

From 35 to 60 tonnes, city CNG supply to spike by year end

New Facility In Kalyani Boosts Supply

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Kolkata: In what seems to be a sort of relief for the CNG vehicle owners in Greater Kolkata, Bengal Gas Company Ltd (BGCL) has increased the supply of natural gas to 20 retail fuel stations in the city and its adjoining areas.

• BGCL, a 74:26 joint venture between Gail and the Greater Calcutta Gas Supply Corporation, a state PSU, on Thursday received approval from the Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation (PESO) to start operations of its Kalyani station. The company claimed that it had increased the CNG supply to Kolkata from 35 tonnes a day to 40 tonnes a day.

• BGCL CEO Anupam Mukherjee said: "We have received the PESO approval to start the Kalyani station. It will help us mitigate the supply woes to some extent. We have set a target to supply 60 tonnes a day to Kolkata and parts of Howrah,

MORE OUTLETS PLANNED



13,000
No. of CNG vehicles (approx.) plying in Kolkata

100 tonnes approx | Total CNG daily demand in Kolkata

40 tonnes
Daily CNG supply to Kolkata and its suburbs



The queue of cars at a CNG outlet

20 | Total CNG Outlets in Greater Kolkata

13 | Construction complete, yet to start ops

5 | CNG retail stations planned by next March



Hooghly, and the two Parganas by this Dec."

Currently, BGCL transports CNG in cascades from Panagarh for the purpose of supplying the gas to its retail outlets in Greater Kolkata. The transportation takes nearly 5-6 hours to cover 170km distance. The long transportation time, coupled with traffic jams, result in delays in the arrival of CNG at the retail outlets. As a result, vehicles need to queue up at the outlets for hours almost everyday. The unavailability of CNG has for-

ced many car owners to drive their vehicles on petrol.

"I was told that the gas would be available in abundance in the city, and that prompted me to buy a CNG car three years ago. But still, the problem persists," Sunil Kumar, a CNG car owner from Kestopur, said.

Chandan Patra, a luxury taxi owner-cum-driver, said: "For the last 15 days, I didn't face much problem in getting CNG. But before that, the pump near Rubi crossing used to dry out in the afternoon, and so I had to wait for 2-3 hours."

Sankar Ghosh, a petrol pump owner in the Bagbazar area, informed that some 15 days back, the cars had to wait overnight outside his pump to get CNG.

Acknowledging the problem, Mukherjee informed that for about 13,000 CNG vehicles in the city, currently, the demand for gas has zoomed to around 100 tonnes a day. "After Kalyani, we aim to start another station at Jhapa in Hooghly's Mogra in Oct, which will increase the CNG supply by another 20 tonnes a day" he added. There are also plans to set up two more stations — one at Bhatpara and another 20-tonne station at the Wireless Crossing in Barrackpore.

Currently, BGCL has 20 operational CNG retail outlets in Greater Kolkata. The construction of another 13 stations has been completed but are yet to start operations due to a lack of supply. The company plans to construct another five CNG retail outlets by next March. "A retail station generally sells around 1,500 kg of CNG a day. On that basis, after the start of operations at Kalyani, Mogra, and Bhatpara stations, we will be able to cater to the demand of 38 retail outlets," Mukherjee said.

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Kolkata: Bengal Gas Company Limited (BGCL) plans to start piped natural gas (PNG) supply to parts of Hooghly by Feb next year. PNG supply will begin after the company finishes building the 20 kilometres-long pipeline from Rajarambai near Mogra to Swetpur More on Delhi Road. BGCL has already set up a compressed natural gas (CNG) mother station at Jhapa, near Mogra, which is set to start operations by the end of Oct.

"We will supply 15 tonnes of CNG from Jhapa mother station increasing our daily offerings to 50 tonnes from 35 tonnes now," said BGCL chief executive officer (CEO) Anupam Mukherjee,

adding that this will reduce the demand-supply gap to an extent.

BGCL is a 74:26 joint venture of Gail and state govt-owned Greater Calcutta Gas Supply Corporation. It's the sole licensee for CNG and PNG supply in Greater Kolkata, which includes areas under Kolkata Municipal Corporation and parts of Howrah, Hooghly, and North and South 24 Parganas.

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The company will supply PNG through a medium density poly-ethylene (MDPE) pipe network. "We have already built an MDPE pipe network of 58 kilometres in Chandannagar and 32 kilometres in Bansberia respectively. We hope to begin PNG supply to end-consumers in Chandannagar, Bansberia and Kotalia and Debanandapur gram panchayats in Jan-Feb 2026," Mukherjee said.

BGCL has also started installing gas meters with 1,250 already installed. It has set a target of 74,000 PNG customers in Hooghly alone out of a projected 12.18 lakh consumers in its command area.

Climate change and India's energy transition beyond coal

The second Indian Express Round Table Conference on Environment was held at Calcutta Club on August 29, 2024. It was attended by an eclectic mix of thought leaders and key decision makers in this area.

Setting the tone for the evening, the Indian Express Group emphasised on the need for having a collective momentum towards building a culture of sustainability, for the betterment of all.

The Chief Guest for the evening, Dr Kalyan Raha, Chairman of the West Bengal Pollution Control Board, stated that we are currently living in the Anthropocene Era. Fossil fuels had caused significant damage to the UK in the last century and the West Thames had become deeply polluted. Since 1982, scientists have been warning about the irreversible damage to the environment and we are facing the impact today from the devastating air pollution in 2019. There had been no major incidences for ten years but in the last five years, a number of events have occurred including high intensity rainfall and the systemic damage to the Himalayas due to frequent construction, especially due to the establishment of the Sikkim Railway link.

Dr Satish Das, Chairman and Managing Director of Eastern Coal fields, was the keynote speaker. He spoke about how the energy landscape is evolving rapidly and how 15% of India's energy requirements is taken care of by coal, a long from 15% in 1990. He also spoke of the price stability in the coal sector and mentioned that mining by itself does not contribute to greenhouse gases. Non-fossil fuels enjoy a 50% cost reduction to their total installed capacity but electricity generation is only 25%. New technologies in storage capacity would surely be a significant game changer in this context.

The topic for the first panel discussion was 'Climate Change and Sustainability - How can we help the transition to a sustainable future?'

Prof S B Roy, Deputy of IIRADA, spoke about the Green India Mission and how livelihoods are intricately connected to sustainability. Agriculture versus forestry is a real



Dr Satish Das, Chairman, WBPCB, Pollution Control Board; Dr Kalyan Raha, Chairman, PCB, Bengal Gas Company Ltd.



Dr Pradyumn Das, Asst Professor, Rabindra Bharati University, Dakshinina Barta, WB, IIRAD, GAIL, Dr S B Roy, Director, IIRADA Management College, Prof. Anandita Mukherjee, Professor Emeritus, Jadavpur University, Prof. Sankar Bhattacharya, Ex Director, West Bengal Engineering Board.

time operational challenge and how, across the board, implementation is an ongoing concern. He reiterated the necessity for an integrated systems based approach and how all stakeholders must work for the common good.

Mr. Debabrata Das, Executive Director, Environment Management Division, SAIL, mentioned that our transition and AI must be purposeful and not just powerful. AI solutions must be fundamentally sustainable in nature and the steel industry is taking significant strides in this regard. Out of the 1482 MW electricity consumption by SAIL, 40% is derived from renewable

sources, with battery storage becoming increasingly critical. Prof Anandita Mukherjee, Professor Emerita from the School of Water Resources Engineering, Jadavpur University, emphasised the need for solid and liquid waste management. The ability to generate renewable energy from waste will help us manage the transition.

Structured Government initiatives like Swachh Bharat and Jal Jeevan Mission have helped greatly in improving the overall health and the employment of women as climate volunteers will take this momentum to the next level. Dr Piyu Banerjee, Assistant Pro-

fessor of Rabindra Bharati University, mentioned that academia industry for us are crucial for raising awareness at a grassroots level, especially through funding. Today India is a signatory of the Paris Climate Agreement and the recent addition of Article 1 has ensured that Carbon Credits can now be traded, thus further enhancing the commitment of businesses.

Professor Sankar Bhattacharya, an member of West Bengal Board of Secondary Education, spoke from his perspective as an evolutionary biologist with an interest in human cultural evolution. He expressed deep concern that we are attempt-



Group photo of the seminar participants.



Dr Kalyan Raha, Chairman, Pollution Control Board, Govt of West Bengal.

ing to solve local problems from a global solution perspective, which may not be totally compatible. The equilibrium between local and global goals will need to be addressed through meaningful applications of technology and insights. The topic for the second panel discussion was 'Substitute to fossil fuels is the answer to India's Energy dilemma?'

Dr Anupam Mukherjee, CEO of Bengal Gas, mentioned that while renewable energy is emerging significantly, 50% of installed capacity is currently contributing to only 21% of electricity generation. Grid stability is an integral part of electricity generation but renewable energy is not yet fully stable and may lead to blackouts. Fossil fuels required to command but in case of alternatives that is not the case. A Green Hydrogen plant set up by GAIL is facing challenges linked to availability of domesticated natural gas.

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the also stressed upon the need to balance demand and supply in green associations must be economically self-sufficient. Mr. Jay Chaudhary, Director General, IIRADA spoke about the necessity for RIT, 'Round the Clock' electricity, which is a fundamental expectation, that is best served by coal. On solar panels, he mentioned that till 2020, they were only deployed in areas which were off-the-grid but subsequently applied as a mainstream power source, marking a significant transition. Post the Paris Agreement, the NDC's (Nationally Determined Contributions), will ensure greater commitment by all stakeholders. Mr. Pradyumn Das, Chief General Manager, GAIL, spoke about how the transition to renewable energy is the key challenge. India has about 42 million tonnes of waste and this emits significant carbon dioxide. 150 tonnes of waste can emit 5 tonnes of natural gas. The Government has mandated that 1% of waste must be converted to natural gas and this target is being enhanced to 5% in 2030. A commitment to implementing such policies will be immensely beneficial for all stakeholders and society at large. In sum, the Environment Committee led by deeply insightful and astute conversations, with the audience truly involved. The speakers spoke candidly and occasionally anchoring assessments and establishing the critical integrated context.



Audience at the seminar



Guests at the seminar



Speakers at the seminar

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