौरान रैलियां स्वच्छ ईंधन के उपयोग से किसानों की आजीविका में सुधार और पर्यावरण में योगदान के बारे में जागरूकता बढ़ाते हुए निकली। रैली का समापन दिल्ली में हुआ, जहां देश के विभिन्न हिस्सों से शुरू हुई रैलियों ने मिलकर धौला कुआं से मानेकशॉ एन्वलेव दिल्ली तक अपना अंतिम पड़ाव तय किया। धौला कुआं से शुरू हुई इस रैली को अलका उपाध्याय सचिव ने रैलियों को हरी झंडी दिखाई। इस अवसर पर अमूल के अध्यक्ष शामलभाई बी पटेल, अमूल के उपाध्यक्ष वालमजी हुम्बल, डॉ. वर्गीस कुरियन की पुत्री

निर्मला कुरियन, अमूल के प्रबंध निदेशक जयेन मेहता और डीएचडी के निदेशक मंडल और अधिकारी की गरिमामयी उपस्थिति थी। रैलियां मानेकशॉ एन्वलेव पहुंचीं जहां उनका अभिनंदन और स्वागत केंद्रीय मत्स्यपालन, पशुपालन एवं डेयरी तथा पंचायती राज मंत्री प्रो. एसपी बघेल और भारत सरकार के पशुपालन एवं डेयरी विभाग के अन्य अधिकारियों द्वारा किया गया। पशुपालन एवं डेयरी केंद्रीय राज्य मंत्री प्रो. एसपी बघेल ने इस अवसर पर सहकारी क्षेत्र और श्वेत क्रांति में डॉ. कुरियन के योगदान को याद किया।

पुरस्कार

बोंगाईगांव रिफ़ाइनरी की राधा को एफआईपीआई अवार्ड्स 2023 में 'यंग अचीवर' का सम्मान

हल्दिया रिफ़ाइनरी ने जीता 'रिफ़ाइनरी ऑफ द ईयर' पुरस्कार

वैभव न्यूज ■ नई दिल्ली

इंडियन ऑयल रिफ़ाइनरीज़ प्रभाग ने एफआईपीआई ऑयल एंड गैस अवार्ड्स 2023 में उल्लेखनीय दोहरी सफलता हासिल की। हल्दिया रिफ़ाइनरी को इसकी स्थिरता पहल और नवोन्मेषी पर्यावरण अनुकूल उत्पादों के लिए 'रिफ़ाइनरी ऑफ द ईयर' का पुरस्कार मिला, जबकि राधा, प्रोसेस मैनेजर, बोंगाईगांव रिफ़ाइनरी को रिफ़ाइनरी ऑप्टिमाइजेशन और ऊर्जा दक्षता में उनके योगदान के लिए यंग अचीवर ऑफ द ईयर (महिला) पुरस्कार से सम्मानित किया गया। एफआईपीआई ऑयल एंड गैस अवार्ड्स 2023 में इंडियनऑयल को मिली दोहरी मान्यता रिफ़ाइनिंग उत्कृष्टता, पर्यावरण में नई खोज और युवा प्रतिभाओं को प्रोत्साहित करने में इसके नेतृत्व क्षमता को दर्शाता है, जो भारत के ऊर्जा क्षेत्र में इसकी महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका



की पुष्टि करता है। रिफ़ाइनरी ऑफ द ईयर का पुरस्कार हरदीप सिंह पुरी, केंद्रीय पेट्रोलियम एवं प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्री ने अरविन्द कुमार, निदेशक (रिफ़ाइनरीज़), इंडियनऑयल को प्रदान किया। हल्दिया रिफ़ाइनरी को ग्रीन लाइट डीजल ऑयल और ग्रुप-

III ल्यूब्स के उत्पादन में इसकी अग्रणी भूमिका, ऊर्जा दक्षता में सुधार और पर्यावरणीय संरक्षण के लिए यह पुरस्कार प्रदान किया गया, जिसमें मियावाकी वनरोपण पहल के तहत हरा-भरा क्षेत्र बनाना भी शामिल है। कार्यक्रम में राधा, बोंगाईगांव

रिफ़ाइनरी को प्रोसेस ऑप्टिमाइजेशन, विशेष रूप से कार्बन ब्लैक फीडस्टॉक के उत्पादन में उनकी विशेषज्ञता के लिए यंग अचीवर ऑफ द ईयर (महिला) पुरस्कार मिला। उनके इस योगदान से डिस्टिलेट पैदावार में वृद्धि हुई है और महत्वपूर्ण

विदेशी मुद्रा बचत भी हुई। यह उनकी तकनीकी उत्कृष्टता और समर्पण को दर्शाता है। कार्यक्रम में बोलते हुए हरदीप सिंह पुरी ने इंडियनऑयल की उपलब्धियों की सराहना करते हुए कहा, भारतीय उद्यमी और प्रोफेशनल्स राष्ट्र के ऊर्जा परिवर्तन को क्रांतिकारी खोज के साथ आगे बढ़ा रहे हैं। इंडियनऑयल जैसी कंपनियों की उपलब्धियाँ एक सतत, किफायती और सुरक्षित ऊर्जा भविष्य बनाने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभा रही हैं। पुरस्कार समारोह में सुरेश गोपी, पर्यटन और पेट्रोलियम एवं प्राकृतिक गैस राज्य मंत्री, पंकज जैन, सचिव, पेट्रोलियम एवं प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्रालय, अरुण कुमार सिंह, एफआईपीआई के अध्यक्ष और अरविंदर सिंह साहनी, अध्यक्ष, इंडियनऑयल के साथ-साथ उद्योग जगत के लीडर्स, वरिष्ठ सरकारी अधिकारी और ऊर्जा व्यवसायी भी मौजूद थे।