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# Oil min tells ONGC to sell oilfields, hive off drilling, other services

## New Delhi,

The petroleum ministry has told India's largest oil and gas producer ONGC to sell stake in producing oil fields such as to Ratna R-Series to private firms, get foreign partners in KG basin gas fields, monetize existing infrastructure, and hive off drilling and other services into a separate firm to raise production.

Amar Nath, additional secretary (exploration) in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, on April 1 wrote to Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) Chairman and Managing Director Subhash Kumar giving a seven-point action plan, 'ONGC Way Forward' that would help the firm raise oil and gas production by one-third by 2023-24.

The action plan, reviewed by calls on ONGC to consider sale of stake in maturing fields such as

Panna-Mukta and Ratna and R-Series in western offshore and onshore fields like Gandhar in Gujarat to private firms while divesting/privatizing 'non-performing' marginal fields.

It wanted ONGC to bring in global players in gas-rich block KG-DWN-98/2 where output is slated to rise sharply by next year, and the recently brought into production Ashokenagar block in West Bengal.

Also identified for the purpose is the Deendayal block in the KG basin which the firm had bought from Gujarat government firm GSPC a couple of years back.

The ministry also wants the company to explore creating separate entities for drilling, well services, logging, workover services and data processing entities.

This is the third at-

tempt by the oil ministry to get ONGC to privatize its oil and gas fields under the Modi government. In October 2017, the Directorate General of Hydrocarbons,

the ministry's technical arm, had identified 15 producing fields with a collective reserve of 791.2 million tonnes of crude oil and 333.46 billion cubic metres of gas, for handing over to private firms in the hope that they would improve upon the baseline estimate and its extraction.

A year later, as many as 149 small and marginal fields of ONGC were identified for private and foreign companies on the grounds that the state-owned firm should focus only on big ones.

The first plan couldn't go through because of strong opposition from ONGC, sources aware of the matter said.

# Colonial recovering from cyberattack

**C**olonial Pipeline, a top US fuel pipeline operator, continued work on Sunday to recover from a ransomware cyberattack that forced it to shut down on Friday and sparked worries of a spike in retail prices of petrol. The incident is one of the most disruptive digital ransom operations ever reported and has prompted calls from American lawmakers to tighten protection for critical US energy infrastructure against hackers. Colonial said on Saturday it was “continuing to monitor the impact of this temporary service halt” and to work to restore service. It did not give an estimate for a restart date. Retail fuel experts said an outage lasting several days could have significant impacts on regional fuel supplies.

While the US government investigation is in early stages, a former US official and two industry sources said the hackers are likely a professional cybercriminal group and that a group dubbed “DarkSide” was likely among the potential suspects.

**REUTERS**

# Exports surges 80% to \$7 bn in May 1st week

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**

New Delhi, 9 May

Continuing a positive growth, India's exports grew by 80 per cent to \$7.04 billion during the first week of this month, according to preliminary data of the commerce ministry.

Exports during May 1-7 last year stood at \$3.91 billion and \$6.48 billion in the same week of May 2019, the data showed. Imports too rose by 80.7 per cent to \$8.86 billion during May 1-7, 2021 as against \$4.91 billion in the same period last year and \$10.39 billion in 2019.

India's exports in April jumped nearly threefold to \$30.21 billion from \$10.17 billion in the same month last year.

Major export commodities which are recording healthy growth include gems and jewellery, jute, carpet, handicrafts, leather, electronic goods, oil meals, cashew, engineering, petro-



leum products, marine products and chemicals.

Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) President S K Saraf said that the exports growth is encouraging and order books of exporters are healthy.

"I will urge the government to look into the issues of MEIS (merchandise export from India scheme). RoDTEP (remission of duties and taxes on export products) rates should also be announced immediately to further push the shipments as profitability of exporters are getting impacted," he said.

## FuelBuddy buys MyPetrolPump in an all cash and stock deal



**Mumbai:** Delhi-based fuel delivery startup FuelBuddy has acquired Bengaluru-based on-demand fuel delivery startup MyPetrolPump, a venture owned by ANB Fuels Pvt. Ltd, for a cash and stock consideration. FuelBuddy is an app-based, tech-enabled platform, which provides doorstep fuel delivery along with value-added services. MyPetrolPump is a first-of-its-kind on-demand fuel delivery service in India, which attempted to solve refuelling problems faced by owners of diesel generators and stationary equipment.

**KALPANA PATHAK**

VITAL SYSTEMS

# Cyber attack shuts down US' largest pipeline

## TECHNOLOGY

WASHINGTON: The largest fuel pipeline system in the United States was forced to shut down its entire network after a ransomware attack, the operating company said in a statement on Sunday.

The Colonial Pipeline Company ships gasoline and jet fuel from the Gulf Coast of Texas to the populous East Coast through 8,850 km of pipeline, serving 50 million consumers.

The government is planning for various scenarios and working with state and local authorities on measures to mitigate any potential supply issues, officials said Saturday. The attack is unlikely to affect gasoline supply and prices unless it leads to a prolonged shutdown, experts said.

Colonial Pipeline did not say what was demanded or who made the demand. Ransomware attacks are typically carried out by criminal hackers who scramble data, paralyzing vic-



tim networks.

The attack on the company, which says it delivers roughly 45% of fuel consumed on the East Coast, underscores again the vulnerabilities of critical infrastructure to damaging cyberattacks that threaten to impede operations. It presents a new challenge for the US, which is still dealing with its response to major hacks from months ago, including a massive breach of government agencies and corporations for which the U.S. sanctioned Russia last month.

In this case, Colonial Pipeline said the ransomware attack Friday affected some of its information technology systems and that the company moved "proactively" to take certain systems offline, halting pipeline operations. In an earlier statement, it said it was "taking steps to understand and resolve this issue" with an eye toward returning to normal.

The Alpharetta, Georgia-based company transports gasoline, diesel, jet fuel and home heating oil from refineries located on the Gulf Coast through pipelines running from Texas to New Jersey.

The private cybersecurity firm FireEye said it's been hired to manage the incident response investigation.

A leading expert in industrial control systems, Dragos CEO Robert Lee, said systems such as those that directly manage the pipeline's operation have been increasingly connected to computer networks in the past decade.

# फिरौती से पहले ही सबसे बड़ी पाइपलाइन का नेटवर्क सुरक्षित

साइबर हमले के बाद अमेरिका की सबसे बड़ी कोलोनिअल पाइपलाइन बंद

इससे रोजाना 250 अरब बैरल डीजल और विमान इंधन की आपूर्ति

कोलोनिअल पाइपलाइन से पूर्वी तट के 45% हिस्से में की जाती है आपूर्ति

वाशिंगटन। अमेरिका में ईंधन और विमान ईंधन की आपूर्ति के लिए बनी सबसे बड़ी पाइपलाइन को साइबर हमले के बाद बंद कर दिया गया है। ये पाइपलाइन टेक्सास से न्यूयार्क के पूर्वी तट तक जाती है। हालांकि फिरौती की मांग से पहले ही नेटवर्क को सुरक्षित कर लिया गया है।

अमेरिका की सबसे बड़ी पाइपलाइन का संचालन करने वाली कंपनी कोलोनिअल पाइपलाइन ने कहा कि 8852 किमी लंबी पाइपलाइन को साइबर अटैक का पता लगने के बाद बंद कर दिया गया है। इस पाइपलाइन से पूर्वी तट के लिए 45 फीसदी ईंधन की आपूर्ति होती है। कंपनी के अनुसार शुक्रवार पाइपलाइन में गड़बड़ी को देखा गया, लेकिन स्पष्ट नहीं हो सका कि अचानक ऐसा क्यों हुआ? शनिवार को इस मामले में एफबीआई, ऊर्जा विभाग और व्हाइट हाउस ने पूरी जानकारी मांगी। इस पर कंपनी ने बताया कि उसके कॉरपोरेट कंप्यूटर नेटवर्क में साइबर अटैक हुआ। फिरौती की मांग होती इससे पहले ही पाइपलाइन को बंद करने के साथ नेटवर्क को सुरक्षित कर लिया गया। एजेंसी



## बीते कुछ महीनों में अधिक हमले

कंपनी का कहना है कि उसे डर था कि हमलावर हमला कर सकते हैं। ये हमला अपराधिक समूह द्वारा किया गया है। ये देश की पाइपलाइन व्यवस्था को ध्वस्त करने की कोशिश नहीं है। ऐसे संगठनों का विदेशी इंटे्लिजेंस से भी कोई संपर्क नहीं है। बीते कुछ महीनों से इस तरह के हमलों की संख्या में तेजी से इजाफा हुआ है।

कंपनी कहीं फिरौती तो नहीं देगी?...अमेरिकी सरकार को साइबर अटैक की जानकारी देने के बाद कंपनी ने ये बताने से साफ इंकार कर दिया कि वो फिरौती देगी या नहीं? ये भी कयास लगाया जा रहा है कि उसने फिरौती की रकम पहले ही दे दी है। ऐसा इसलिए अनुमान लगाया जा रहा है क्योंकि कंपनी अभी तक ये स्पष्ट नहीं कर रही है कि वो पाइपलाइन का संचालन कब से करेगी? कंपनी रोजाना 250 बिलियन बैरल डीजल और विमान ईंधन की आपूर्ति करती है।

तेल की धार पर देखा गया असर...कंपनी ने बताया कि प्राथमिक जांच में पता चला है कि साइबर हमले से उद्योग की नियंत्रण प्रणाली को प्रभावित करने की कोशिश की गई है। इसका सबसे ज्यादा असर तेल की धार पर देखने को मिला था। शिकायत के आधार पर एफबीआई समेत अन्य एजेंसियों ने मामले की जांच शुरू कर दी है। कंपनी पर इस तरह के दो हमले हो चुके हैं जिसको लेकर वो सतर्क हो गई है।