



ONGC News as on 28 November 2023 (Print)

Double push for tunnel rescue as wait continues

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SILKYARA (UTTARKASHI): Rescuers initiated the process of manual drilling to rescue 41 workers trapped behind a 60m thick wall of debris under the Silkyara-Barkot tunnel late on Monday evening, after removing a part of an augur machine stuck inside the evacuation pipes, even as vertical drilling from the top of the mountain continued, with about 50 metres left.

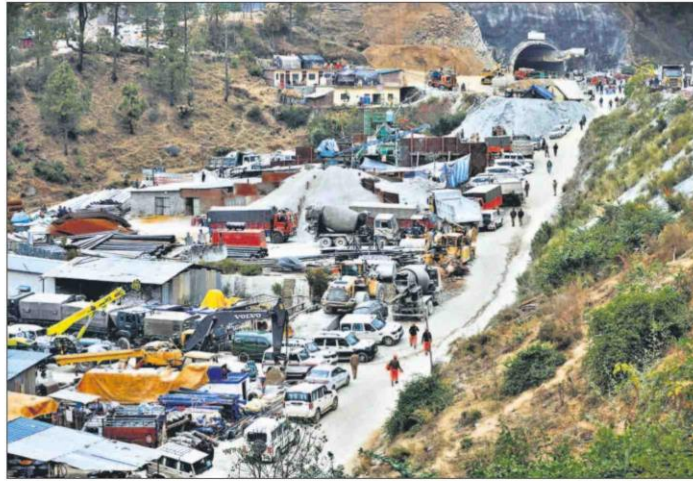
Officials are focusing on the two methods to evacuate the men, trapped in increasingly desperate conditions since a part of the 4.5km-long tunnel collapsed two weeks ago, as the augur machine — a corkscrew-like device with a rotary blade at the front — went bust on Friday, upon getting entangled in an iron girder after drilling 46.8 metres into the debris.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is in Hyderabad, on Monday said that all government agencies are working round-the-clock to rescue the workers. "In this campaign, nature is constantly giving us challenges, but we are standing firm and trying round the clock," he said.

An official release on the operation on Monday said, "After visual inspection by welders it was found that the cutter of the augur has been entangled with lattice girder bars, which damaged 1.5m length of the 800mm-wide passage pipe."

Now that it has been removed, "rat miners" have started manually drilling through the narrow pipe to reach the workers, offi-

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The scale of rescue operations around the Silkyara tunnel in Uttarkashi on Monday.

REUTERS



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UTTARKASHI

officials said.

Explaining the process, officials said that three miners will go inside the pipe at a time — one will drill, another will collect muck and the third will push the muck through a trolley to the other side of the pipe.

Rat-hole mining is a primitive method of extracting coal deposits through narrow, horizontal passages, prevalent in Meghalaya. The term "rat hole" refers to the narrow pits dug into the ground, typically just large enough for one person to descend into and extract coal. The name comes from its resemblance to rats burrowing through narrow holes. A team of six rat-hole miners has been called in from Madhya Pradesh for the operation.

"According to our estimates, it is only about 12 metres to reach the trapped men. We will do manual excavation," Mahmood Ahmad, additional secretary, ministry of road transport and highways, and MD, National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL), said.

The augur machine broke down just about 10-12 metres from the breakthrough point on November 24, stalling the progress of the operation even as officials had hoped to bring the workers out that day itself.

Once it became clear that the augur machine was irreparable, officials shifted to the next best option — of drilling down 86 metres to reach the tunnel.

Till Monday evening, Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam (SJVN) had managed to drill through 36 metres. At this rate, if there are no other obstacles, the rescuers should be able to reach the workers by Thursday in an operation that has already dragged on much longer than was previously expected.

On Monday, however, the machine hit a water aquifer, which slowed down the rescue effort.

"We got water in the bore. Dewatering was done. We are also facing difficulty due to hard rock coming in the way, but it is going well. We have to do about 85-90 metres. We are expecting it to be completed by November 30," said Ahmad.

As the drilling progresses, 700mm wide pipes are being inserted to create an escape passage. A little distance away, a thinner, 200mm probe is being pushed in. It has reached the

70-metre mark. Once the rescuers reach the requisite height, choppers will be used to airlift the trapped men, lieutenant general (retd) Syed Ata Hasnain, member, National Disaster Management Authority, said.

The authorities are working on at least three other methods of rescue.

Giving details of the progress, Ahmad said, "From the Barkot side, we have done six blasts and penetrated 12 metres. The distance to go is 483 metres. But this is not our main plan."

The Tehri Hydroelectric Development Corporation (THDC) has been tasked with constructing a rescue tunnel from the Barkot end using the conventional drill-and-blast method. However, as the method can take long, it is only a contingency plan.

The Rail Vikas Nigam Limited, meanwhile, is expected to start perpendicular drilling for 170-180 metres by Tuesday or Wednesday. "RVNL is also doing vertical drilling as trial to get geological findings," he said.

Separately, for vertical drilling by ONGC all the associated materials are on standby in Rishikesh, while officials from the Border Roads Organisation prepared the access path and location for placement of the rig, officials said. "Track preparation for 24-inch vertical drilling is complete, but the rig work is pending," Hasnain said.

Officials are still unable to reach a consensus on a timeline for the operation, even as they said that all efforts are being made to ensure mental and physical well-being of the workers.

"No harm to physical or mental health is being caused; provisions include power, oxygen, and communication lines to family members and psychosocial therapists," Hasnain said.

Meanwhile, principal secretary to the Prime Minister, PK Mishra, Union home secretary, Ajay Bhalla, visited the site of the tunnel collapse on Monday to take stock of the operations.

RAT-HOLE MINING IS A PRIMITIVE METHOD OF EXTRACTING COAL DEPOSITS THROUGH NARROW, HORIZONTAL PASSAGES

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Rescuers to use manual drift process for trapped workers

Auger machine debris removed; manual drilling of the passage to start soon

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NEW DELHI

After facing setbacks to the horizontal drilling of the tunnel, rescue operations resumed in full swing on the 16th day to save the 41 trapped workers at Silkyara Tunnel in Uttarkashi with all hope on manual drilling to reach the trapped labourers.

All the debris of the auger machine, which had been used for the last several days to create an 800 mm wide passage through the debris to reach the trapped workers, has been removed and the passage created by the auger will now be drilled manually for around 10 metres to reach the workers.

This exercise will start after clearance of the 800 mm rescue pipe. After visual inspection by welders it was found that the auger's cutter had got entangled with the lattice girder bars which damaged a

length of 1.5m of the 800mm wide passage. These lattice bars are now being cut.

Earlier on Monday, the auger machine was cut and removed by a plasma cutter.

"After clearance of 800mm rescue pipe from all the obstruction including stuck-up augers, manual drift procedure will be applied to clear the last few meters to access the other side," a government statement on the rescue operations said. Simultaneously, a drift tunnel is being created using Manual-Semi Mechanized Method by joint team of THDCL, army, Coal India and NHIDCL. Also, SJVNL's machine for the vertical rescue tunnel construction has started its work and has already drilled over 30.8 metres or just over a third of the distance to reach the trapped

workers.

THDC has also started to construct a rescue tunnel from the Barkot end, with six blasts already completed, resulting in a 12-meter drift. Three blasts per day are planned. RVNL is transporting machinery for micro-tunneling through horizontal drilling to rescue the labourers.

Five government agencies have been brought in to look at all options to rescue the workers. These include National Highways and Infra-

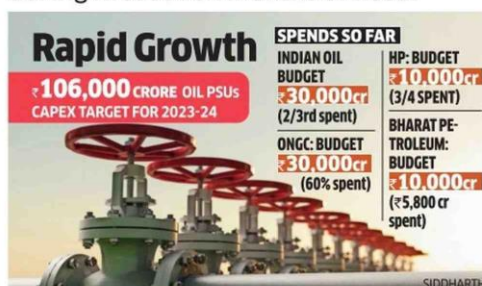
Five government agencies have been brought in to look at all options to rescue the 41 workers trapped in the Uttarkashi tunnel

structure Development Corporation Ltd (NHIDCL), Oil and Natural Gas Corp. (ONGC), Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam (SJVNL), Tehri Hydro Development Corporation Ltd (THDC) and Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd (RVNL) have been assigned one option each.

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At ₹65k cr, Oil PSUs Roll Out 62% of FY24 Capex Target During Apr-Oct

IndianOil leads with ₹30,000 cr spends during first seven months of fiscal



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New Delhi: State-run oil companies in India have spent ₹65,000 crore on capital expenditure during the first seven months of this financial year, underscoring their rapid expansion to meet surging demand for energy in one of the world's fastest-growing economies.

These companies had set a capex target of ₹106,000 crore for the year through March 2024, and they have already achieved 62% during the April to October period, according to oil ministry data.

IndianOil, the nation's top refiner and fossil fuel retailer, has already spent two-thirds of this year's budget of ₹30,000 crore. The company has been spending on a range of projects from petrochemicals to pipelines, fuel marketing, and natural gas infrastructure.

IndianOil is targeting to boost its refining capacity to 107 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) by 2025 from the current 70 mtpa

Oil and Natural Gas Corp., the largest domestic producer of oil and gas, is the second-highest spender among the state-run oil companies. It has spent ₹18,000

crore between April and October, about 60% of its capex target of ₹30,000 crore. The company's capital spending is spread over multiple upstream projects, aimed at enhancing oil and gas production.

Hindustan Petroleum has spent three-fourths of its target of ₹10,000 crore for the year towards expansion of its refinery in Barmer and other projects.

Bharat Petroleum spent ₹5,800 crore towards capex against the FY24 target of ₹10,000 crore. Gail, the nation's largest transporter and marketer of natural gas, has used up nearly two-thirds of its annual budget. It spent ₹5,000 crore against the target of ₹7,750 crore.

Oil India Ltd has spent ₹2,700 crore against its annual goal of ₹4,900 crore while ONGC Videsh, the overseas arm of ONGC, has spent about half of its annual budget of ₹3,200 crore.

Indian state-run oil and gas firms have been rapidly expanding, adding new production and distribution infrastructure as domestic energy demand rises. Consumption of natural gas rose 9% year-on-year in the April-October period while that of refined petroleum products jumped 6%.

Day trading guide

19825 » Nifty 50 Futures

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
19775	19725	19885	19930	Wait for dips. Go long at 19785. Keep the stop-loss at 19760

₹1532 » HDFC Bank

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
1520	1500	1540	1565	Go long only above 1540. Keep the stop-loss at 1530

₹1437 » Infosys

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
1425	1400	1460	1490	Wait for dips. Go long at 1430 with a stop-loss at 1415

₹438 » ITC

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
435	432	440	443	Go long only above 440. Stop-loss can be placed at 438

₹189 » ONGC

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
185	182	190	192	Go short now and at 189. Stop-loss can be kept at 191

₹2394 » Reliance Ind.

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
2380	2360	2405	2430	Go long only above 2405. Keep the stop-loss at 2390

₹561 » SBI

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
559	556	563	567	Immediate outlook is unclear. Avoid trading this stock

₹3458 » TCS

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
3445	3410	3475	3505	Go long on a break above 3475. Keep the stop-loss at 3465

S1, S2: Support 1 & 2; R1, R2: Resistance 1 & 2.

Rescuers cover over 32 m via vertical boring; manual horizontal drilling also on

Our Bureau
New Delhi

The efforts to rescue 41 labourers trapped in the tunnel at Uttarakhand got a boost on the 15th day as more than 32-meter passage was created via vertical drilling, while manually creating the passage at the stalled horizontal drilling site also commenced from Monday evening.

Since Sunday morning, the rescue efforts have been focused on vertical drilling from the Silkyara end, by hydropower generator SJVNL. The drilling began at 12.00 hours on Sunday. A total of 86 meters have to be covered to reach the labourers, who have

been trapped inside the tunnel at Uttarkashi since November 12.

Furthermore, rescue efforts received a shot in the arm as the debris and broken parts of the Augur drilling machine were cleared from the horizontal passage by Monday morning. Now, manual drilling has commenced (around 17.00 hours on Monday).

The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways in its daily media briefing (updated till 13.30 hours) said that a third vertical lifeline (pipeline of 8 inch diameter) is also being laid by Rail Vikas Nigam from the Silkyara end. The drilling commenced at 04.00 hours on Sunday

(November 26) and so far (as of 16.00 hours on Monday) around 75 meter was completed.

Meanwhile, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister PK Mishra and Union Home Secretary AK Bhalla visited the tunnel collapse site on Monday morning and took stock of the rescue operations. They assured all possible help and assistance to the rescue teams and relatives of the trapped workers. Mishra also reviewed the progress at the vertical drilling sites of SJVNL and RVNL (Silkyara end).

HORIZONTAL DRILLING
To fast track manual drilling, the government has brought



CRISIS MANAGEMENT. Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister PK Mishra reviews the rescue operation, in Uttarkashi district, on Monday #11

in rat miners, who are proficient in drilling under closed and cramped spaces. Such miners are widely used in coal

mining. A team of six people has been formed, who will work in two groups of three persons each.

This horizontal drilling, also from the Silkyara end, is being done by National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation.

A better assessment of the progress and the time it will take to cover the remaining 12-15 meters will be made on Tuesday morning. Rescue teams cleared 45 meters of the horizontal passage before the Augur's joints got stuck and broke down.

OTHER MEASURES

Some more progress has been made in horizontal drilling from the Barkot side by THDC India. A sixth blast was done at 0615 hrs on Monday and the total executed length of the drift is now 12 meters.

The fabrication work on 18 ribs has been completed.

In the case of perpendicular-horizontal drilling, being done by RVNL, the equipment for micro tunnelling required for horizontal drilling has reached the site from Nashik and Delhi.

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation is doing a vertical drilling exercise from the Barkot end. The air drilling rig from Indore has reached the site and all associated material of the air hammer drilling rig has been mobilized by ONGC and are on standby at Rishikesh as the road and location for placement of rig for drilling is being prepared by Border Roads Organisation.

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Musashi India eyes 25% mkt share in EV components



ANJALI SINGH
Mumbai, 27 November

Musashi India, a subsidiary of Japanese auto parts giant Musashi Seimitsu Industries, plans to secure a 25 per cent market share for transmission components designed for electric two-wheelers by 2028.

"We're looking for market share not only in India, but also Indonesia, Thailand, and Africa. We already have big factories in Indonesia, Vietnam, and Thailand. So, we will be looking for investments for the assembly line once the customer demand is up to 100,000 units," said Toshihisa Otsuka (pictured), chief executive officer, Asia and Africa region.

Musashi India has invested ₹70 crore in its electric vehicle (EV) business and plans to invest an additional ₹100 crore in the next two to three years. The investment will be used to establish new assembly lines for EV transmission components and to upgrade existing facilities.

Musashi recently formed a joint venture (JV) with Delta Electronics, and Toyota Tsusho Corporation to sell EV drive units for two-wheelers. Musashi holds a majority share of 51 per cent in this JV, with Delta and Toyota Tsusho holding 34 per cent and 15 per cent, respectively.

This collaboration aims to leverage combined expertise of the three companies to develop cutting-edge EV drive units, with Toyota Tsusho overseeing distribution through its global logistics network.

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Sembcorp to acquire wind assets in India & China for ₹1,247 cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi, November 27

SEMBCORP INDUSTRIES ON Monday announced that it has signed two separate agreements to acquire 428 MW of wind power assets in China and India for 200 million Singaporean dollar (about ₹1,247 crore).

The Singaporean energy company, backed by state-owned investor Temasek Holdings Pte, will acquire 228 MW of operational wind power assets of Leap Green Energy Pvt Ltd for 70 million Singaporean dollar and 200 MW of Qinzhou Yuanneng for 130 million Singaporean dollar, the firm said in a statement.

The Singapore company had last year announced the acquisition of Vector Green to add 583 MW of renewable assets in India

Sembcorp has been operating in India for more than 12 years, with a presence across 18 states. With this acquisition, the company now has a balanced portfolio of 3.7 GW of renewable assets. Last year, it announced the acquisition of Vector Green to add 583 MW of renewable assets in India.

"Sembcorp's wholly-owned subsidiary, Sembcorp Energy (Shanghai) Holding Co Ltd has signed an agreement with Envision Energy Co Ltd to acquire 100 per cent of the share capital in Qinzhou Yuanneng Wind Power Co Ltd (Qinzhou Yuanneng) for an equity consideration of approximately 130 million Singaporean dollar," it said.

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Brent dips to near \$80 ahead of OPEC+ meet



PAUL CARSTEN
London, November 27

OIL PRICES FELL on Monday, with the Brent benchmark dropping near \$80 a barrel as investors awaited this week's OPEC+ meeting and expected curbs on supplies into 2024. Brent crude futures were down 35 cents, or 0.4%, at \$80.23 a barrel by 1447 GMT. US West Texas Intermediate crude futures lost 29 cents, or 0.4%, to \$75.25.

Both contracts lost \$1 in early trading, after having registered their fifth weekly decline in a row last week.

Prices tumbled midweek when OPEC+ and allies, including Russia, postponed to November 30 a ministerial meeting to iron out differences on production targets for African producers.

Since then the group, helmed by de facto leader Saudi Arabia, has moved closer to a compromise.

OPEC+ is still negotiating ahead of an oil policy meeting on Thursday, sources said on Monday.

ING analysts said market sentiment remains negative given the dispute within OPEC+ over production quotas, though they expect Saudi Arabia to roll over its additional voluntary cut of 1 million barrels per day (bpd) into next year, and Russia to extend its own cuts.

"Clearly, if we do not see this, it would put further downward pressure on the market," ING analysts said in a note. —REUTERS

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Crude oil down as traders look to OPEC+ meet



Crude oil fell for a fourth day as traders looked ahead to this week's delayed OPEC+ meeting and wider financial markets carried a risk-off tone. Global benchmark Brent dipped near \$80 a barrel after falling in each of the last five weeks, the longest such run since the end of 2021. Crude's retreat on Monday mirrored a slight worsening of sentiment across markets.

BLOOMBERG