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Why India doesn't move against CO2's close cousin

India is the world's third-largest emitter of methane but lacks clear policy direction and mechanisms to track and mitigate the gas, which is far more potent than carbon dioxide in global warming

S DINAKAR
Chennai, 30 December

It would be tempting to dismiss the low priority accorded to action against a toxic air pollutant like methane to the fact that it is odourless and colourless. Unlike its close cousin carbon dioxide (CO₂), it's out of sight, which makes it easier to shove out of mind. But it's not that: the truth is a political inconvenience.

This inconspicuous gas contributes to the catastrophic pollutants polluting the country's northern plains, according to climate experts and UN data.

Methane, a byproduct of farming, cow burps (and farts), energy and waste, is a dangerous air pollutant and the biggest contributor to human-induced warming after carbon dioxide. But what really sets it apart is its potent short-term warming effect. This in turn is a precursor to the accumulation of ground-level ozone, which harms human health, agriculture and ecosystems.

Climate shocks

India is the world's third-biggest emitter of methane. A rise in temperatures should ring alarm bells in New Delhi—60 per cent of India's population lives in places that already experience prolonged heat stress each year. It will require India to commit \$210 billion (in 2030 value) annually over 2030 to 2050 towards protecting the population and economy from climate shocks, Mekala Krishnan and Olivia White, partners at global consultant McKinsey, said in a note earlier this month.



"Studies have shown that methane emissions are more potent at trapping heat than carbon emissions even though they have a shorter duration," said Purva Jain, energy specialist at the US-based Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis. "Therefore lowering methane emissions is critical for India."

Methane is also an indirect contributor to particulate pollution. But three decades after the UN launched its annual climate summits to keep track of all greenhouse gas emissions, India lacks the mechanisms to track methane, let alone mitigate it. (Methane concentrations are tracked separately from particulate matter, which is measured using

the Air Quality Index.)

The 50 most polluted districts in India are concentrated in Delhi, Assam, Haryana and Bihar, said Finnish climate researcher CREA in a November 25 study.

But, according to Bangalore-based climate NGO Janaagraha, 85.5 per cent of assessed cities are not on track to meet their PM₁₀ reduction targets for 2024 to 2025. It published its conclusion after a year-long study on air quality.

Methane is a gas, unlike GREA and Janaagraha's focus—dust particles, organic compounds and liquid droplets, derived from vehicle exhausts, construction or combustion.

The world's first Global Methane Status Report (GMSR), released last month by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), says global methane emissions, caused by human activity, could come down by 8 per cent by 2030 below 2020 levels if countries implement their national climate plans (NDCs) and methane action plans (MAPs). This would be the largest and most sustained decline of methane in history. More ambitious plans could lead to a 32 per cent reduction in methane emission and a 0.2 degree centigrade reduction in temperature by 2050.

But India remains the only major polluter yet to submit a new NDC to 2035; nor has it produced a MAP, according to UN records. Even India's current NDC to 2030 is short of details on how it plans to tackle methane.

"India is the world's third-largest emitter of methane in absolute terms but does not identify action to reduce emissions from its largest source, agriculture, within its NDC," UNEP said.

Agriculture is too sensitive a subject to touch, a senior biofuel industry official said. But substituting "Jersey cows with desi (indigenous breeds)" can limit emissions because of changes in their digestive system, said Gaurav Kedia, chairman, Indian Biogas Association. Local breeds are said to emit less methane.

Wastewater from agriculture and households and industries is another problem. "People don't talk about it but wastewater has got very high organic content, which creates a lot of methane," he added. But programmes to capture methane from waste are on the slow lane because of the high costs of biogas, bio-fuel industry officials said.

On the other hand, state-run explorer ONGC is helping India tackle methane leaks in the energy sector. "ONGC was an early player in identifying methane leaks," said Deepak Tandon, executive director of ONGC's carbon management division. The company has invested heavily in procuring special cameras and interpreting satellite data to plug emission leaks.

India's emissions

"Because methane is both a powerful greenhouse gas and short-lived compared to carbon dioxide, achieving significant reductions would have a rapid

and significant effect on atmospheric warming potential," Kedia said.

A Global Methane Pledge (GMP) was launched in 2021 at United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) by the European Union and the US as the first global policy initiative to reduce human-made methane emissions by 2030. As of April 2025, 159 countries had joined the GMP, covering 57 per cent of global emissions, UN data shows. But India has stayed away.

India accounted for 9 per cent of global methane emissions in 2020 at 31 million tonnes, after China and the US, according to UN documents. And these emissions are on the rise, pushed by rice cultivation.

Rice cultivation accounted for a fifth of global agricultural emissions in 2020. A slight decline is expected in China, but India will witness an increase of 8 per cent between 2020 and 2030, according to GMSR.

While agriculture makes up nearly 40 per cent of India's methane emissions, waste is shaping up as the fastest growing emitter, in addition to emissions from coal mines and oil and gas production.

India is planning a significant expansion in domestic coal mining, which may lead to more than a doubling of methane leaks in the decade to 2029, climate consultant Ember said. Capturing and utilising emissions from coal mines could save nearly \$1 billion worth of gas imports in the five years to 2030, Ember said.

But there is no mechanism in place at present to monitor and regulate methane emissions, Kishan Reddy, Union minister of state for coal, told Parliament last July.

The GMSR report expects a sharp increase in methane emissions from waste by 13 per cent by 2030 and 56 per cent by 2050, relative to 2020, driven by population and economic growth.

"Large amounts of waste are currently scattered or openly burned, about 40 per cent or more in Africa, India and South-East Asia," UNEP said. But effective policies targeting rice cultivation and the burning of rice paddy straw and other crop residues are absent in

selected regions, particularly in China and India.

"While open-field burning has declined globally, it is increasing in densely populated agricultural areas in China and India," according to GMSR. Kedia said the government has encouraged modern methods of paddy cultivation and growing less water-guzzling millet varieties to mitigate methane emissions.

Expensive gas

Methane abatement does not come cheap. Climate Policy Initiative (CPI) analysis shows an 18 per cent increase to an annual average of \$13.7 billion in 2021 and 2022. This, however, remains far below the estimated \$127 billion net

annual cost by 2030 to implement abatement measures consistent with the GMP target, the UNEP report said.

Development finance institutions (DFIs) currently provide about \$3 billion annually for methane mitigation—small compared with the \$2.5 trillion they expend in investments every year.

Methane is thrice as destructive as carbon dioxide and contributes more to immediate warming of the earth than CO₂. It accounts for 11 per cent of global emissions but is more than 28 times as potent as carbon dioxide at trapping heat in the atmosphere, UN records show.

Over the last two centuries, methane concentrations in the atmosphere have more than doubled, largely due to human-related activities; it is also a key contributor to ground-level ozone

pollution, a major component of smog. Globally, 42 per cent of methane emissions come from agriculture, 38 per cent from the energy sector and 20 per cent from waste. The major methane emission sources for large emitters vary greatly. For example, a key source of methane emissions in China is coal production, whereas Russia emits most of its methane from natural gas and oil systems. India owes its emissions to agriculture.

While agriculture remains a sensitive subject, India would do better working on curbing fugitive emissions from the energy and waste sector to curtail emissions in the short term.

The hidden heat

Global human-induced methane emissions (in million tonnes per year)



*Projected
Source: Global Methane Status Report, UNEP

HAL's Dhruv-NG makes maiden flight

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
Bengaluru, December 30

SETTING ITS EYES on the civil aviation sector, Hindustan Aeronautics (HAL) completed the inaugural flight of the Dhruv New Generation helicopter on Tuesday.

During an event held to mark the feat, HAL received certification from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) for the "indigenous manufacturing of the Shakti civil engine", paving the way for the certification of the helicopter before its commercial release.

HAL Chairman and MD D K Sunil said the helicopter could

carry 14 passengers and offer various services, such as VIP movement, heli-tourism, and medical ambulances.

Although the helicopter is yet to receive complete certification from the DGCA, Sunil said that HAL had received orders for eight Dhruv-NG helicopters from the state-run Pawan Hans Helicopter Limited. "These will be used to transport men and materials to Bombay High (an oil field run by ONGC off the coast of Maharashtra)," he said.

Over the next two months, HAL will complete around 150 flights in two Dhruv helicopters to complete certification for the whole aircraft,"

Sunil said.

To a question on the cost of the aircraft, the HAL CMD replied that the price would be competitive as 65% of the aircraft was indigenously produced.

"There is a current market for 1,000 helicopters. This can help us generate good revenue for a long period of time. Estimates are that there will be a requirement for around 15,000 helicopters in the next 10 years. Once heli-tourism picks up in places like Char Dham, the numbers (of helicopter sales) will pick up," he said.



DHRUV-NG, the next-generation civil helicopter takes inaugural flight at Hindustan Aeronautics (HAL) in Bengaluru on Tuesday

ANI

Multi-role copter Dhruv completes maiden flight

Express News Service
Bengaluru, December 30

SETTING ITS eyes on the civil aviation sector, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) completed the inaugural flight of the multi-role Dhruv New Generation helicopter on Tuesday.

During an event, HAL received certification from the DGCA for the "indigenous manufacturing of the Shakti civil engine", paving the way for the certification of the helicopter before its commercial release.

After the event, HAL Chairman and MD D K Sunil said the helicopter could carry 14 passengers and offer various services, such as VIP movement, heli-tourism, and medical ambulances. The Dhruv NG features a highly configurable cabin (7.33 cubic metres) adaptable for various civilian roles.

As for its Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (Air Ambulance) role, the helicopter is equipped with a layout for four stretchers along with a doctor and attendant. Its specialised roles include offshore operations, law enforcement, and disaster relief (SAR).

Although the helicopter is yet to receive complete certification from the DGCA, Sunil



Dhruv-NG receives a water salute after its maiden flight in Bengaluru on Tuesday. ANI

said HAL had received orders for eight Dhruv-NG helicopters from the state-run Pawan Hans Helicopter Ltd. "These will be used to transport men and materials to Bombay High (an oil field run by ONGC off the coast of Maharashtra)," he said.

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will pick up," he said.

To another question, he said while 65% of current aircraft is indigenous, HAL is looking to achieve 80% indigenisation over the next 10 years, he said.

Union Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu said the internal design of HAL had changed. While HAL used to focus mostly on the defence sector, it was now looking at civil aviation and defence in equal measure.

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Date : 31 December 2025	Page : 7

India's Russian crude oil imports dip

Dec volumes fall to lowest since Dec 2022 at 1.2mn bpd, Kpler data shows

#NEW DELHI

India's imports of Russian crude oil are set to register a sharp pullback in December, but the decline reflects short-term disruptions rather than a structural shift in sourcing patterns.

According to real-time data analytics company Kpler, Russian crude imports into India are expected to fall to around 1.2 million barrels per

day (bpd) in December, down from 1.84 million bpd in November, marking the lowest level since December 2022.

Indian refiners continue to buy Russian crude from non-sanctioned entities.

The drop, flagged by analysts as early as October, has been driven by disruptions resulting from US action on top Russian exporters,

Rosneft and Lukoil, as well as due to the impact of EU sanctions on Russian-linked product flows.

This appears to be a near-term adjustment, with Russian crude imports into India expected to recover gradually from January as new intermediaries step in and supply chains re-establish," said Sumit Ritolia, Lead Research Analyst, Refining & Modeling, Kpler. **PTI**

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Rosatom sends N-fuel for initial loading of Kudankulam project's unit

Russian state-owned atomic energy major Rosatom on Tuesday announced that its nuclear fuel division — managed by TVEL JSC — has supplied nuclear fuel for the initial loading of the VVER-1000 reactor core at unit 3 of the Kudankulam nuclear power plant (NPP) in Tamil Nadu.

The fuel, including the initial reactor loading and reserve assemblies, was manufactured by the Novosibirsk chemical concentrates plant, a facility of Rosatom's nuclear fuel division. The shipment is provided under the contract covering full lifetime fuel supply for units 3 and 4.

The delivery was carried out under the contract for fuel supply of power units of the second stage of the project's third and fourth units for their entire service life starting from the initial loading.

BS REPORTER

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Tata Power commissions SJVN's ₹5.5K cr, 1 Gw project in Rajasthan

SHINE JACOB
Chennai, 30 December

Tata Power Renewable Energy (TPREL) has commissioned a 1 gigawatt (Gw) solar power plant in Rajasthan for Navratna CPSE SJVN Limited and it is the largest solar project taken up by the Tata Group arm so far and will light up parts of three states, including Rajasthan, Jammu & Kashmir, and Uttarakhand.

With the commissioning of this domestic content requirement (DCR) policy-compliant project worth over ₹5,500 crore, TPREL's total renewable utility-scale capacity has reached 11.6 GW, including 4.9 Gw executed as third-party EPC.

All 2.4 million modules used in the project have been manufactured at Tata Power's TP Solar Limited in Tirunelveli, reinforcing the company's strong commitment to domestic manufacturing under the 'Make in India' initiative.

Spanning the Bandarwala and Karnisar Bhatiyar sites in Bikaner,

Rajasthan, the project reflects the extensive scale of the development and is designed to deliver clean, reliable power across multiple states.

The capacity has been allocated to key state utilities — 500 mega watt (MW) to Rajasthan Urja Vikas and IT Services Limited (RUVITL), 300 MW to Jammu & Kashmir Power Limited (JKPL), and 200 MW to Uttarakhand Power Corporation Limited (UPCL) ensuring power supply to Rajasthan, Jammu & Kashmir, and Uttarakhand.

In its first year of operation, the project is expected to generate approximately 2,454.84 million units of green electricity and offset nearly 1.74 million tonnes of carbon dioxide.

The project stands out for its robust engineering and innovative execution, having been delivered in one of India's most challenging environments, with temperatures soaring to 50 degree Celsius in peak summers and dropping to as low as 3 degree Celsius in winters, compounded by difficult terrain and restricted vehicle movement.

China, EU still lead Russian fuel buys

S DINAKAR

Hyderabad, 30 December

As the Russia-Ukraine war enters its fifth year, the biggest buyers of Russian fossil fuels are still being dealt an easy hand, while India, which has contributed much less than China and the European Union (EU) to nearly a trillion dollar in Russian export revenues from fuels, has faced the stick, according to data from international forecasters and industry sources.

India's purchases of fossil fuels from Russia was just around half of what China paid and three fourths of what the EU contributed in the near four-year span of the conflict, industry data showed. But US President Donald Trump slapped a 50 per cent tariff on Indian exports earlier this year, half of which was in retaliation to India buying Russian oil. And the US has refused to drop it in spite of Indian refiners slashing purchases in December. China pays lower import duties than India on exports to the US and the EU pays a fraction, according to US government data.

The EU, which has introduced several sanctions and price caps on trade of Russian oil on Indian buyers, has contributed to 22 per cent of Russia's revenues from fossil fuel exports, second only to China, in the 46 months to December 25, 2025, according to calculations based on data from Finnish think tank Centre for Research on Energy & Clean Air (CREA).

"According to our estimates, since the beginning of the war, Russia earned 996 billion euros (\$1.2 trillion) in revenue from fossil fuel exports," CREA said in its latest data set. "European Union countries purchased more than 218 billion euros of these exports."

India and Turkey paid 162 billion euros and 117 billion euros, respectively, during the period, according to CREA. Oil imports



constituted 89 per cent of India's total expenditure on Russian fuels, with coal making up the rest. Purchases may dwindle in 2026 — after severe sanctions on Russian oil producers by Trump in October sent the share of Russian oil in India's crude basket falling by 14 percentage points on the month to around 22 per cent in December, ship tracking data accessed by *Business Standard* showed.

China is the biggest buyer of sanctioned oil, importing fuels from countries sanctioned by the UN such as Iran, and from Venezuela. It paid 292 billion euros for fossil fuels imported from Russia from the beginning of Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 till December 25, 2025, accounting for 29 per cent of Russia's overall revenues from fuel exports since the beginning of the war. Russia's piped gas deliveries to China grew by 25 per cent in

Russian fossil fuel revenues

Data for Feb 2022-Dec 25, 2025 (in billion euro)

	Oil	Gas	Coal	Total
China	209	42.5	41	292.5
EU	106	108	+3.5	217.5
India	143	-	-18	996
Turkey	77	30	-12	161.0
				Russia's total revenues 119.0

Source: Centre for Research on Energy & Clean Air

Russian supplies of crude oil in Dec

(in '000 barrels per day)

	Dec '24	Nov '25	Dec '25*
India	1,482	1,859	1,149
Reliance	331	575	296
Nayara	242	408	341
Rest (state refiners)	909	876	512

*Until Dec 29

Source: Kpler

2025 on year to a new all-time high of 38.8 billion cubic metres —now accounting for almost 9 per cent of China's gas demand, said Greg Molnar, gas analyst at the Paris-based International Energy Agency. And these supplies came cheap, Molnar said.

State-run CNPC paid around \$9.5 billion for Russia's piped gas in 2025, translating into an average price of around \$6.5 per million British thermal units, half of what India pays for imports of LNG —natural gas super-cooled to liquid form for ease of transportation. It was also 45 per cent below the average European gas benchmark TTF price in 2025.

US biggest beneficiary

Ironically, Washington is the biggest beneficiary of the Russo-Ukraine war even after excluding the earnings from arms sales to Ukraine. US fuel exporters gained hundreds billions of dollars in fresh sales of

LNG and fuels to Europe —a market which until 2021 was awash with cheaper pipeline gas from Russia— catapulting America as the world's biggest supplier of LNG.

After the EU drastically slashed supplies of Russian gas and later diesel following the invasion of Ukraine, it was forced to turn to the US for the fuels, given the proximity and ease of shipments, industry officials said. The US, which accounts for around 25 per cent of global LNG supply, up from virtually zero back in 2015, is Europe's main supplier of LNG, and the most expensive one, said Ana Maria Jaller-Makarewicz, lead energy analyst IEEFA for Europe, in a LinkedIn post.

European imports of US LNG rose by 46 per cent on year in the first half of 2025. The US accounted for 57 per cent of the continent's LNG imports, which paid around 225 billion euros for LNG imports in the three years between 2022 and 2024, including 100 billion for US LNG. "This high amount is partly because US LNG is more expensive for EU buyers than LNG from any other supplier," Jaller-Makarewicz said. The US Energy Agency forecasts US gas benchmark Henry Hub to average \$4/mmBtu next year.

Russian supplies

Finally, after evading the western sanction dragnet for over three years, Russian supplies of crude oil to India slumped to 1.1 million barrels per day, the lowest since November 2022, according to ship tracking data from Kpler. The sharp slide by around 700,000 bpd from November came after Washington's October sanctions on Rosneft and LukOil, the country's two biggest oil producers, registered a blip on the global Russian supply chain. Reliance Industries, the single biggest buyer of Russian oil globally, sharply cut purchases by nearly half to 296,000 bpd, Kpler data showed.

Import of Russia oil hits 3-yr low in Dec

SHUBHANGI MATHUR
New Delhi, 30 December

India's intake of Russian crude oil slid to a three-year low in December, as refiners grew increasingly cautious amid tightening western sanctions on Moscow's petroleum sector. Even so, Russia remained India's largest oil supplier by a wide margin compared with November.

Crude oil imports from Russia fell by about 38 per cent in December from the previous month to 1.14 million barrels a day, according to data from maritime intelligence firm Kpler. India had imported 1.83 million bpd of Russian crude in November.

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Ebb and flow

Crude oil imported by India ('000 bpd)

■ Nov ■ Dec*



*until Dec 30

Source: Kpler

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Import of Russia oil hits 3-year low in Dec

US President Donald Trump had imposed sanctions, from November 21, on two major Russian oil producers, Rosneft and Lukoil, which together account for about 60 per cent of India's oil imports from Moscow. In parallel, under the

European Union's 18th sanctions package, the bloc banned imports of refined oil products derived from Russian crude.

Indian refiners have scaled back purchases of Russian crude in response to the latest western measures, despite

Moscow offering steeper discounts. Russia has doubled discounts for Indian buyers to around \$5 a barrel following the US sanctions, two industry executives told Business Standard. Russian President Vladimir Putin, during a visit to India earlier this month, also assured New Delhi of Moscow's readiness to ensure uninterrupted fuel supplies.

Despite the sanctions, Rosneft remained India's largest Russian crude supplier in December, while Lukoil also contributed significant volumes. Kpler data show Rosneft supplied about 667,000 bpd, while Lukoil provided 46,000 bpd to Indian refiners during the month.

The decline comes even as Rosneft-backed Nayara Energy continued strong purchases from Russia, while Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries, India's largest buyer of Russian crude, secured a one-month concession from Washington to continue buying Rosneft cargoes, *Reuters* reported. Reliance had a long-term contract to purchase nearly 500,000 bpd of crude from Rosneft. However, the private refiner has stopped importing Russian oil into its export-focused special economic zone refinery at Jamnagar in Gujarat.

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Fixing India's air in five years

From vehicular pollution to construction dust, coordinated solutions exist. What's needed now is the will to act

ILLUSTRATION: BINAY SINHA



There are easy problems, there are complex problems, and then there are the wicked problems. The easiest problems are those where we know the precise issue, we know the solution, and it is easy to assign accountability. The wickedest of all problems are those where the problem is ill-defined, and, therefore, so are the solutions. But North India's pollution problem is neither. While it is easy to measure and fix accountability, multiple stakeholders work against one another.

Fortunately for us, the political parties are explicitly united on reducing pollution. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had "halving Delhi's AQI (air quality index) by 2030" as an election promise. And, even more fortunately for everyone concerned, the techno-economic-policy solutions to pollution are well known. So, then, where is the problem? Simply confusion on what to prioritise and how to do so.

There are two ways to solve any problem: The first is to analyse the causes and work from the bottom up by eliminating each of the underlying causal factors. The other is to identify the technological solution and determine how institutions and incentives can be aligned to enable the full rollout of the tech solution. This lays out a method for the latter.

Broadly, the pollution process is as follows: Economic activity gives rise to many emissions such as dust, nitrous or sulphur compounds, and particulate matter. These interact with weather conditions such as temperatures, humidity, and winds to increase, reduce, persist, or be removed from our immediate environment.

All cities and rural areas create pollution. Delhi seems worse than many other cities because of its unique weather conditions. In jest, a Muskian solution would be to place large jet engines at a height of 500-

700 metres, sucking up the pollution over cities like Delhi and throwing it upwards to be blown away by stratospheric winds. But unfortunately — or perhaps fortunately — that's not feasible.

We can't just throw away pollution; we need to limit it, or the winter gas chamber created over North India will become worse as population and economic activity increase. I repeat what we all already know: The more we delay action, the worse this problem will get.

Source apportionment studies have now identified many different sources that add up to the total air pollution in Delhi. These differ by location, hour, day, month, and even year, but it is clear that to address pollution, we will need to address each source. That is, like Chanakya's sticks, it needs to be treated as a collection of smaller challenges and addressed individually. Moreover, pollution does not respect state boundaries, and a large share of pollution over a region emanates from the regions around it.



LAVEESH BHANDARI

Our objective, therefore, is to create a zero- to low-pollution (ZLP) economy. First, as much as possible, we need to create cooperative solutions, where all of society, government, and industry come together towards a common target. Second, it needs to be a regional solution, in that pollution over Haryana is impacted by actions in Punjab. Therefore, the solution has to be implemented across as many states as possible. Third, the government will need to explicitly announce a timeline — simply an election promise will not be enough. A complete changeover with a five-year horizon would make for a great target and will help align all — government, civil society, and industry — to a common goal.

Fourth, we will need additional funds for this. For that purpose, state governments will (a) need to tax fossil fuels extra (since they cause the most pollution)

and (b) levy other fees on polluting industries such as brick kilns.

And fifth, the central government can implement accelerated depreciation (of, say, 20 per cent) so that the capital costs of new ZLP assets are fully compensated for within five years.

Together automobile exhaust, industrial chimneys, construction dust, road particles (or dust), biomass burning and poor waste management are responsible for the bulk of the particulate pollution impacting North India. A combination of explicit orders supported by financial support and technology interventions spanning both the private and public sector can address almost all of these.

Consider the question of how to reduce automobile exhaust, where two-wheelers, commercial vehicles, and four-wheelers all are significant emitters. Fortunately, for two- and four-wheelers and even buses, electric vehicles (EVs) and hybrids are attractive alternatives. But what would make large automobile companies stop selling fossil-fuel vehicles across North India in five years? A combination of mandates and accelerated depreciation could provide both the necessary target date and the financial support for the changeover.

Then, there is the large number of fossil-fuel vehicles already on the roads. Here as well, a hard five-year timeline for current users to switch to ZLP vehicles would accelerate the transition to EVs. An exchange initiative or a tax break for owners of older fossil-fuel vehicles may also need to be introduced.

Second is the construction dust. Many construction sites have started placing a plastic or cloth cover over such sites. Spraying water over all construction sites is also a relatively low-cost solution. Moreover, since government projects account for a large share of construction projects, this would be easy to institute as a precondition for all contractors and public-private partnerships.

Third is the problem of road dust. This includes small particles of dust, carbon black and rubber from tyres, and particles from auto exhaust. While moving towards low- or zero-carbon vehicles would reduce the latter, tyre and dust particles will never go away. This means we need a mechanism for the daily washing or vacuuming of all major roads and thoroughfares.

This would lead to higher costs for local governments, which they can easily recover by rationalising property taxes, at least for all new properties. Open garbage dumps are another case where local governments will need to get their act together.

Fourth, many small, medium, and large industries burn biomass or fossil fuels. These include thermal power plants, brick kilns, and chemical plants. Many of them can be converted to electricity-based processes. For units that cannot be converted, there is no reason they cannot be shifted to other parts of the country where winds are stronger through the year.

Finally, a major polluter in the aggregate is the informal sector — biomass burning for heat and the tandoor, for example. These are by far the most difficult to change. However, like all parts of the economy, even informal businesses conform to the environment in which they operate.

We need to start believing that we can fix this.

The author heads CSEP Research Foundation. The views are personal

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Russian oil buys to recede in Dec.

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO
NEW DELHI, DEC. 30

India's imports of Russian crude oil are expected to fall in December, but the decline reflects short-term disruptions rather than a structural shift in sourcing patterns.

The likely drop has been driven by disruptions resulting from US sanction on top Russian exporters, Rosneft and Lukoil, as well as due to impact of EU sanctions on Russian-linked product flows.

According to real-time data analytics company Kpler, Russian crude imports into India are expected to fall to around 1.2 million barrels per day (bpd) in December, down from 1.84 million bpd in November, marking the lowest level since December 2022. Despite the fall in imports, Indian top refiners are still continuing to buy the Russian



crude from the non-sanctioned entities.

Though fall in imports Russia remained the country's top supplier in December but its share fell to less than a quarter of all oil imports from about a third in November.

"This appears to be a near-term adjustment, with Russian crude imports into India expected to recover gradually from January as new intermediaries step in and supply chains re-establish," said Sumit Ritolia, lead research analyst, refining and modelling of Kpler.

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Bihar commissions 1st phase of Kajra Solar Project



IN A MAJOR boost to Bihar's renewable energy plans, the first phase of the ₹2,800 crore Kajra Solar Power Plant in Bihar has been commissioned, an official statement said on Tuesday. The Bihar government is setting up the project in the Lakhisarai district to increase the share of clean energy in its overall energy consumption.

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India's Russian crude imports dip in Dec

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The drop, flagged by analysts as early as October, has been driven by disruptions resulting from US action on top Russian exporters, Rosneft and Lukoil, as well as due to the impact of EU sanctions on Russian-linked product flows.

India, the world's third-largest oil importer, became the largest buyer of discounted Russian crude after Western countries shunned Moscow following its February 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

PTI

Russian crude imports into India are expected to fall to around 1.2 mn bpd in Dec, down from 1.84 mn bpd in Nov

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Headline: CNG and PNG prices reduced.

सीएनजी-पीएनजी के दाम में कटौती

1 शहरी गैस वितरण कंपनी
थिंक गैस ने बिहार, पंजाब,
यूपी में सीएनजी की दाम में
2.50 रुपये प्रति किलो तक
कटौती की है। **P 13**

Publication : Hindustan (Hindi)	Editions : New Delhi
Date :31 December 2025	Page : 1, 13

Headline: CNG and PNG prices reduced.

सीएनजी-पीएनजी के दाम में कटौती

नई दिल्ली, एजेंसी। पेट्रोलियम एवं प्राकृतिक गैस नियामक बोर्ड एक जनवरी से प्राकृतिक गैस पाइपलाइनों के लिए सुवित्तसंगत और एकीकृत शुल्क ढांचा लागू करने जा रहा है। इस फैसले के बाद गैस वितरक कंपनियों के दाम घटने शुरू कर दिए हैं।

कंपनी थिंक गैस ने उत्तर प्रदेश, बिहार और पंजाब में सीएनजी की कीमतों में 2.50 रुपये प्रति किलोग्राम तक और घरेलू पीएनजी में लगभग तीन रुपये प्रति मानक घन मीटर की कटौती की घोषणा की है। अन्य कंपनियां भी जल्द दाम घटाएंगी।

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Date :31 December 2025	Page : 3

INDIA'S RUSSIAN CRUDE BUYS DIP IN DECEMBER

Press Trust of India

feedback@livemint.com

NEW DELHI: India's imports of Russian crude oil are set to register a sharp pullback in December, but the decline reflects short-term disruptions rather than a structural shift in sourcing patterns.

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Indian refiners continue to buy Russian crude from non-sanctioned entities.

The drop, flagged by analysts as early as October, has been driven by disruptions resulting from US action on top Russian exporters, Rosneft and Lukoil, as well as due to the impact of EU sanctions on Russian-linked product flows.

Publication : Hindustan Times_edge	Editions : New Delhi
Date :31 December 2025	Page : 8

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TRADE REMAINS 'STRUCTURALLY INTACT'

India's imports of Russian crude oil decline 'sharply' in December

MPOST BUREAU

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REPRESENTATIVE PIC

Russian-linked product flows.

"India's appetite for Russian crude cooled sharply in December, with imports falling to their lowest levels since 2022 as major refiners cut intake following sanctions on Rosneft and Lukoil. This appears to be a near-term adjustment, with Russian crude imports into India expected to recover gradually from January as new intermediaries step in and supply chains re-establish," said Sumit Ritolia, Lead Research Analyst, Refining & Modeling, Kpler.

India, the world's third-largest oil importer, became the largest buyer of discounted Russian crude after Western countries shunned Moscow following its February 2022 invasion of Ukraine. Traditionally reliant on the Middle Eastern oil, India sharply ramped up Russian imports as sanctions and reduced European

demand made barrels available at steep discounts, pushing its share from under 1 per cent to nearly 40 per cent of total crude imports.

In December, Russia remained the country's top supplier but its share fell to less than a quarter of all oil imports from about a third in November.

Following US sanctions on Rosneft, Lukoil and their majority-owned subsidiaries

HIGHLIGHTS

- » Russian crude imports into India are expected to fall to around 1.2 mn bpd, marking the lowest level since Dec 2022
- » However, Indian refiners continue to buy Russian crude from non-sanctioned entities

taking effect on November 21, refiners including Reliance Industries, Hindustan Petroleum, HPCL-Mittal Energy and Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals temporarily halted Russian imports. The only exception is Rosneft-backed Nayara Energy, which continues to rely heavily on Russian crude after EU sanctions curtailed alternative supplies.

"Russian crude oil imports to India are retreating sharply in December, with volumes forecast to fall to around 1.2 million bpd (25 per cent of India's total import) - down from 1.84 million bpd in November," Ritolia said.

"The decline is largely driven by reduced intake from major buyers, particularly Reliance Industries (RIL) and the New Mangalore refinery, both of which have significantly scaled back Russian crude purchases during the month."

MINT CURATOR

Emissions still rising does not mean climate action has failed

The Paris pact catalysed clean-tech advances that are paying off



LARA WILLIAMS
is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist covering climate change.

When 196 nations adopted the 2015 Paris climate accord, the UK prime minister at the time, David Cameron, wrote on Twitter: "Our grandchildren will see we did our duty." Ten years on, what would those grandkids think? The pact has started to look like a failure. But that only holds true if you're fixated on the end goal rather than the journey. The legally binding treaty aims to limit climate change to "well below 2° Celsius above pre-industrial levels" and pursue efforts to keep the increase close to 1.5° Celsius. It specifies that countries should reach a "global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions" as soon as possible. But carbon emissions and anti-climate sentiments are both on the rise.

In 2025, the US, responsible for about 24% of all emissions ever pumped into the atmosphere, withdrew from the treaty for the second time under President Donald Trump. The EU, which has weakened key regulations as well, including its 2035 combustion engine ban and pollution reporting requirements. Elsewhere, greenwashing, which plays down environmental efforts to avoid political scrutiny, is on the rise among companies. Many experts seem almost certain that the 1.5° target is lost. Copernicus, the EU's Earth observation service, said the last three years are set to be the first period when average temperature rise would exceed that goal. And we're nowhere near net-zero emissions.

But then, were our expectations too high? The treaty gave us a multi-pronged dilemma. Part of the problem is that the Paris pact has no penalties for inadequate plans or action, so the incentive to free-ride is high. While only those parties cutting emissions bear the costs, everyone benefits from their efforts. Meanwhile, petro-states want to keep squeezing profits out of their businesses. Oil and gas companies have been making about \$2.5 billion a day in profit for the last 50 years, according to a 2022 analysis of World Bank data. Why would they give up that revenue?

Yet, the Paris Agreement has put us in a far better position than we would have been without it. In October 2015, Climate Action Tracker calculated that policies and actions at the time put the world on track for 3.6° Celsius of warming by 2100 but projected warming is now 2.6°. This signals progress. The idea of a net-zero goal has also sparked a flurry of innovation. If researchers didn't believe that anyone would want green technologies, then why would they invest in them? The accord sent a signal [of net-zero-aimed demand].



Green-technology adoption means that emissions could peak by 2030. **AFP**

Ever since, research and money have been flowing into green transition sectors at an ever-increasing pace. The EU's Innovation Fund, created to help the bloc meet its treaty commitments, has supported the development of batteries, carbon-negative cement and advanced recycling.

But fossil-fuel emissions will dictate the fate of the planet. Demand remains at an all-time high and though the International Energy Agency forecasts that fossil-fuel use will peak before 2030, it acknowledges that if governments abandon their stated intentions, oil and gas demand will continue to rise. Still, there is optimism that emissions would likely peak by 2030. With renewables increasingly available cheaply, it could happen. Also, consider trends in various parts of the world. Pakistan is seeing a massive solar boom. Driven by frustration with soaring electricity prices and power failures, rooftop generation is expected to exceed demand on the grid during daytime hours in some large industrial regions for the first time next year.

Many African countries are set to replicate that expansion with solar panel imports from China. Records were set in 20 countries, Kenya, Algeria and Nigeria included. Though Africa is responsible for only about 4% of global emissions, it has a rapidly growing population and is industrializing. Switching to cleantech now avoids huge future growth in carbon emissions. Ethiopia and Nepal are embracing electric vehicles (EVs) like never before. More than 70% of four-wheeled passenger vehicles imported to Nepal last year were electric, and the adoption is helping to reduce Kathmandu's air pollution crisis. Although the Paris Agreement no doubt kickstarted the EV industry's rapid development, in Ethiopia, the driving force behind widespread adoption is the desire to save money. The nation spends roughly \$4.5 billion importing fuel every year, while drivers have had to put up with chronic fuel shortages and rising prices. EVs eliminate that problem.

It's shifts like these, where cleantech makes economic sense, that will power the climate transition. Whether or not the Paris Agreement still exists in its current form by then, it has done a remarkable job of sparking a green revolution, which is only just beginning to take off. That's not a failure to me.

©BLOOMBERG

Publication : Mint	Editions : New Delhi
Date :31 December 2025	Page : 3

VinFast-backed V-GREEN partners with HPCL for EV charging network

Mumbai: VinFast-backed charging infrastructure firm V-GREEN on Tuesday said it has joined hands with Hindustan Petroleum Corp. Ltd (HPCL) to set up electric vehicle charging facilities at HPCL fuel stations across different markets. The state-owned HPCL's existing 24,400 retail outlet network, along with 5,300 EV charging stations under HP e-Charge brand, provides a strong platform for the accelerated EV charging infrastructure deployment and seamless nationwide expansion, the company said.

PTI

Publication : Mint	Editions : New Delhi
Date :31 December 2025	Page : 2

India's Russian crude imports dip in Dec

REUTERS



New Delhi: India's imports of Russian crude oil are set to register a sharp pullback in December, but the decline reflects short-term disruptions rather than a structural shift in sourcing patterns. As per real-time data analytics firm Kpler, Russian crude imports into India are expected to fall to around 1.2 million barrels per day (bpd) in December, down from 1.84 million bpd in November. **PTI**

Publication : The Economic Times	Editions : New Delhi
Date :31 December 2025	Page : 9

BRENT FUTURES AT \$62

Oil Steadies as Ukraine Peace Hopes Fade

Reuters

Houston: Oil prices were steady on Tuesday as investors weighed dented hopes of a Russia-Ukraine peace deal and rising geopolitical tensions in the Middle East around Yemen.

Brent crude futures for February delivery, which expire on Tuesday, were up 2 cents, or 0.03%, at \$61.96 a barrel at 11:29 a.m. EDT (1629 GMT). The more active March contract was down 1 cent, or 0.02% at \$61.48.

US West Texas Intermediate crude gained 3 cents, or 0.05%, to \$58.11. The Brent and WTI benchmarks settled more than 2% higher in the previous session as Saudi Arabia launched airstrikes against Yemen and after Moscow accused Kyiv of targeting a Russian presidential residence, denting hopes of a peace deal.

"The peace agreement between Russia and Ukraine could be delayed further, which is supportive to prices," said Dennis Kissler, senior vice president of trading at BOK Financial, adding that the actual effect on crude exports remains minimal. The ongoing US blockade of Venezuelan oil and suspension of Caspian CPC Blend exports because of poor weather supported prices on Tuesday, said UBS analyst Giovanni Staudeno.

Adding to supply concerns were strikes by a Saudi Arabia-led coalition on what it described as foreign military support to UAE-backed southern separatists in Yemen. Traders also watched other Middle East developments after US President Donald Trump said that the United States could support another major strike on Iran were Tehran to resume rebuilding its ballistic missile or nuclear weapons programmes.

India's Russian oil imports dip in Dec

'Trade remains structurally intact'

PTI
NEW DELHI

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According to real-time data analytics company Kpler, Russian crude imports into India are expected to fall to around 1.2 million barrels per day (bpd) in December, down from 1.84 million bpd in November, marking the lowest level since December 2022.

Indian refiners continue to buy Russian crude from non-sanctioned entities.

The drop, flagged by analysts as early as October, has been driven by disruptions resulting from US action on

Indian refiners continue to buy Russian crude from non-sanctioned entities

top Russian exporters, Rosneft and Lukoil.

"India's appetite for Russian crude cooled sharply in December, with imports falling to their lowest levels since 2022 as major refiners cut intake following sanctions on Rosneft and Lukoil. This appears to be a near-term adjustment, with Russian crude imports into India expected to recover gradually from January as new intermediaries step in and supply chains re-establish," said Sumit Ritolia, Lead Research Analyst, Refining & Modeling, Kpler.

India's Russia oil buy to dip 40% in Dec, hit a 3-year low

LOOKING OPTIMISTIC. Analysts expect the cargoes to recover gradually next year

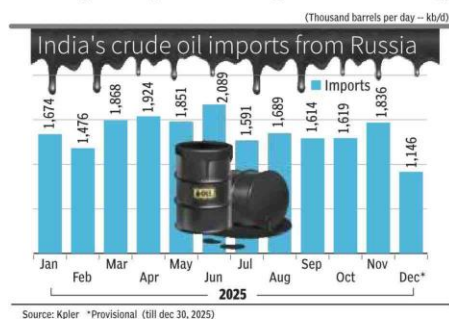
Rishi Ranjan Kala
New Delhi

India's crude oil imports from Russia are set to decline 35-40 per cent month-on-month in December after shipments rose to a monthly record in November, with refiners topping up supplies before the US sanctions deadline. However, purchases slipped to their lowest levels in the last three years.

Global real time data and analytics provider Kpler expects Russian crude oil exports to India to retreat sharply in December, with volumes likely declining to around 1.2 million barrels per day (mb/d), or 25 per cent of India's total imports (as of December 30), against 1.84 mb/d in November.

US SANCTIONS

Considering that tankers from Russia (Baltic/Black Sea ports) take 30-40 days to reach India, domestic refiners had booked more cargoes in anticipation of the sanctions deadline. Washington's sanctions on Rus-



sian oil giants Rosneft and Lukoil — the first serious attempt to check energy trade between New Delhi and Moscow — kicked-in on November 21.

Kpler termed December crude oil imports at their lowest level since December 2022, pointing to a temporary shift in procurement among key Indian refiners.

"The decline is largely driven by reduced intake from major buyers, particularly Reliance Industries (RIL) and the New Mangalore refinery, both of which have significantly scaled back Russian crude

purchases during the month," it added.

Sumit Ritolia, Kpler's Lead Research Analyst for Refining and Modelling, told *businessline*, "This appears to be a near-term adjustment, with Russian crude imports into India expected to recover gradually from January as new intermediaries step in and supply chains re-establish."

However, December's decline only reveals part of the story as Russian crude flows into India are increasingly being rerouted through a growing web of intermediaries, traders and logistical

workarounds, he explained.

While direct purchases have softened, the underlying demand signal remains intact, and Russian barrels are expected to retain a structural presence in India's crude slate, given pricing economics, refinery compatibility and limited near-term alternatives, he added.

"As alternative sellers such as Tatneft, Rusexport, Morexport and Alghaf Marine expand their trading footprint and take over the commercial role previously played by Rosneft and Lukoil, Russia's exports should largely re-normalise, with volumes gradually re-appearing through these new channels," Ritolia explained.

CARGOES IN TRANSIT

Russian crude loadings bound for India have also declined to around 1.27 mb/d from roughly 1.44 mb/d in November. However, these remain subject to change as several vessels are currently heading toward Asia without a declared final destination — often a signal of potential Suez Canal transit.

PNGRB's tariff reform spurs CNG, piped gas price cuts

Press Trust of India
New Delhi

India's natural gas market has started showing tangible consumer benefits from the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board's (PNGRB) recent overhaul of pipeline tariffs, with city gas operators starting to cut CNG and piped cooking gas (PNG) prices.

While Think Gas has already announced a reduction in CNG and domestic PNG prices across multiple States ahead of the new tariff

regime taking effect on January 1, other city gas operators are likely to announce rate cuts in the coming days.

PNGRB announced a rationalised tariff structure for pipelines that move natural gas. This makes natural gas transportation simpler, fairer and more cost-effective for consumers and the city gas distribution sector.

Under the revised regime, the number of distance-based tariff zones has been reduced from three to two – up to 300 km and beyond – with a single lower zone-1 rate (around ₹54 per million British thermal unit) applied nationwide for CNG and domestic PNG customers regardless of the distance from the gas source.

Publication : The Hindu Business Line	Editions : New Delhi
Date :31 December 2025	Page : 11

Grew Solar bags ₹2,028 cr order from NTPC RE

Ahmedabad: Solar PV manufacturer, Grew Solar, on Tuesday said it has secured a ₹2,028 crore contract from NTPC Renewable Energy Ltd for the supply of high-efficiency solar PV modules aggregating 1,464.5 MW in Uttar Pradesh. The Gujarat-based company told *businessline* that the solar modules will be supplied from the manufacturing facility at Rajasthan within a period of one year. OUR BUREAU

Publication : The Hindu Business Line

Editions : New Delhi

Date : 31 December 2025

Page : 10

**Crude oil flat as investors
eye Russia-Ukraine talks**

Crude oil prices were little changed after Russia accused Ukraine of attacking President Vladimir Putin's residence and investors sought clarity on Ukraine peace talks to gauge potential supply risks. Brent crude futures for February delivery were down 2 cents at \$61.92 a barrel as of 0314 GMT. US WTI eased 5 cents at \$58.03. REUTERS

ADVERTORIAL

BALRAMPUR

Transforming the District through Green Energy, Industry and Inclusive Growth

Balrampur, one of the state's strategically important border districts, is witnessing a new chapter of development. Under the dynamic leadership of the Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the district, long recognised for its agrarian strength, is now emerging as a centre of industrial investment, green energy initiatives, and employment generation. Focused policy direction, accelerated infrastructure development, and growing private sector participation have reshaped Balrampur's growth narrative, aligning with the Aspirational Districts Programme, which emphasises results-driven governance.




BALRAMPUR AT A GLANCE



Tourism & Heritage

- Devi Patan Temple (Shakti Peeth)
- Shrawasti-Jetavana Buddhist heritage
- Rapti River banks and regional pilgrimage sites
- Suhelwa Wildlife Sanctuary (eco-tourism)

Tharu Janjati Cultural Museum

- The first tribal museum of Uttar Pradesh located in Imli Kodder / Pachperwa village of Balrampur district, showcasing the culture, traditions, lifestyle and heritage of the indigenous Tharu community.

Heritage Preservation & Exhibits

- It displays traditional costumes, jewelry, agricultural tools, household items and cultural artifacts that reflect the art, beliefs and daily life of the Tharu people.

Tourism & Local Significance

- Built as a cultural landmark to promote tribal heritage and tourism, the museum sits on several acres and has become a visitor attraction in the region.

Economic Strengths

- Balrampur Chini Millstone of India's largest sugar producers
- Strong MSMEs, handicrafts, pottery and weaving under ODP

Strategic Advantage

- International border with Nepal
- Key role in cross-border trade, security, and cultural exchange

Women & Livelihoods

- 1.46 lakh families linked to SHGs under National Rural Livelihoods Mission and Uttar Pradesh State Rural Livelihood Mission
- 1.42 lakh women trained in disaster preparedness

Financial Inclusion

- Business Correspondent (BC) Sahni, deployed in 153 villages
- Expanded access to banking, credit, and digital services

Aspirational District Balrampur Performance with Purpose

Balrampur has consistently improved its standing across key ADP indicators—education, health, infrastructure & financial inclusion.

The district's 4th national rank in education (August 2020) marked a turning point, after which focused planning, inter-departmental convergence, and time-bound execution sustained development momentum.

Aspirational District Transformation

Joined the Aspirational Districts Programme in 2018

Transitioned from lagging benchmarks to measurable socio-economic progress

Emerging as a model of:

- Inclusive development
- Strong community participation
- Sustainable and green growth
- Policy alignment and strategic investment

Laying the foundation for a resilient and future-ready district

Infrastructure & Connectivity Enabling Growth



Over ₹825 crore invested across 124 projects in Balrampur. Major upgrades in:

- Roads and bridges
- Hospitals and hostels
- Improved connectivity has:
- Eased mobility
- Enabled private investment
- Strengthened market access
- Supported regional integration

Education & Skill Development Investing in Human Capital



These initiatives have significantly improved digital access, learning outcomes, and student engagement across the district.

- Establishment of a state-of-the-art Academic Resource Centre at a cost of ₹0.78 crore
- Smart classrooms and computer labs in 19 senior secondary schools
- Solar power systems installed in 26 basic schools
- 64 model pre-primary schools equipped with child-friendly furniture
- Tablet labs in 70 government schools under the Window-2 pilot project, operational since July 3, 2023

Higher Education and Skill Development

- The Maa Pateswari University, established in 2024, is rapidly emerging as a key higher education institution for Balrampur and the Devpatan division.
- Expansion of polytechnic and ITI institutes and hostels has strengthened youth skill development and workforce readiness.
- The 'Padhe Balrampur, Badhe Balrampur' campaign and Buniyaad Project have reinforced foundational education across 436 anganwadis and 60 primary schools, improving early learning outcomes.

Health and Nutrition Expanding Access and Quality



KGMU Satellite Centre, Balrampur

- Advanced Tertiary Healthcare Access: KGMU Satellite Centre brings super-specialty medical services closer to people of Devpatan region, reducing dependence on Lucknow.
- Strengthening regional health infrastructure: Enhances quality healthcare delivery in an aspirational district through modern facilities and specialist doctors.
- Socio-Economic Impact: Improves health outcomes, generates local employment, and boosts overall development of Balrampur district.

Under the Aspirational Districts framework, Balrampur has strengthened its healthcare infrastructure and service delivery:

- Sonography machines at two Community Health Centres
- Solar power systems and geysers at 10 Primary Health Centres
- New OPD buildings at CHCs
- Expansion of dialysis and specialised services

These interventions have enhanced maternal and child healthcare, immunisation coverage & service accessibility, especially in rural areas.

Industrial Investment & Green Energy: Driving the New Economy

Ethanol Plant - Catalyst for Industrial Growth



- Rs. 450 crore ethanol plant by Balrampur Chini Mills Limited strengthens the district's industrial base
- Operational since 2024, providing direct employment to 100+ people
- Improves sugarcane price realisation, benefiting thousands of farmers
- Supports ethanol blending and bio-energy initiatives
- Advances national goals of energy security, lower emissions & self-reliance

Modern Rice Mill - From Farm to Market, Strengthening Local Industry & Rural Livelihoods

- Rs. 30 crore modern Rice mill established by Shri Baba Shyam Ji Udyog
- Direct employment for 50+ people
- Strengthens agro-processing value chains, linking local produce to organised markets
- Boosts rural industrialisation and local enterprise growth
- Creates opportunities for youth and helps reduce migration from the district

Compressed Bio-Gas Plant

- Green Fuel, Large-Scale Employment
- Rs. 100 crore CBG plant established in Sirsiya village, Sadar tehsil
- 11-acre facility producing ~10 tonnes of biogas per day
- Major rural employment generator, creating thousands of direct & indirect jobs

- Supports livelihoods through biomass supply, transport, operations and allied services
- Environment-friendly model with scientific waste management and emission control
- Organic manure output reduces chemical fertilizer use and improves soil health



Online

Headline	Restoration Work Begins at Historic British-Era Cemetery Inside ONGC Nazira Campus		
Publication	Assam Times	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	30 Dec 2025		

Restoration Work Begins at Historic British-Era Cemetery Inside ONGC Nazira Campus

<https://www.assamtimes.org/node/23642>

After years of discussion and a long wait, restoration and beautification work has finally begun at the historic British-era cemetery located within the ONGC campus at Nazira. Though regarded as an important heritage site of the region, the colonial-era cemetery had remained neglected for decades.

Towards the end of 2024, a concrete initiative was taken to renovate and preserve the cemetery with financial support from the Nazira MLA's Local Area Development Fund. As part of the process, officials from the Nazira Co-District administration and the State Archaeology Department conducted site inspections and carried out a detailed assessment.

During the inspection, officials observed that the roots of several large trees growing inside the cemetery had caused damage to multiple graves. It was also noted that some graves lying outside the existing boundary wall need to be brought within the cemetery premises to ensure their proper protection.

Local residents and heritage-conscious citizens have cautioned that during the ongoing tree-cutting and cleaning operations, utmost care must be taken to prevent damage or loss of historical remains. They warned that any negligence at this stage could lead to irreversible damage to valuable heritage assets.

The initiative gained momentum after Nazira MLA Debabrata Saikia wrote to the Sivasagar regional office of the Directorate of Archaeology on 26 November 2024, seeking details about the condition of the cemetery. Subsequently, on 4 December 2024, a team from the Directorate visited the site and submitted a detailed report to the MLA, stating that the cemetery contains around 60 graves. The senior conservation officer highlighted the urgent need for regular maintenance, noting that many tombstones have already suffered weather-related damage, making inscriptions difficult to read.

The Archaeology Department's Sivasagar office also recommended several conservation measures. Following the MLA's proposal, a six-member committee was constituted under the chairmanship of the Co-District Commissioner of Nazira to oversee the development work. An amount of 5 lakh from the MLA's Local Area Development Fund has been allocated for the project.

The cemetery holds immense historical significance and is closely linked to world tea history. In 1839, following the formation of the Assam Tea Company Limited, the world's first tea company, commercial tea cultivation expanded in areas including Chabua, Nazira and Dumdum in present-day Dibrugarh, Sivasagar and Tinsukia districts. Nazira became the headquarters of the company under the supervision of J.W. Masters, whose grave is located in this cemetery.

Notably, Queen Victoria granted a Royal Charter to the Assam Tea Company in 1845. Its first board of directors included Dwarkanath Tagore, the grandfather of Kobi Gururabindranath Tagore. The company remained active until 1966, after which its Nazira land came under ONGC, though several tea gardens in Assam still continue to operate under the company's name.

Established during the Assam Tea Company era, the cemetery contains over 60 graves, including that of renowned educationist William Robinson, the pioneer of the first Assamese grammar. Robinson played a key role in the Normal School movement in Assam and was instrumental in establishing the Normal School in Guwahati, later shifted to Jorhat in 1906 as a teacher training institute. The cemetery also houses the graves of prominent tea planters, victims of historic incidents at Makipur tea estate, members of British royal families, and individuals associated with colonial administration and the tea industry.

Interestingly, ONGC does not have precise records of the total number of graves at the site. Available information suggests that even during the 9 May 1967 agreement between Assam Tea Company Limited and ONGC, and during subsequent property transfers, the exact number of graves was not documented. Several other heritage structures transferred to ONGC, including nine historic bungalows and old office and factory buildings, also remain neglected. There is a growing demand to conserve the century-old building that currently houses ONGC Assam Asset's headquarters and to convert it into a Tea and Oil Museum.

Earlier, the British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia (BACSA) had expressed willingness to assist in the preservation of the cemetery, though no further developments have been reported so far.

Local residents have welcomed the conservation initiative, driven by public demand and the efforts of MLA Debabrata Saikia, to save this historically significant site from being lost to time. There is strong optimism that once preserved, the cemetery will play an important role in promoting heritage tourism in Nazira and safeguarding the region's rich colonial and tea-history legacy.

Headline	Why India doesn't move against CO2's malign cousin as methane tracking lags		
Publication	Business Standard	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	30 Dec 2025		

Why India doesn't move against CO2's malign cousin as methane tracking lags

https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/why-india-doesn-t-move-against-co2-s-malign-cousin-as-methane-tracking-lags-125123001163_1.html

It would be tempting to dismiss the low priority accorded to action against a toxic air pollutant like methane to the fact that it is odourless and colourless. Unlike its close cousin carbon dioxide (CO2), its out of sight, which makes it easier to shove out of mind. But its not that: the truth is a political inconvenience.

This inconspicuous gas contributes to the catastrophic pollutants populating the countrys northern plains, according to climate experts and UN data.

Methane, a byproduct of farming, cow burps (and farts), energy and waste, is a dangerous air pollutant and the biggest contributor to human-induced warming after carbon dioxide. But what really sets it apart is its potent short-term warming effect. This in turn is a precursor to the accumulation of ground-level ozone, which harms human health, agriculture and ecosystems.

Climate shocks

India is the worlds third-biggest emitter of methane. A rise in temperatures should ring alarm bells in New Delhi 60 per cent of Indias population lives in places that already experience prolonged heat stress each year. It will require India to commit \$210 billion (in 2020 value) annually over 2020 to 2050 towards protecting the population and economy from climate shocks, Mekala Krishnan and Olivia White, partners at global consultant McKinsey, said in a note earlier this month.

Studies have shown that methane emissions are more potent at trapping heat than carbon emissions even though they have a shorter duration, said Purva Jain, energy specialist at the US-based Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis. Therefore lowering methane emissions is critical for India.

Methane is also an indirect contributor to particulate pollution. But three decades after the UN launched its annual climate summits to keep track of all greenhouse gas emissions, India lacks the mechanisms to track methane, let alone mitigate it. (Methane concentrations are tracked separately from particulate matter, which is measured using the Air Quality Index.)

The 50 most polluted districts in India are concentrated in Delhi, Assam, Haryana and Bihar, said Finnish climate researcher CREA in a November 25 study.

But, according to Banguru-based climate NGO Janaagraha, 85.5 per cent of assessed cities are not on track to meet their PM10 reduction targets for 2024 to 2025. It published its conclusion after a year-long study on air quality.

Methane is a gas, unlike CREA and Janaagrahas focus dust particles, organic compounds and liquid droplets, derived from vehicle exhausts, construction or combustion.

The worlds first Global Methane Status Report (GMSR), released last month by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), says global methane emissions, caused by human activity, could come down by 8 per cent by 2030 below 2020 levels if countries implement their national climate plans (NDCs) and methane action plans (MAPS). This would be the largest and most sustained decline of methane in history. More ambitious plans could lead to a 32 per cent reduction in methane emission and a 0.2 degree centigrade reduction in temperature by 2050.

But India remains the only major polluter yet to submit a new NDC to 2035; nor has it produced a MAP, according to UN records. Even Indias current NDC to 2030 is shorn of details on how it plans to tackle methane.

India is the worlds third-largest emitter of methane in absolute terms but does not identify action to reduce emissions from its largest source, agriculture, within its NDC, UNEP said.

Agriculture is too sensitive a subject to touch, a senior biofuel industry official said. But substituting Jersey cows with desi gai (indigenous breeds) can limit emissions because of changes in their digestive system, said Gaurav Kedia, chairman, Indian Biogas Association. Local breeds are said to emit less methane.

Wastewater from agriculture and households and industries is another problem. People don't talk about it but wastewater has got very high organic content, which creates a lot of methane, he added. But programmes to capture methane from waste are on the slow lane because of the high costs of biogas, biofuel industry officials said.

On the other hand, state-run explorer ONGC is helping India tackle methane leaks in the energy sector. ONGC was an early player in identifying methane leaks, said Deepak Tandon, executive director of ONGC's carbon management division. The company has invested heavily in procuring special cameras and interpreting satellite data to plug emission leaks.

Indias emissions

Because methane is both a powerful greenhouse gas and short-lived compared to carbon dioxide, achieving significant reductions would have a rapid and significant effect on atmospheric warming potential, Kedia said.

A Global Methane Pledge (GMP) was launched in 2021 at United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) by the European Union and the US as the first global policy initiative to reduce human-made methane emissions by 2030. As of April 2025, 159 countries had joined the GMP, covering 57 per cent of global emissions, UN data shows. But India has stayed away.

India accounted for 9 per cent of global methane emissions in 2020 at 31 million tonnes, after China and the US, according to UN documents. And these emissions are on the rise, pushed by rice cultivation. Rice cultivation accounted for a fifth of global agricultural emissions in 2020. A slight decline is expected in China, but India will witness an increase of 8 per cent between 2020 and 2030, according to GMSR.

While agriculture makes up nearly 40 per cent of India's methane emissions, waste is shaping up as the fastest growing emitter, in addition to emissions from coal mines and oil and gas production.

India is planning a significant expansion in domestic coal mining, which may lead to more than a doubling of methane leaks in the decade to 2029, climate consultant Ember said. Capturing and utilising emissions from coal mines could save nearly \$1 billion worth of gas imports in the five years to 2030, Ember said.

But there is no mechanism in place at present to monitor and regulate methane emissions, Kishan Reddy, Union minister of state for coal, told Parliament last July.

The GMSR report expects a sharp increase in methane emissions from waste by 13 per cent by 2030 and 56 per cent by 2050, relative to 2020, driven by population and economic growth.

Large amounts of waste are currently scattered or openly burned, about 40 per cent or more in Africa, India and South-East Asia, UNEP said. But effective policies targeting rice cultivation and the burning of rice paddy straw and other crop residues are absent in selected regions, particularly in China and India.

While open-field burning has declined globally, it is increasing in densely populated agricultural areas in China and India, according to GMSR.

Kedia said the government has encouraged modern methods of paddy cultivation and growing less water guzzling millet varieties to mitigate methane emissions.

Expensive gas

Methane abatement does not come cheap. Climate Policy Initiative (CPI) analysis shows an 18 per cent increase to an annual average of \$13.7 billion in 2021 and 2022. This, however, remains far below the estimated \$127 billion net annual cost by 2030 to implement abatement measures consistent with the GMP target, the UNEP report said.

Development finance institutions (DFIs) currently provide about \$3 billion annually for methane mitigation small compared with the \$2.5 trillion they expend in investments every year.

Methane is thrice as destructive as carbon dioxide and contributes more to immediate warming of the earth than CO₂. It accounts for 11 per cent of global emissions but is more than 28 times as potent as carbon dioxide at trapping heat in the atmosphere, UN records show.

Over the last two centuries, methane concentrations in the atmosphere have more than doubled, largely due to human-related activities; it is also a key contributor to ground-level ozone pollution, a major component of smog.

Globally, 42 per cent of methane emissions come from agriculture, 38 per cent from the energy sector and 20 per cent from waste. The major methane emission sources for large emitters vary greatly. For example, a key source of methane emissions in China is coal production, whereas Russia emits most of its methane from natural gas and oil systems. India owes its emissions to agriculture.

While agriculture remains a sensitive subject, India would do better working on curbing fugitive emissions from the energy and waste sector to curtail emissions in the short term.

Headline	Government Fires \$30 Billion Claim In KG-D6 Arbitration, Reliance & BP Push Back Against Underproduction Allegations		
Publication	Daily Hunt (Mobile)	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	30 Dec 2025		

Government Fires \$30 Billion Claim In KG-D6 Arbitration, Reliance & BP Push Back Against Underproduction Allegations

<https://m.dailyhunt.in/news/india/english/thefreepressjournal-epaper-fpressjr/government+fires+30+billion+claim+in+kg+d6+arbitration+reliance+bp+push+back+against+underproduction+allegations-newsid-n695031028>

New Delhi : The government is seeking over USD 30 billion from Reliance Industries Ltd and BP as compensation, alleging the partners built

larger-than-required facilities at the KG-D6 fields and subsequently failed to meet natural gas output targets, sources said.

The government made the claim during its submissions before a three-member arbitration tribunal that on November 7 concluded hearings on the 14-year-old dispute. The tribunal is expected to give its award sometime next year and the party that loses will most likely challenge it before the Supreme Court, three sources aware of the matter said.

Sources said the government in the arbitration proceedings sought monetary value of the natural gas that wasn't produced as well as a compensation for excess amount spent on installations, fuel marketing, and interest. It put the value for all of this at over USD 30 billion. In a statement, Reliance said, "There is no claim of USD 30 billion against Reliance and BP" and it was "factually incorrect" to state that the government has sought USD 30 billion from it and its partner for underproduction from the KG-D6 gas field.

The claim was made by the government before an arbitration panel which is hearing the dispute. A claim for a compensation before an arbitration panel or a court does not mean that a formal claim has been raised against any party. That statement only translates into an actionable claim once the panel gives its award in favour of the party seeking such compensation.

"The matters referred to in the report are entirely sub judice and would be determined in accordance with the laws of the country by its judicial system, in which Reliance has full faith. Reliance Industries Limited, together with its partner BP has at all times complied with its contractual and legal obligations and take strong exception to mischaracterization of facts in the report," the company statement said.

It acknowledged a demand for USD 247 million in additional profit petroleum that the government made from Reliance and its partner following disallowance of USD 3.02 billion cost, saying the same have been "appropriately and consistently disclosed in the company's annual audited financial statements, in accordance with its disclosure requirements." The dispute stems from alleged failure of Reliance to comply with approved investment plan that led to under-utilisation of capacity at the Dhirubhai-1 and 3 fields - the first and the largest of discoveries in the Krishna Godavari basin KG-DWN-98/3 (KG-D6) block to be put on production.

Natural gas output from Dhirubhai-1 and 3 (D1&D3) gas fields started to lag company projections from the very second year of production in 2010, and the field ceased to produce in February 2020, much ahead of its projected life.

Reliance, in an initial field development plan, had proposed a USD 2.47 billion investment to produce a peak of 40 million standard cubic meters per day of gas. In 2006, it revised this to USD 8.18 billion, projecting a doubling of that output by drilling 31 wells by March 2011. But it drilled only 22 wells, of which only 18 were put to production. The well started shuttering earlier than expected due to unanticipated sand and water ingress, leading to the company mid-way revising the reserves in the field to only 3.10 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) instead of 10.03 Tcf estimated in the 2006 plan.

The government blamed the phenomenon on the company not sticking to the approved development plan, and in the initial years, disallowed USD 3.02 billion of costs that Reliance and its partners had incurred on developing the fields. The company disputed this, saying there is no provision in the KG-D6 contract which entitles the government to disallow cost recovery on that basis. On November 23, 2011, Reliance served an arbitration notice, seeking to resolve the dispute.

The arbitration proceedings, however, couldn't begin as the government refused to accept the judges appointed to the three-member tribunal. Reliance had in 2014 named former UK judge Sir Bernard Rix as its arbitrator on the tribunal in place of its original choice, S P Bharucha, a former chief justice of India. Justice Bharucha had recused himself from the tribunal where the government had named former chief justice of India V N Khare as its arbitrator.

Michael Kirby, a former judge of the Australian High Court, was in September 2014 appointed by the Supreme Court as the neutral arbitrator and chairman of the panel. The government moved the Delhi High Court seeking removal of Rix and Kirby, alleging their ex facie bias against the Union government. The court in December 2022 dismissed the Central government's plea as "not maintainable". The government then moved the Supreme Court, which on January 11, 2023, dismissed the petition. Thereafter, the tribunal began hearing on the dispute.

Sources said in the arbitration proceedings, the government made claims related to the cost of unproduced gas as well as excess amount spent on installations, extra amount recovered on account of marketing margin, and interest. It put the value for all of this at over USD 30 billion. Reliance and BP, which had bought a 30 per cent stake in KG-D6 and 21 other blocks in 2010 for USD 7.2 billion, contended that the production sharing contracts (PSCs) under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) explicitly allow an operator to first recover all its development costs fully, before sharing profits from the production with the government.

They argued that finding oil and gas is a high-risk business, solely borne by the operator. In case of D1&D3, the reserves were downsized due to geological factors and the output lagged targets because of unforeseen geological surprises. The reserve downgrade is not a new phenomenon and companies worldwide have done the same. The same thing has happened in the KG block which was originally with Gujarat government firm GSPC but was later sold to state-owned ONGC.

They claimed to have followed all rules and all investments incurred on the block were approved by a management committee (MC) that had representatives of the Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH) and the Oil Ministry. Sources said they termed the ministry's action of "retroactively" disallowing some of the costs already incurred as being against the signed PSC. Gas output from D1&D3 fields in KG-D6 block was supposed to be 80 million standard cubic meters per day but actual production was only 35.33 mmscmd in 2011-12, 20.88 mmscmd in 2012-13 and 9.77 mmscmd in 2013-14. The output continued to drop in the subsequent years and the fields ceased to produce in February 2020.

The Government, by its letters dated May 2, 2012, November 14, 2013, July 10, 2014 and June 3, 2016, disallowed USD 3.02 billion costs which the PSC entitled Reliance and its partners to recover. This disallowance was for missing the target during six years beginning April 1, 2010. In these four notices, the government sought USD 247 million of additional profit petroleum after cost recovery was disallowed. Reliance and its partner have maintained that a contractor is entitled to recover all of its costs under the terms of the PSC and there are no provisions that entitle the government to disallow the recovery of any cost.

The PSC allows them to deduct all capital and operating expenses from the sale of gas before sharing profit with the government. Reliance held 60 per cent interest in block KG-DWN-98/3 or KG-D6 in the Bay of Bengal. BP had 30 per cent and Niko the remaining 10 per cent. Facing cash problems, Niko exited the blocks, leaving Reliance with 66.66 per cent stake and the balance with BP.

Headline	Reliance BP vs Govt of India: What is the \$30 Billion Dispute all about?		
Publication	Inc Business	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	30 Dec 2025		

Reliance BP vs Govt of India: What is the \$30 Billion Dispute all about?

<https://incbusiness.in/stocks/reliance-bp-vs-govt-of-india-what-is-the-30-billion-dispute-all-about/>

India and Reliance-BP are locked in a long-running arbitration over alleged KG-D6 gas underproduction, with the government citing a \$30

billion claim, while Reliance disputes the figure and pegs exposure at \$247 million.

The Indian Government is seeking more than \$30 billion in compensation from Reliance Industries and BP the largest compensation claim ever raised against a company in India. So, what's really going on, and why has the government taken such a strong stand against a corporate entity? In this article, we break down the issue in simple terms and answer all the key questions you need to know.

What is the dispute?

At the centre of the issue is the government's claim that Reliance Industries and BP failed to produce the agreed volumes of natural gas from offshore fields in the Krishna Godavari basin. According to the government, alleged mismanagement and operational decisions led to a significant loss of gas reserves from the D1 and D3 fields.

The matter has been under arbitration since 2016 and is currently being heard by a three-member tribunal. As per Reuters, a verdict is expected around mid-2026, though the decision could later be challenged in Indian courts.

The D1 and D3 blocks were once seen as a game-changer India's first major deepwater gas project aimed at boosting domestic energy security. However, the project ran into multiple hurdles, including water seepage, falling reservoir pressure, and prolonged disagreements over cost recovery. These challenges meant actual output fell well short of early expectations, something both Reliance and the government have acknowledged in earlier statements.

Government Allegations

The government's case rests on a sharp gap between what was initially promised and what was eventually produced. In 2012, the oil ministry told Parliament that Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) had originally estimated recoverable gas reserves of 10.3 trillion cubic feet (tcf) from the D1 and D3 fields, a figure that was later revised down drastically to 3.1 tcf. In reality, actual production from these fields ended up being just about 20 percent of the original estimate.

Based on this shortfall, the government argues that Reliance and BP should compensate the state for the value of gas that was never produced. During arbitration proceedings, officials have maintained that all gas discovered under the contract belongs to the state and that poor mismanagement led to the loss of a large portion of reserves.

The government has further alleged that Reliance followed unduly aggressive production practices, drilling gas from only 18 wells instead of the originally planned 31, and proceeding without adequate supporting infrastructure. According to officials, these decisions damaged the reservoir.

Both Reliance and BP strongly dispute these allegations and say no compensation is due.

The gas block was awarded to Reliance and its partners in 2000 under a production-sharing contract, which allowed the company to first recover project costs from oil & gas sales before sharing profits with the government. Initially, the government's profit share stood at 10 percent, with scope to rise after cost recovery. As per the contract terms, all disagreements are to be resolved through arbitration by a mutually agreed tribunal.

Who is BP and how is it connected to India?

BP (British Petroleum) is a UK-based global integrated energy major, with operations spanning oil, gas, and renewables across several countries, including India. BP's India journey took a major turn on 21st February 2011, when it entered into a strategic alliance with Reliance Industries.

As part of this deal, BP acquired a 30 percent stake for about \$7.2 billion in 21 oil & gas production-sharing contracts (PSCs) operated by RIL in India, including the key KG-D6 block. Collectively, these blocks cover nearly 2.2 lakh square kilometres.

BP holds participating interests in two PSA blocks KG-D6 (33.33 percent) and NEC-25 (33.33 percent), and two revenue-sharing contracts KG-UDWHP-2018/1 (40 percent) and KG-UDWHP-2022/1 (40 percent). All these blocks are operated by Reliance Industries.

Later on 18th November 2011, the partnership expanded further with the formation of India Gas Solutions Private Limited, a 50:50 joint venture between BP and Reliance. The JV focuses on global sourcing and marketing of natural gas in India.

More recently, in February 2025, BP strengthened its India presence by signing an agreement with Oil & Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC). Under this deal, BP will act as the technical services provider for ONGC's Mumbai High field, India's largest oil & gas field, aiming to improve production efficiency over a 10-year period.

Why is KG-D6 project such a big deal for India?

The KG-D6 project was seen as a landmark moment for India's energy sector. On 18th December 2020, RIL and BP announced the start of gas production from the R Cluster, an ultra-deep-water field located in the KG-D6 block off India's east coast.

What made this project truly special was its scale and complexity together, the R Cluster, Satellite Cluster, and MJ fields were producing about 30 million metric standard cubic metres per day (MMSCMD), contributing nearly 30 percent of India's total gas production.

Strategically, KG-D6 was India's first major ultra-deepwater natural gas project, with expectations to reduce dependence on gas imports, strengthen energy security, and significantly boost domestic gas supply.

Reliance Industries Clarification

As per the 29th December exchange filings, Reliance Industries dismissed reports claiming that the Indian government had sought \$30 billion in compensation over alleged underproduction of gas from the KG-D6 block, calling such claims factually incorrect. The company said publishing such reports based on unnamed and unidentified sources was inappropriate and irresponsible.

The company further clarified that there is no \$30 billion claim against either itself or BP. According to the company, the government's claim related to the KG-D6 block is ~\$247 million, a figure that has been consistently and appropriately disclosed in its audited annual financial statements in line with regulatory disclosure requirements.

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The post Reliance BP vs Govt of India: What is the \$30 Billion Dispute all about? appeared first on Trade Brains.

Headline	ONGC Honors Gopal Joshi on Superannuation After 35 Years of Service in India's Energy Exploration		
Publication	Indian Master Minds	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	30 Dec 2025		

ONGC Honors Gopal Joshi on Superannuation After 35 Years of Service in India's Energy Exploration

<https://indianmasterminds.com/news/ongc-gopal-joshi-superannuation-35-years-energy-exploration-172745/>

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has honored Mr. Gopal Joshi, Executive Director and Chief of Institute at the Keshava Deva Malaviya

Institute of Petroleum Exploration (KDMIPE), on his superannuation, celebrating a distinguished career spanning over three decades dedicated to India's energy exploration and knowledge ecosystem.

Distinguished Career Across Geoscience and Exploration Domains

An M.Tech in Applied Geology, Mr. Joshi joined ONGC in 1990 and built a remarkable career across multiple domains, including Mumbai Offshore, Assam, Frontier Basins, the Exploration & Development Directorate, and the Office of Director (Exploration). This diverse experience gave him a deep understanding of both field operations and corporate exploration strategy.

Over the years, Mr. Joshi made major contributions in development geology, basin evaluation, frontier basin management, and exploration planning, helping shape ONGC's long-term exploration priorities. As Basin Manager Frontier Basins, he successfully managed complex geological programs and advanced exploratory understanding in challenging terrains, demonstrating exceptional leadership and strategic insight.

Read also: ONGC Invites Applications for Director (Production) Post; Applications Open Till January 10

Leadership at KDMIPE and Mentorship

Since June 2024, Mr. Joshi served as Chief of Institute at KDMIPE, ONGC's premier geoscience and research institution. Under his leadership, the institute strengthened its focus on research, training, technology integration, and knowledge dissemination, nurturing the next generation of geoscientists and enhancing ONGC's scientific capabilities.

He is widely respected for his technical depth, analytical clarity, and calm, people-centric leadership, earning recognition as a mentor, institution builder, and strategic thinker within ONGC. His legacy reflects scientific rigour, institutional strength, and unwavering commitment to India's energy exploration sector.

About ONGC

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) is India's flagship public sector undertaking in the energy sector, established in 1956. It is engaged in exploration, production, and development of oil and gas resources across the country and internationally. ONGC plays a critical role in ensuring India's energy security, promoting research and technology in hydrocarbon exploration, and supporting the nation's sustainable energy initiatives.

Headline	Oil, gas block auction bid round deadline extended for third time		
Publication	MSN India	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	30 Dec 2025		

Oil, gas block auction bid round deadline extended for third time

<https://www.msn.com/en-in/money/markets/oil-gas-block-auction-bid-round-deadline-extended-for-third-time/ar-AA1TebKn>

The government has extended the deadline for submitting bids under the latest oil and gas block auction for the third time, giving potential investors six more weeks, according to DGH.

Bid submission deadline for the OALP-X licensing round, the largest acreage offering, has been extended till February 18, 2026, the Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH) said on its website. While it did not give any reason for the extension, industry sources said this may have been done keeping in mind the holiday season that sets in at the year-end in many countries. The 10th round of Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP-X), which was launched in February during India Energy Week (IEW) 2025 in New Delhi, was originally scheduled to close at the end of July. In late July, the deadline was extended to October 31 and again to December 31, 2025. Alongside, the deadline for submission of bids under the fourth round of Discovered Small Field (DSF) bid round and the special coal-bed methane (CBM) round too were extended till February 18, 2026. Under OALP-X, 25 blocks with a total area of about 191,986 square kilometres have been offered. The acreage on offer comprises six onshore blocks, six shallow-water tracts, one deepwater block and 12 located in ultra-deepwater across 13 sedimentary basins. The round includes four blocks with a combined area of 47,058 sq km in the Andaman basin, which Oil Minister Hardeep Singh Puri has been touting as having the potential to hold even greater volumes of oil and gas reserves than those found in exploration hotspot Guyana. The round offers the largest area so far for exploration and production of crude oil, which is refined into fuels like petrol and diesel, and natural gas, which is used to produce power, make urea, turned into CNG to run automobiles and fire household kitchens. In the previous nine rounds, 3.78 lakh sq km area was offered. The last bid round, OALP-IX, was the largest before the current bid round. The OALP-IX bid round featured 28 blocks or areas spread over 1.36 lakh sq km were offered for finding and producing oil and gas. OALP bid rounds were introduced after an open acreage policy was brought in 2016, which moved away from the previous practice of the government identifying and bidding out blocks to one where explorers were allowed the freedom to identify any area outside of the ones that are already with some company or other, for prospecting of oil and gas. The salient features of this policy, called Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy (HELP), include reduced royalty rates and concessional royalty rates for early commercial production, no oil CESS, exploration rights on all retained areas over the full contract life, and marketing and pricing freedom. OALP-IX in September last year attracted four bidders that included state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India Ltd (OIL) and private sector Vedanta Ltd, with most blocks getting just two bids, according to the DGH. It also for the first time saw Reliance Industries Ltd-BP Plc combine bidding together with ONGC for one block in Gujarat offshore. ONGC on its own won 11 blocks and another three in partnership with OIL. It also won the show water block in the Gujarat-Saurashtra basin that it had bid with Reliance-BP. Mining billionaire Anil Agarwal's Vedanta, which had bid for all the 28 blocks on offer, won seven blocks while OIL walked away with the remaining six. Prior to OALP-IX, Reliance and its supermajor partner BP had bid in just two of the preceding eight bid rounds since 2017. They had won both those blocks. Blocks are awarded to firms offering the highest share of revenues generated from oil and gas produced from the blocks and the work programme they commit to. The government has been hoping that opening up more acreage for exploration will help boost India's oil and gas production, helping cut down the USD 220 billion oil import bill. In 2016, it brought in an open acreage policy which moved away from the previous practice of the government identifying and bidding out blocks to one where explorers were allowed the freedom to identify any area outside of the ones that are already with some company or other, for prospecting of oil and gas. The areas identified are to be clubbed twice a year and offered for bidding. The firm identifying the area gets a 5-point advantage. Vedanta Ltd walked away with 41 blocks out of the 55 blocks on offer in the very first round and got another 10 areas in two subsequent rounds. Other rounds have been dominated by state-owned firms.

Headline	Oil, gas block auction bid round deadline extended for third time		
Publication	Millennium Post	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	30 Dec 2025		

Oil, gas block auction bid round deadline extended for third time

<https://www.millenniumpost.in/business/oil-gas-block-auction-bid-round-deadline-extended-for-third-time-641862>

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The round offers the largest area so far for exploration and production of crude oil, which is refined into fuels like petrol and diesel, and natural gas, which is used to produce power, make urea, turned into CNG to run automobiles and fire household kitchens.

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ONGC on its own won 11 blocks and another three in partnership with OIL. It also won the show water block in the Gujarat-Saurashtra basin that it had bid with Reliance-BP.

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Headline	The Green Pivot: How India Inc Is Turning Climate Goals Into Capital Expenditure		
Publication	NDTV Profit	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	30 Dec 2025		

The Green Pivot: How India Inc Is Turning Climate Goals Into Capital Expenditure

<https://www.ndtvprofit.com/business/the-green-pivot-how-india-inc-is-turning-climate-goals-into-capital-expenditure>

A CEEW study projects a potential Rs 91 lakh crore annual green market by 2047, underlining the scale of the opportunity.

India's corporate climate ambitions are increasingly being reflected in capital allocation decisions. From power utilities and steelmakers to renewable equipment manufacturers, large Indian companies are committing significant capital towards clean energy, storage, hydrogen and low-carbon manufacturing.

An independent study by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) estimates that India could attract Rs 341 lakh crore in cumulative green investments by 2047, creating 48 million full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs. The assessment also projects a potential Rs 91 lakh crore annual green market by 2047, underlining the scale of the opportunity.

Tata Power: Clean energy at the core of capex

Tata Power has outlined one of the largest clean-energy investment plans among Indian utilities, proposing a Rs 1.25 lakh crore capital expenditure over the next five years. The investment is aimed at scaling total generation capacity to around 30 GW by FY30.

Nearly 65% of the planned capex will be directed toward clean and green energy, including expanding renewable capacity to over 20 GW, strengthening transmission infrastructure, and developing new-age businesses such as solar manufacturing and EV charging networks. Managing Director and CEO Praveer Sinha has said the programme will focus on renewable generation, transmission upgrades, distribution reforms and emerging energy solutions.

JSW Energy: Green hydrogen moves from pilot to scale

JSW Energy has commissioned India's largest green hydrogen manufacturing plant under the government's National Green Hydrogen Mission. Located alongside JSW Steel's Vijayanagar plant in Karnataka, the facility will supply green hydrogen to the steelmaker's direct reduced iron (DRI) unit, enabling low-carbon steel production.

Under a seven-year offtake agreement, JSW Energy will supply 3,800 tonnes per annum (TPA) of green hydrogen and 30,000 TPA of green oxygen to JSW Steel. This forms part of the company's 6,800 TPA allocation under the SIGHT programme run by SECI.

The company has also signed an MoU to scale supplies to 85,00090,000 TPA of green hydrogen and 7.2 lakh TPA of green oxygen by 2030, aligned with India's goal of producing 50 lakh tonnes of green hydrogen annually by the end of the decade.

JSW Energy currently has 30.5 GW of locked-in generation capacity and 29.4 GWh of locked-in energy storage capacity. It is targeting 30 GW of generation capacity and 40 GWh of storage by FY30, with a longer-term goal of carbon neutrality by 2050.

ONGC Green: Renewables become material for oil PSU

ONGC Green, a wholly owned subsidiary of ONGC formed in 2024, is tasked with delivering the parent company's 10 GW renewable capacity target by 2030.

The subsidiary is expected to contribute Rs 6,000 crore in Ebitda by 2030, nearly 9% of ONGC's standalone Ebitda in FY24, according to CEO and Executive Director Sanjay Kumar Mazumder. The numbers highlight how renewables are becoming financially meaningful even for legacy hydrocarbon companies.

Waaree Energies: Manufacturing for the energy transition

Waaree Energies is deploying capital across storage, electrolyzers and inverters to support the clean-energy ecosystem. Nearly Rs 8,000 crore has been earmarked to expand its lithium-ion advanced chemistry storage cell and battery energy storage systems (BESS) capacity from 3.5 GWh to 20 GWh.

The company is also increasing electrolyser manufacturing capacity from 300 MW to 1,000 MW with a capex of Rs 125 crore, and expanding its inverter manufacturing capacity from 3 GW to 4 GW with an additional Rs 50 crore investment.

Waaree said the investments are intended to strengthen its clean-energy and allied businesses amid rising domestic and global demand. The company's shares have gained nearly 47% over the past year.

JSW Steel: Green steel and export competitiveness

JSW Steel plans to invest Rs 50,00060,000 crore over the next three to four years to build 10 million tonnes of capacity at its Salav Works unit in Maharashtra, now housed under JSW Green Steel.

The output will primarily cater to exports to Europe, where the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) comes into effect from 2026, placing a premium on low-carbon manufacturing.

Economics of the green shift

According to Rishi Shah, partner at Grant Thornton Bharat, reallocating capex toward climate-aligned projects is economically prudent. Studies show that green spending multipliers exceed those of traditional capex, supported by higher domestic content and labour intensity.

With India requiring nearly Rs 33 lakh crore in renewable financing by 2030, strategic government leadership and policy clarity could help catalyse private investment through risk-mitigation and demonstration effects.

Headline	Govt of India seeks \$30 billion compensation from Reliance, BP in KG-D6 gas field dispute		
Publication	PGurus	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	30 Dec 2025		

Govt of India seeks \$30 billion compensation from Reliance, BP in KG-D6 gas field dispute

<https://www.pgurus.com/govt-of-india-seeks-30-billion-compensation-from-reliance-bp-in-kg-d6-gas-field-dispute/>

Government alleges excess infrastructure build-out and failure to meet gas output targets at the KG-D6 fields; tribunal verdict expected next year

Tribunal to rule on high-stakes KG-D6 dispute between Centre and Reliance-BP

The Government of India has sought over USD 30 billion from Mukesh Ambani -led Reliance Industries Ltd and British company BP as compensation, alleging the partners built larger-than-required facilities at the KG-D6 fields and subsequently failed to meet natural gas output targets. The government claimed its submissions before a three-member arbitration tribunal that on November 7 concluded hearings on the 14-year-old dispute . The tribunal is expected to give its award sometime next year, and the party that loses will most likely challenge it before the Supreme Court, three sources aware of the matter said.

Officials said the government in the arbitration proceedings sought the monetary value of the natural gas that wasn't produced as well as compensation for the excess amount spent on installations, fuel marketing, and interest. It put the value for all of this at over USD 30 billion. The dispute stems from alleged failure of Reliance to comply with the approved investment plan that led to under-utilisation of capacity at the Dhirubhai-1 and 3 fields the first and the largest of discoveries in the Krishna Godavari basin, KG-DWN-98/3 (KG-D6) block to be put on production.

Natural gas output from Dhirubhai-1 and 3 (D1&D3) gas fields started to lag company projections from the very second year of production in 2010, and the field ceased to produce in February 2020, much ahead of its projected life. Reliance, in an initial field development plan, had proposed a USD 2.47 billion investment to produce a peak of 40 million standard cubic meters per day of gas. In 2006, it revised this to USD 8.18 billion, projecting a doubling of that output by drilling 31 wells by March 2011. But it drilled only 22 wells, of which only 18 were put to production. The well started shutting in earlier than expected due to unanticipated sand and water ingress, leading the company to revise the reserves in the field to only 3.10 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) instead of 10.03 Tcf estimated in the 2006 plan.

The government blamed the phenomenon on the company not sticking to the approved development plan, and in the initial years, disallowed USD 3.02 billion of costs that Reliance and its partners had incurred on developing the fields. The company disputed this, saying no provision in the KG-D6 contract entitles the government to disallow cost recovery on that basis. On November 23, 2011, Reliance served an arbitration notice, seeking to resolve the dispute. The arbitration proceedings, however, couldn't begin as the government refused to accept the judges appointed to the three-member tribunal.

Reliance had in 2014 named former UK judge Sir Bernard Rix as its arbitrator on the tribunal in place of its original choice, S P Bharucha, a former Chief Justice of India. Justice Bharucha had recused himself from the tribunal where the government had named former Chief Justice of India V N Khare as its arbitrator. Michael Kirby , a former judge of the Australian High Court, was appointed in September 2014 by the Supreme Court as the neutral arbitrator and chairman of the panel.

The government moved the Delhi High Court seeking the removal of Rix and Kirby, alleging their ex facie bias against the Union government. The court in December 2022 dismissed the Central government's plea as not maintainable . The Government then moved the Supreme Court, which, on January 11, 2023, dismissed the petition. Thereafter, the tribunal began hearing on the dispute.

Reliance and BP, which had bought a 30 percent stake in KG-D6 and 21 other blocks in 2010 for USD 7.2 billion, contended that the production sharing contracts (PSCs) under the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) explicitly allow an operator to first recover all its development costs fully, before sharing profits from the production with the government. They argued that finding oil and gas is a high-risk business, solely borne by the operator. In the case of D1&D3, the reserves were downsized due to geological factors, and the output lagged targets because of unforeseen geological surprises.

The reserve downgrade is not a new phenomenon, and companies worldwide have done the same. The same thing has happened in the KG block, which was originally with Gujarat government firm GSPC but was later sold to state-owned ONGC. They claimed to have followed all rules, and all investments incurred on the block were approved by a management committee (MC) that had representatives of the Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH) and the Oil Ministry. The companies termed the Ministry's action of retroactively disallowing some of the costs already incurred as being against the signed PSC.

Gas output from D1&D3 fields in the KG-D6 block was supposed to be 80 million standard cubic meters per day, but actual production was only 35.33 mmscmd in 2011-12, 20.88 mmscmd in 2012-13, and 9.77 mmscmd in 2013-14. The output continued to drop in the subsequent years, and the fields ceased to produce in February 2020. The Government, by its letters dated May 2, 2012, November 14, 2013, July 10, 2014, and June 3, 2016, disallowed USD 3.02 billion costs which the PSC entitled Reliance and its partners to recover. This disallowance was for missing the target during six years beginning April 1, 2010. In these four notices, the Government sought USD 247 million of additional profit from petroleum after cost recovery was disallowed.

Reliance and its partner BP have maintained that a contractor is entitled to recover all of its costs under the terms of the PSC, and there are no provisions that entitle the government to disallow the recovery of any cost. The PSC allows them to deduct all capital and operating expenses from the sale of gas before sharing profits with the government.

Headline	ONGC Honors Shri Gopal Joshi on Superannuation		
Publication	PSU Connect	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	30 Dec 2025		

ONGC Honors Shri Gopal Joshi on Superannuation

<https://www.psuconnect.in/psu-news/ongc-honors-shri-gopal-joshi-on-superannuation>

ONGC salutes Shri Gopal Joshi for over three decades of service and leadership in petroleum exploration and geoscience research.

ONGC has paid tribute to Shri Gopal Joshi , Executive Director and Chief of Institute at the Keshava Deva Malaviya Institute of Petroleum Exploration (KDMIPE), on his superannuation after more than three decades of dedicated service to India's energy exploration and knowledge ecosystem.

An M.Tech in Applied Geology, Shri Joshi joined ONGC in 1990 and built a distinguished career across Mumbai Offshore, Assam, Frontier Basins, the Exploration & Development Directorate, and the Office of Director (Exploration), gaining deep experience in both field operations and corporate exploration strategy.

He made major contributions in development geology, basin evaluation, frontier basin management, and exploration planning , helping shape ONGC's long-term exploration priorities. As Basin Manager Frontier Basins , he led complex geological programs and advanced understanding in challenging exploration regions.

Since June 2024 , as Chief of Institute at KDMIPE , ONGC's premier geoscience research institution, Shri Joshi focused on strengthening research, training, technology integration, and knowledge sharing, nurturing the next generation of geoscientists.

Widely respected for his technical expertise and calm, people-focused leadership, Shri Joshi leaves behind a legacy of scientific excellence, strategic vision, and institutional strength.

Headline	MRPL will announce December end results soon		
Publication	PSU Connect	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	30 Dec 2025		

MRPL will announce December end results soon

<https://www.psuconnect.in/financial/mrpl-will-announce-december-end-results-soon>

Shares of Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited (MRPL) are in focus as the company has updated an intimation of Board Meeting for considering Un-Audited Financial Results for the Quarter ended December 31, 2025.

According to the exchange filing, it is hereby informed that the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company has been scheduled on Thursday, January 15, 2026, inter-alia to consider and approve Standalone and Consolidated Un-Audited Financial Results for the quarter ended December 31, 2025.

Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited (MRPL), is a part of ONGC which is under the ownership of Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

Headline	ONGC Invites Bids for Supply of HEDP Chemical Through GeM Portal		
Publication	PSU Connect	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	30 Dec 2025		

ONGC Invites Bids for Supply of HEDP Chemical Through GeM Portal

<https://www.psuconnect.in/psu-news/ongc-invites-bids-for-supply-of-hedp-chemical-through-gem-portal>

ONGC has issued a major GeM tender for supplying 214,020 kg of HEDP chemical across India, offering strong Make in India and MSME purchase preference.

New Delhi: Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) has invited bids through the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) portal for the supply of Hydro Ethylidene Di Phosphonic Acid (HEDP) , an important industrial chemical used in oil and gas operations. The tender has been issued by ONGC's Central Procurement Department and aims to strengthen the company's operational supply chain across multiple regions in the country.

Under the tender, ONGC is seeking a total quantity of 214,020 kilograms of HEDP to be delivered to its operational locations in Assam, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. The bid submission will close on January 19, 2026 at 3:00 PM , and the bids will be opened on the same day at 3:30 PM . The offer validity period has been fixed at 90 days from the bid closing date.

The procurement process follows a two-packet bidding system , with mandatory post-dispatch inspection to ensure quality compliance. ONGC has also enabled the reverse auction mechanism to promote transparent and competitive pricing. All supplied material will be subject to strict quality checks at ONGC-approved laboratories before final acceptance.

In line with the Government of India's manufacturing and procurement policies, ONGC has extended strong support to domestic suppliers. Purchase preference has been provided to Make in India manufacturers for up to 50 percent of the total quantity and to Micro and Small Enterprises (MSMEs) for up to 25 percent of the quantity. Only eligible Class 1 and Class 2 local suppliers are permitted to participate in the bidding process.

This tender plays a vital role in supporting ONGC's ongoing production and exploration activities while promoting domestic manufacturing, enhancing supply reliability and maintaining the highest standards of safety and quality in its operations.

Headline	PNGRB Proposes Regasification Fee Regulation & GST for Gas		
Publication	Bharat Horizon	Edition	Online Coverage

PNGRB Proposes Regasification Fee Regulation & GST for Gas

<https://bharathorizon.com/business/industry/pngrb-proposes-regasification-fee-regulation--gst-for-gas.html>

In a significant move aimed at reducing the cost of natural gas for consumers and industries, India's Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory

Board (PNGRB) has proposed two key reforms: bringing regasification charges under regulatory oversight and including natural gas under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime.

Addressing High Infrastructure Costs and Taxes

The proposals were detailed in a discussion paper published on the regulator's website on 24 December 2024 . The PNGRB highlighted that high and unregulated infrastructure costs, combined with state-level taxes, are keeping the delivered price of gas elevated. This is happening despite substantial investments in regasification capacity across the country.

Currently, the PNGRB regulates the national gas pipeline grid and its transportation tariffs. However, it lacks authority over the charges levied by LNG regasification terminals, which convert imported liquefied natural gas back into its gaseous form. These unregulated regasification charges currently make up 5-6% of the final cost paid by end consumers.

The regulator argued that for effective oversight across the entire gas value chain, statutory changes are needed to bring these charges under its purview.

Low Terminal Utilization and Financial Strain

The PNGRB's paper sheds light on the underutilization of India's LNG import infrastructure. As of November 2024, the country has an operational regasification capacity of roughly 47.7 million metric tonnes per annum (MMTPA) , built with a total investment of around 37,000 crore

However, the average capacity utilization for the financial year 2023-24 was only about 51%. This figure is skewed by the high utilization of the Dahej terminal, which operated at 95%. Excluding Dahej, the utilization of other terminals ranged from a mere 15% to 45%, averaging just 25%.

"It may be inferred that based on these utilization levels most of the LNG regasification terminals may not be able to even financially break-even for a long time," the regulator stated. Major players in this sector include Petronet LNG, Shell, Indian Oil Corporation, and Adani Total Gas.

The Push for GST Inclusion to Remove Tax Anomaly

The second major proposal involves bringing natural gas under the GST framework. Currently, natural gas is outside the GST net, leading to a patchwork of state-level Value Added Tax (VAT) and the denial of input tax credit benefits for gas companies.

The PNGRB pointed out an ironic tax disparity: while natural gas faces a central excise duty of 14% plus state VAT, auto-LPGa more carbon-intensive and less safe fuelattracts a GST of only 18%. "Mainly because of this anomaly, particularly in southern India, CNG is not gaining traction vis a vis auto LPG," the report noted.

Union Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri had earlier indicated a growing consensus on this issue in January 2024. However, states like Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh have expressed concerns about potential revenue losses.

Expected Impact on Prices and Consumption

If implemented, these reforms are expected to significantly reduce the overall cost of natural gas in India. Prashant Vashisht, Senior Vice-President at ICRA Ltd., noted that India's regasification charges are around 70 cents per mmBtu , compared to about 50 cents in major gas-based economies like Japan. Lowering these costs and rationalizing taxation would directly benefit consumers.

This move is critical for India's energy transition goals. The country aims to raise the share of natural gas in its primary energy mix to 15% by 2030 , up from the current level of approximately 6.2%. However, consumption has been weak,

declining by 6.7% year-on-year to 46,239 million standard cubic meters (mmscm) in the April-November period of FY26, after a 6% rise in FY25.

The proposals follow another recent reform by the PNGRB: simplifying the gas transportation tariff structure under its 'One Nation, One Grid, One Tariff' vision. By reducing tariff zones and lowering slabs, the regulator has already made CNG and piped natural gas (PNG) cheaper for city gas distribution networks.

The success of these regulatory interventions will be key to making natural gas a more competitive and widely adopted cleaner fuel in India's energy basket.

Headline	Energy Sector Reaches ‘Transformative Milestone’ with Offering of 50 New E&P Blocks		
Publication	Chemical Industry Digest	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	30 Dec 2025		

Energy Sector Reaches ‘Transformative Milestone’ with Offering of 50 New E&P Blocks

<https://chemindigest.com/energy-sector-reaches-transformative-milestone/>

India has reached a transformative milestone in its energy sector by offering fifty new exploration and production (E&P) blocks across oil, gas, and coal bed methane (CBM) assets. The move signals a renewed push to unlock domestic hydrocarbon potential and strengthen the countrys energy security, Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri said. The initiative reflects Indias growing openness to both global and domestic investors, while reinforcing confidence in the countrys upstream energy ecosystem.

Open Acreage Licensing Policy Expands Exploration Opportunities

Under the Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP), the government has offered 25 blocks covering approximately 1.83 lakh square kilometres. These include six onland blocks, six shallow-water blocks, one deepwater block, and 12 ultra-deepwater blocks. Through this diversified portfolio, the government aims to attract investment across varied geological terrains while accelerating exploration activity.

DSF Bid Round-IV Targets Faster Transition from Discovery to Production

At the same time, the Discovered Small Field (DSF) Bid Round-IV features 55 discoveries spread across nine contract areas. The round focuses on shortening the time between discovery and production, thereby enabling faster monetisation of hydrocarbon resources. To support investor participation, the government has introduced several incentives. These include zero royalty for the first seven years in deepwater areas, full marketing freedom on an arms-length basis, and relaxed eligibility criteria, with no mandatory prior experience in oil and gas operations.

Incentives Extended to Coal Bed Methane Rounds Similarly, the government has extended flexible terms and incentives to the CBM rounds. These include complete pricing freedom, no overlap with coal blocks or mining areas, and, beginning with the 2026 round, government reimbursement of costs for mandatory core-hole drilling. As a result, CBM development is expected to gain momentum as an important contributor to Indias domestic gas production.

Headline	PM Modi highlights 'Reform Express 2025', says India's growth is built on credibility and stability		
Publication	DD India	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	30 Dec 2025		

PM Modi highlights 'Reform Express 2025', says India's growth is built on credibility and stability

<https://ddindia.co.in/2025/12/pm-modi-highlights-reform-express-2025-says-indias-growth-is-built-on-credibility-and-stability/>

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has underscored the importance of sustained and methodical governance reforms, saying that India's growth story is being shaped by credibility, stability and long-term confidence rather than headline-driven policy changes.

The Prime Minister shared an article titled Reform Express 2025 written by Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri.

The article reflects on what PM Modi described as the quiet, cumulative work of governance that has steadily cleared bottlenecks across sectors.

Responding to Puri's post on X, the Prime Minister's Office said the article captures how reforms across labour laws, trade agreements, logistics, energy and markets have laid a strong foundation for India's next phase of growth.

From labour laws and trade agreements to logistics, energy and market reforms, India's growth story is being built on credibility, stability and long-term confidence, the PMO said.

In his article, Puri said that while major economic milestones often dominate headlines, it is the continuous week-after-week reform effort that has driven India's economic resilience. He noted that India has crossed \$4.1 trillion in nominal GDP, overtaken Japan to become the world's fourth-largest economy, and received a sovereign rating upgrade from Standard & Poor's to BBB after 18 years, signalling durable macroeconomic strength.

Highlighting trade and export growth, the article said India's total exports reached \$825.25 billion in 2024-25, supported by digital initiatives such as the Trade Connect e-Platform and the Trade Intelligence and Analytics (TIA) portal. It also cited major trade agreements, including the India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, the CEPA with Oman, and the conclusion of negotiations for a free trade agreement with New Zealand.

Puri pointed to the expansion of India's startup ecosystem, which now includes over two lakh government-recognised startups, generating more than 21 lakh jobs. Platforms such as the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) and the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) have significantly increased digital transactions and market access for micro and small enterprises.

On the legislative front, the article highlighted the repeal of obsolete laws through the Repealing and Amending Act, 2025, reduction of over 47,000 compliances, and decriminalisation of more than 4,400 legal provisions. The implementation of the four labour codes from November 2025 consolidated 29 central labour laws into a simplified framework covering wages, industrial relations, social security and workplace safety.

Puri also underlined reforms in capital markets through the proposed Securities Markets Code Bill, maritime and logistics modernisation via the Indian Ports Act, 2025, and shipping sector reforms aimed at improving efficiency and reducing costs.

Energy reforms formed a key pillar of the Reform Express narrative. Measures such as the Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Amendment Act, 2025, new Petroleum and Natural Gas Rules, expansion under the Open Acreage Licensing Policy, and the National Deep Water Exploration Mission were highlighted as steps to reduce investor risk and strengthen domestic energy security.

The article also emphasised the government's push towards nuclear energy through a 20,000 crore Nuclear Energy Mission and the proposed SHANTI Bill, aimed at modernising India's civil nuclear framework and enabling regulated private participation.

Summing up the reform journey, Puri wrote that the government's approach has focused on cleaning up outdated laws, modernising compliance systems, strengthening governance, digitising trade, fixing logistics, and de-risking long-term investments.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has consistently argued that the role of the state is to reduce the burden on entrepreneurs so that productivity can compound, the article said, adding that the foundations of India's next phase of double-digit growth are being laid through steady and disciplined reform.

Headline	India Unveils 50 New Hydrocarbon Blocks to Boost Energy Security		
Publication	India Manufacturing Review	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	30 Dec 2025		

India Unveils 50 New Hydrocarbon Blocks to Boost Energy Security

<https://www.indiamanufacturingreview.com/manufacturing/news/india-unveils-50-new-hydrocarbon-blocks-to-boost-energy-security-nwid-10421.html>

India offers 50 new oil, gas and CBM exploration blocks nationwide.

OALP, DSF-IV and CBM rounds provide incentives and flexible terms.

New regulatory reforms aim to boost investment and energy security.

India has achieved a significant milestone in its energy sector by providing 50 new exploration and production (E&P) blocks for oil gas , and coal bed methane (CBM) assets, indicating a renewed effort to tap into domestic hydrocarbon resources and enhance energy security , stated Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri.

In a social media update on X, Minister Puri described the initiative as a "transformative milestone" under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, highlighting India's openness to both global and domestic investors.

"We are offering 50 new E&P blocks across Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP) : 25 blocks, Discovered Small Field (DSF-IV) : 55 fields across 9 contract areas/blocks. Special CBM bid rounds 2025 and 2026: 3 blocks (2025) & 13 blocks (2026)," the petroleum minister said in his post.

According to the details provided by him, the Open Acreage Licensing Policy offers 25 blocks that span approximately 1.83 lakh square kilometres, which include six onland blocks, six shallow water blocks, one deepwater block, and 12 ultra-deepwater blocks.

Simultaneously, the Discovered Small Field (DSF) Bid Round-IV features 55 discoveries distributed over nine contract areas, designed to hasten the transition from discovery to production. For DSF Bid Round-IV, extra incentives consist of no royalty for the initial seven years in deepwater regions, complete marketing freedom on an arm's length basis, and looser eligibility criteria where prior experience in oil and gas isn't required.

The CBM rounds also offer comparable flexibility and incentives, featuring complete pricing freedom, no overlap with coal blocks or mines, and in the 2026 round, the government will reimburse costs for required core-hole drilling.

The Minister additionally emphasized that India has established a cohesive regulatory structure facilitated by the Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Amendment Act, 2025 , which separates petroleum activities from mining, along with the PNG Rules 2025

This encompassed the Revenue Sharing Contract modelsimplicity in business operations; a unified license for both conventional and unconventional hydrocarbons; exploration permitted for the entire contract period; tiered decreasing royalty rates; and stabilization against legal changes.

Headline	Oil, gas block auction bid round deadline extended for third time		
Publication	Millennium Post	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	30 Dec 2025		

Oil, gas block auction bid round deadline extended for third time

<https://www.millenniumpost.in/business/oil-gas-block-auction-bid-round-deadline-extended-for-third-time-641862>

The government has extended the deadline for submitting bids under the latest oil and gas block auction for the third time, giving potential investors six more weeks, according to DGH.

Bid submission deadline for the OALP-X licensing round, the largest acreage offering, has been extended till February 18, 2026, the Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH) said on its website.

While it did not give any reason for the extension, industry sources said this may have been done keeping in mind the holiday season that sets in at the year-end in many countries.

The 10th round of Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP-X), which was launched in February during India Energy Week (IEW) 2025 in New Delhi, was originally scheduled to close at the end of July. In late July, the deadline was extended to October 31 and again to December 31, 2025.

Alongside, the deadline for submission of bids under the fourth round of Discovered Small Field (DSF) bid round and the special coal-bed methane (CBM) round too were extended till February 18, 2026.

Under OALP-X, 25 blocks with a total area of about 191,986 square kilometres have been offered. The acreage on offer comprises six onshore blocks, six shallow-water tracts, one deepwater block and 12 located in ultra-deepwater across 13 sedimentary basins. The round includes four blocks with a combined area of 47,058 sq km in the Andaman basin, which Oil Minister Hardeep Singh Puri has been touting as having the potential to hold even greater volumes of oil and gas reserves than those found in exploration hotspot Guyana.

The round offers the largest area so far for exploration and production of crude oil, which is refined into fuels like petrol and diesel, and natural gas, which is used to produce power, make urea, turned into CNG to run automobiles and fire household kitchens.

In the previous nine rounds, 3.78 lakh sq km area was offered.

The last bid round, OALP-IX, was the largest before the current bid round. The OALP-IX bid round featured 28 blocks or areas spread over 1.36 lakh sq km were offered for finding and producing oil and gas.

OALP bid rounds were introduced after an open acreage policy was brought in 2016, which moved away from the previous practice of the government identifying and bidding out blocks to one where explorers were allowed the freedom to identify any area outside of the ones that are already with some company or other, for prospecting of oil and gas.

The salient features of this policy, called Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy (HELP), include reduced royalty rates and concessional royalty rates for early commercial production, no oil CESS, exploration rights on all retained areas over the full contract life, and marketing and pricing freedom.

OALP-IX in September last year attracted four bidders that included state-owned ONGC and Oil India Ltd (OIL) and private sector Vedanta Ltd, with most blocks getting just two bids, according to the DGH. It also for the first time saw Reliance Industries Ltd-BP Plc combine bidding together with ONGC for one block in Gujarat offshore.

ONGC on its own won 11 blocks and another three in partnership with OIL. It also won the shallow water block in the Gujarat-Saurashtra basin that it had bid with Reliance-BP.

Mining billionaire Anil Agarwal's Vedanta, which had bid for all the 28 blocks on offer, won seven blocks while OIL walked away with the remaining six.

Headline	Regulator PNGRB for regulating regasification fee, bringing natural gas under GST		
Publication	Mint	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	30 Dec 2025		

Regulator PNGRB for regulating regasification fee, bringing natural gas under GST

<https://www.livemint.com/economy/india-natural-gas-price-reduction-regulator-proposes-gst-regasification-charges-11766753133685.html>

In a bid to make natural gas cheaper and boost adoption, Indias gas regulator has proposed regulating the regasification charges for liquefied natural gas (LNG) and also bringing the fuel under the goods and services tax (GST), citing low utilization and weak financial viability at most terminals.

In a paper on regasification, listed gas marketing and CGD entities, published on its website on 24 December, the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) said high and unregulated infrastructure costs, coupled with state-level taxes, are keeping gas prices elevated despite large investments in regasification capacity. Implementation of the PNGRB's proposals would require statutory changes.

Though the PNGRB regulates the gas transmission grid and its tariffs, it does not have the regulatory oversight over the regasification terminals and its charges. The proposal comes days after the regulator lowered the tariff slabs for gas transportation, thereby making compressed natural gas (CNG) and city gas distribution (CGD) prices cheaper.

Noting that the regulator is vested with power primarily to fix tariffs for natural gas pipelines, the report said: "However, other remaining major part of delivered cost of gas i.e. gas prices, regasification charges (including truck loading charges) are currently not in PNGRBs regulatory oversight. There is a need for statutory provisions and administrative oversight over these functions across the gas value chain. Besides this there is another major component of cost i.e. taxation (VAT/GST on several components/custom duty, etc)."

Regasification charges, charges by regasification terminals, currently account for 5-6% of the delivered gas cost to consumers and they are not regulated. Major infrastructure costs for delivery of natural gas to various consuming sectors consists of natural gas pipeline tariffs, re-gasification charges of LNG along with CGD infrastructure costs for gas consumption in the CGD sector.

India started importing LNG in 2004 with the first regasification terminal getting commissioned in 2004 in Gujarat. After 2013, terminals have come up in other states also, but the report notes that they are largely concentrated in Gujarat.

As of November 2024, India had an operational LNG regasification capacity of around 47.7 million metric tonne per annum with a total investment of 37,000 crore, according to the PNGRB report.

For FY24, the average capacity utilization of the regasification terminals was around 51%, including Dahej which was around 95%. Barring Dahej, the other terminals' capacity utilization varied from 15% to 45% during the period, averaging 25%.

"It may be inferred that based on these utilization levels most of the LNG regasification terminals may not be able to even financially break-even for a long time," the regulator said.

It noted that only a few LNG regasification terminals had been designed in a way that they could further expand on need basis to even double their existing regasification capacity, and mooted the need for a mechanism to share the benefits of such an expansion with customers through lowered regasification charges.

The major players in India's LNG regasification terminal space are Petronet, Shell, Indian Oil, and Adani Total Gas.

On the need to bring natural gas under the goods and services tax (GST), the regulator said that non-inclusion of natural gas under the indirect tax regime has resulted in state governments levying high rates of value-added tax and the lack of input credit benefit for the gas firms.

It is important to note that, over and above the 14% excise duty, there is an additional state VAT. In contrast, auto-LPG, which is a carbon intensive and less-safer fuel, attracts GST at only 18%, PNGRB said. "Mainly because of this anomaly, particularly in southern India, CNG is not gaining traction vis a vis auto LPG."

Union minister for petroleum and natural gas Hardeep Singh Puri had in January this year said there is an increasing consensus on bringing natural gas under the GST regime. However, states, including Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh, have in the past raised concern over any such move, as it may impact their revenues.

If implemented, the proposals are expected to bring down the cost of natural gas in the country, thereby boosting the adoption of cleaner fuel as India's gas consumption has not increased as anticipated. Gas is considered a cleaner fuel than coal or crude oil products.

"Efforts to lower the regasification cost and bring the fuel under GST, would reduce the overall cost of natural gas and the expenses for the common people. In India, the regasification charges are around 70 cents per mmBtu (metric million British thermal units), while that in Japan, a major gas-based economy is about 50 cents per mmBtu," said Prashant Vashisht, senior vice-president and co-group head of corporate ratings at ICRA Ltd.

Recently, the PNGRB simplified the transportation tariffs under its 'One Nation, One Grid, One Tariff' vision and reduced the number of tariff zones from three to two up to 300 km and beyond 300 km aiming to lower regional disparities and align natural gas pricing with competitive fuels such as liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), or cooking gas, and petrol.

India's natural gas consumption has weakened so far in FY26 after having seen a strong demand in FY25. In April-November, India consumed about 46,239 million standard cubic metres (mmscm) of natural gas, 6.7% lower from a year ago. In FY25, consumption was 6% up at 71,314 mmscm on strong power sector demand.

A Crisil report released on Friday said lower power sector offtake amid seasonal swings in LNG prices and planned maintenance shutdowns at refining and fertilizer units curtailed demand. "Gas consumption saw a pronounced decline in summer as an early onset of southwest monsoon reduced demand for cooling. That compares with a rise to 203 mmscmd in the summer of last fiscal amid policy driven rise in dispatches of gas-based power plants," it said.

The Crisil report, however, noted that the city gas distribution, which accounts for about 23% of overall gas consumption, has remained resilient. Its consumption was up 7% year-on-year in October, while over the past three years, PNG and CNG consumption had grown at 8% and 20%, respectively.

In line with its green ambitions, India aims to increase the share of natural gas in the energy basket to 15% by the end of the decade from the current level of about 6.2%.

Headline	India offers 50 new exploration blocks to boost energy security and hydrocarbon production		
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India offers 50 new exploration blocks to boost energy security and hydrocarbon production

<https://www.projectstoday.com/News/India-offers-50-new-exploration-blocks-to-boost-energy-security-and-hydrocarbon-production>

India has reached a significant milestone in its energy sector by offering 50 new exploration and production (E&P) blocks across oil, gas, and coal bed methane (CBM) assets.

Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Hardeep Singh Puri, hailed the move as a transformative step towards strengthening the country's energy security and unlocking its domestic hydrocarbon potential. The offered blocks include 25 under the Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP-X), 55 fields in the discovered small field (DSF-IV) bid round, and additional blocks under the Special CBM Bid Rounds for 2025 and 2026. Minister Puri emphasised that this initiative showcases India's openness to both global and domestic investors and reflects the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The new framework includes features such as exploration rights throughout the contract duration, revenue share schemes, and incentives for deepwater and CBM exploration. As Union Minister Puri said, "The quest to unlock the potential of India's sedimentary basins gains a new thrust and momentum."