# TIMES CITY

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# Nine hosps may infuse ₹4,500cr into state's healthcare infra

## Promise Of More Beds, Employment For Thousands At Biz Summit

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**Kolkata:** At least nine hospitals presented letters of intent to the Bengal government on the concluding day of Bengal Global Business Summit, promising investment worth over Rs 4,500 crore in the state in the coming years and generating employment for thousands of people.

Cardiac surgeon Devi Prasad Shetty announced that he would be setting up a 1,000-bed hospital in Kolkata for advanced cardiology, oncology and organ transplant. It is expected to be completed in the next three to four years.

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"We require around 10 acres in Kolkata for setting up a 1,000-bed hospital. We have requested the state government to help us find land for the hospital and we have been assured of all help. It is going to be a state-of-the-art hospital for advanced cardiology, oncology and organ transplant. We should be able to complete work in the next three to four years. It will create several jobs," said Shetty. He went on to say that Swasthya Sathi was a good initiative, making healthcare affordable for millions of families.

Several other healthcare companies too showed interest in setting up business in the state. The panel discussion on health infrastructure in the state was attended by representatives of top hospitals and diagnostic centres in the state.

Apollo Gleneagles is planning to infuse Rs 1,000 crore in the next few years, adding 1,000 beds. "The facility in Baranagar is under way. We are expecting to generate 5,000 jobs," said Rana Dasgupta, CEO of Apollo Gleneagles.

Health World Hospitals has submitted a letter of intent to invest Rs 450 crore while Medica has promised Rs 380 crore.

"We want more participation of the private sector in the health infrastructure in the state. We have asked industry leaders to let us know of their requirements. We have always provided a congenial environment for business in the state," said H K Dwivadi, chief secretary of the state.

The state government has roped in Ernst & Young to review the Swasthya Sathi scheme and suggest how it can be improved to include more families. "We are discussing with them and details will be made available shortly," said Narayan Swaroop Nigam, health secretary.

### SHOT IN ARM FOR SECTOR

Representatives of leading hospitals at a panel discussion at the Bengal Global Business Summit on Thursday

- The **healthcare sector** is expected to create over **10,000 jobs over the next few years**
- Cardiac surgeon **Devi Prasad Shetty** announced that he will be setting up a 1,000-bed hospital in Kolkata for advanced cardiology, oncology and organ transplant
- **Apollo Gleneagles** has offered a letter of intent for **₹1,000-crore** investment and they are planning to increase 1,000 beds
- **Health World Hospitals** has submitted a letter of intent to invest **₹450 crore**
- **Medica** has promised to invest **₹380 crore**
- **Fortis, Woodlands** and **other hospitals** too have offered letters of intent

# City pockets may get piped cooking gas by May-end

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**Kolkata:** The city may get piped gas from next month, allowing it to enter the league of city gas distribution. Kolkata is the only metro in India which does not have a piped gas infrastructure.

CEO of Bengal Gas Company Satyabrata Bairagi told **TOI** that at least some households in the city will get it from May-end as the joint venture between Gail and Greater Calcutta Gas has started laying the pipeline for cooking gas in some big housing complexes, like Urbana in south Kolkata, and Uniworld City and Rosedale in New Town. "We are hoping to start supply of piped natural gas in these households in a month. Initially, we may start with some households then try to cover the entire complexes," he said.

Bairagi spoke to **TOI** on the sidelines of Bengal Global Business Summit. Urbana has 1,200 households, Uniworld has 2,000 and Rosedale has 750. Bairagi said the company is bringing natural gas in tankers from Durgapur for CNG stations in Kolkata, which will now be used for PNG as well. Earlier, the director of business development of Gail, M V Iyer, said the gas pipeline is likely to reach Kolkata by June 2023. "Even if we take a pessimistic estimate, the pipeline up to Kolkata should be ready by next September," he said.

According to him, the pipeline up to Durgapur has been completed and a portion of the remaining pipeline up to Kolkata has also been completed. "We have completed 60km-70km of the Durgapur-Kolkata pipeline so far," he said.

The pipeline project in the state faced land acquisition hurdles in some districts. However, Iyer added that now the state is helping them with land acquisition for the gas infrastructure. "We are in touch with the state," he said.

According to the Gail director, the Bengal JV will invest Rs 5,000 crore in five years in the state to build a gas grid and CNG stations. It has a plan to give PNG connections to 14 lakh households in five years, which may go up to 16 lakh in the greater Kolkata region. The Gail JV for Bengal has the licence to supply gas to Kolkata, Howrah, and some parts of North and South 24 Parganas. "We shall have 130 CNG stations in our licenced area, which will ultimately go up to 186," he added. Besides Gail, PSU oil major HPCL is also investing heavily in Bengal for the gas infrastructure.

General manager (CGD, West Bengal) Sanjoy Ghosh said GCD would invest Rs 8,000 crore in building a gas grid in districts of Bengal. "Initially, we had eight districts. Now we have got another four in the latest round of bidding. We shall do both city gas and CNG," he said.

Meanwhile, director exploration of ONGC R K Srivastava said the petroleum and gas major would invest Rs 1,200 crore in the next three-four years in Bengal. "We are entering into a very exciting phase in Bengal. Besides oil in Ashok Nagar, we shall produce 4.4 lakh cubic metres of coal bed methane in the state in three-four years," he added.

### 14L HOMES TO BENEFIT IN GREATER KOL

Industrialists at the discussion on mining, oil & gas at BGBS on Thursday

- **60km-70km** of the **Durgapur-Kolkata pipeline** is complete; the rest will be complete by **June 23**
- **14 lakh households** in **greater Kolkata** to get piped cooking gas in the **next few years**
- **HPCL** to supply piped gas and **CNG** in **12 Bengal districts**

# Sentinel surveillance to track Covid cases

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**Kolkata:** With the number of Covid cases rising in some parts of the country, including Delhi, the state health department has decided to launch a sentinel surveillance in all districts to keep its strategy ready to counter a surge in any pocket. For Kolkata, RG Kar Medical College & Hospital has been entrusted with the responsibility of collecting random samples and testing.

The health department has asked 27 more hospitals in the districts to carry out the surveillance. Each hospital is expected to collect and test 400 samples each within three days starting from April 27 during the first round. Apart from uploading all rest reports on the ICMR website, they have to be compiled and mailed to the state's nodal person.

"This is to keep tabs on any upsurge in pockets so that we can plan strategies to control the infection spread," said a state health official.

The hospitals have been asked to collect samples randomly from patients in the OPDs and wards like surgery, gynaecology other than those with symptoms of influenza and SARI.

"People have become very lax. Many are not wearing the mask. Some are not taking the vaccine, thinking that Covid has disappeared. In such a scenario, such sentinel surveillance can track upsurge of cases," said IPGME&R hepatology head Abhijit Chowdhury.

The state on Thursday reported 26 fresh cases. Currently, 27 positive patients are in hospital care while 218 are in home isolation.

> Sentinel surveillance is generally planned to find out missing cases. Such a step is now necessary to check if there is any community spread
>
> **Anirban Dolui** | PUBLIC HEALTH SPECIALIST

# Health panel relief for IVF centre

**Kolkata:** The West Bengal Clinical Establishment Regulatory Commission (WBCERC) on Thursday disposed of a case involving a central Kolkata fertility centre for IVF failure. This is perhaps the first time the commission had got a case against a fertility clinic where the complainant wanted the IVF treatment cost of Rs 1.8 lakh refunded as the procedure was not successful.

The complainant, a driver by profession, had gone to the fertility centre for an IVF procedure on his 28-year-old wife. He was reportedly assured of a 100% result. Else, it was told to him that he would get a Rs 1.8 lakh refund, he claimed. But his wife did not conceive.

"There was no mention of 100% success or of the refund in the centre's records. Our panel members felt the husband had physiological issues and the wife had gynaecological issues. In such a case, the chance of successful IVF was less," said WBCERC chairman Ashim Kumar Banerjee.

The panel has asked the IVF centre to refund Rs 7,000 on humanitarian grounds. TNN

# Morning hours better but return-home trip brings back Wednesday traffic trauma

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**Kolkata:** After day-long traffic snarls in large parts of south and central Kolkata on Wednesday, cops tweaked traffic management plans to give some relief to commuters during the morning school hours on Thursday. However, the situation reversed by afternoon when schools dispersed with snarls returning to haunt motorists. Police said the influx of 4,800 additional private cars that dropped students to school and then returned to pick them up made it difficult to maintain traffic flow.

As vehicles moved bumper-to-bumper on AJC Bose Road and the jam spread to Exide crossing to the west, Sarat Bose Road to the south and Mullick Bazar to the north, it slowed down vehicular movement on arterial roads. The worst situation was between 12.15pm and 2.45pm. It was only post 3.30pm that the situation limped back to normal.

Cops said the experience on Wednesday and Thursday had forced them to announce some tough measures that will be implemented from Friday. "We will not request parents any more. Any vehicle that does not comply with traffic instructions will be prosecuted," said a police officer, who blamed the traffic snarl on illegal parking and blocking of school main gates. Cops said a couple of no-parking prosecutions took place even on Thursday.

The day started with 28 cops taking up position in the Loudon Street-Rawdon Street belt from 7.30am. Both the roads were soon choked with school vehicles and by 8am, the AJC Bose Road was affected up to Nonapukur tram depot. Slow traffic movement was also reported from Theatre Road, AJC Bose Road and Syed Amir Ali Avenue.

"We found a few thousand vehicles trying to drop students and coming back to pick parents up while going around Rawdon Street-Park Street-AJC Road in a loop. We stopped entry into Park Street-Loudon Street and diverted these cars via seven-point Park Circus crossing and Circus Avenue, thereby enlarging the loop to help us to clear the backlog," said a sergeant.

However, the problem resurfaced during school dispersals. The staggered dispersals did not help. The entire AJC Bose Road from Alimuddin Street towards Mullick Bazar was choked. Sarat Bose Road towards Minto Park was the next to report slow movement. Other roads to be affected were ATM Road towards Exide and finally AJC Bose Road from Exide towards Minto Park, ATM Road towards Exide and Amir Ali Avenue towards seven-point crossing.

Dispersal from school also slowed down the traffic on Sarat Bose Road from Sishu Mangal Hospital towards Minto Park and Theatre Road. With all roads around Mullick Bazar witnessing slow movement, traffic also crawled on Maa Flyover.

"Yet again, we had to resort to chasing away cars from the two La Martiniere schools along with Modern High. The challenge at La Martiniere was even bigger since the cars waited on the main thoroughfares for close to 15-20 minutes. With the school having no bus and very few pool cars, the average picking up time lasted way longer than the roads could sustain," explained an officer from East Traffic guard. He said that they are awaiting a decision from school authorities that can help in traffic circulation after several parents accused cops of "being insensitive towards the requirements of a child."

La Martiniere secretary Supriyo Dhar said: "During school entry hours, Kolkata Police maintains no-entry in Moira street, into which only the students' cars are allowed. This has been happening for years and we have never faced any complaints. It is not possible for us to consider alternatives at this point. The students, guardians and school administration are quite comfortable with the students coming in their private vehicles."

Commuters caught in school traffic in (clockwise from left) Loudon Street, Park Street and AJC Bose Road

# Bengal's first govt hosp fertility centre starts OPD

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**Kolkata:** Bengal's first fertility centre in a government hospital has started functioning at the Institute of Post Graduate Medical Education & Research (IPGMER). The centre of excellence in reproductive medicine opened its doors to outdoor patients on Thursday.

So far, no government health facility had such a unit, even though fertility clinics run by private organisations have mushroomed across the city. An ambitious project by the Bengal government, people who cannot afford costly assisted reproductive technology (ART) at private facilities can now avail of the treatment free at the state-run unit.

"For now, the unit will work from the main OPD building. But the full-fledged centre of excellence as planned by the state will come up in the newly built neonatology building where high-tech equipment will be installed. In addition to free treatment, the centre is expected to conduct various advanced research activities in reproductive medicine," said Manimoy Banerjee, director, IPGMER.

To run in the PPP model, the Ghosh Dastidar Institute for Fertility Research (GDIFR) is the knowledge partner for this unit at IPGMER.

On Thursday, fertility specialist Sudarshan Ghosh Dastidar started seeing patients in the OPD unit. "This is CM Mamata Banerjee's dream project. As a knowledge partner, we will be chipping in with training of manpower — doctors, nurses, technicians, exchanging of technical know-how. We will chip in with trained manpower in the initial years. We plan to support this centre till it stands independently," said Ghosh Dastidar, who runs GDIFR.

As a young doctor, Ghosh Dastidar had worked closely with India's IVF pioneer Subhas Mukherjee and also with Baidyanath Chakaravarty who passed away recently.

ART procedures like in-vitro fertilisation (IVF) are expensive. A single cycle costs anything between Rs 1.5 lakh and Rs 2.5 lakh depending upon the institute. In many cases, a woman might require three to six cycles to conceive. "IVF is costly because materials used for a single cycle cost anything between Rs 80,000 and Rs 90,000, making the treatment out of bounds for people from a poor economic background. The younger the patient, the higher the success rate in fewer attempts," said Ghosh Dastidar.

In addition to IVF, the centre of excellence is expected to provide other ART techniques, like intracytoplasmic sperm injection and intra uterine insemination (IUI).

### FREE TREATMENT

- An IVF cycle costs anything between **₹1.2 lakh** and **₹2.5 lakh** in the **private sector**; treatment at the **govt unit** will be **free**
- For now, the facility will operate out of the **main OPD block** at **IPGMER**; it will later be shifted to the new **neonatology building**
- In addition to fertility treatment, the centre will carry out **advanced research** in **reproductive medicine**

Sudarshan Ghosh Dastidar consults with a patient at the new centre on Thursday

# Kolkata sweats its way through longest spell without a *kalbaisakhi* since 2010

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**Kolkata:** This April has so far been the driest in Kolkata since 2010 and the city is now in the middle of the second longest non-winter rainless spell in 16 years. It hasn't rained a drop in the city since February 28, though a thunderstorm is likely to strike by Friday. In 2010, the city had received the season's first thunderstorm on April 27, following a dry period that had started on March 29.

In 2006, Kolkata had no thunderstorm or rain from February 1 to April 13 – the longest dry pre-monsoon period in recent years. A decade later, in 2016, Kolkata had received a thunderstorm on April 1 that led to a dry period that lasted till May 4.

There hasn't been a rainless April in the last two decades though thunderstorms have often been few and precipitation low, said the Regional Meteorological Centre.

"There has been no rain since March 1 and the mercury has been soaring past 35°C. There are several reasons behind this, including a strong high-pressure zone over central India that has been generating scorching westerly winds since March. This has prevented the formation and movement of western disturbances that lead to low-pressure troughs in the region. This season, no western disturbance has sailed past Kashmir," said RMC director G K Das.

The good news is that the high-pressure zone above central India has now weakened, allowing a western disturbance to generate a north-south low-pressure trough between Madhya Pradesh and Telangana. "There are clouds over central India and these have started floating into the western districts of Bengal," added Das.

Thunderstorms with a wind speed of 30-40 km/hr struck Jhargram, West Midnapore, Purulia, Bankura and West Burdwan on Thursday evening. "We expect the clouds to travel to south Bengal and reach Kolkata for a thunderstorm and rain by Friday. The cloud masses that have formed over Jharkhand are strong enough to sail deep into south Bengal. But if it doesn't rain by Friday, the dry spell could linger for another four-five days," said Das.

Three factors contribute to a squall or a thunderstorm — moisture incursion from the sea, heating of land in Gangetic Bengal and Jharkhand and cyclonic circulations. None of these has been happening this season, pointed out Das. "It is a normal phenomenon, though. In some years, the frequency of the contributing factors go down. So, thunderstorms turn rarer," said Das.

A 20-year analysis of the city's weather puts the average April mean temperature (maximum) at 30.2°C. It rises to 30.7°C in May, which is the hottest month of the year. The city receives around a dozen thunderstorms between March and May on an average.

### BUT MET SPIES THUNDERSTORM RELIEF

- Kolkata has received no rain since Feb 28
- This is the second longest non-winter rainless spell in the last 16 years
- In 2010, the city had received the season's first thunderstorm on April 27, following a dry period that had started on March 29
- In 2006, Kolkata had no thunderstorm or rain from February 1 to April 13 – the longest dry pre-monsoon period in recent years
- A decade later, in 2016, Kolkata had received a thunderstorm on April 1, followed by a dry period that lasted till May 4

**Factors that contribute to a thunderstorm**

- Moisture incursion from the sea
- Heating of land in Gangetic Bengal and Jharkhand
- Cyclonic circulations

A tiger takes a dip to beat the heat at Alipore zoo

Ei Samay dated 22.04.2022

# গ্যাস বণ্টনে ১৭,০০০ কোটি লগ্নি

বাণিজ্যে লক্ষ্মী

**এই সময়:** আগামী পাঁচ বছরে রাজ্যে শহরাঞ্চলে প্রাকৃতিক গ্যাস পাইপলাইন পরিকাঠামো গড়তে মোট ১৭,০০০ কোটি টাকা বিনিয়োগ হবে। বাড়ি ও কলকারখানায় গ্যাস বণ্টনের পরিকাঠামো তৈরি ও সিএনজি স্টেশন গড়ে তুলতে এই লগ্নি করবে গেইল ইন্ডিয়া, রাজ্য সরকারের সঙ্গে গেইলের যৌথ উদ্যোগ সংস্থা বেঙ্গল গ্যাস লিমিটেড ও হিন্দুস্তান পেট্রোলিয়াম (এইচপিসিএল)।

দুর্গাপুর থেকে হলদিয়া পর্যন্ত গ্যাসের যে পাইপলাইন গেইল বসাচ্ছে, তা কলকাতার উপকণ্ঠে আগামী বছরের সেপ্টেম্বরের মধ্যে পৌঁছে যাবে বলে সংস্থার আশা। দুর্গাপুর থেকে হলদিয়া পর্যন্ত ৩১৫ কিলোমিটার পাইপলাইনের মধ্যে ৬০-৭০ কিলোমিটার এখনও পর্যন্ত বসানো হয়েছে।

অন্য দিকে, আগামী কয়েক বছরে রাজ্যে শহরাঞ্চলে গ্যাস বণ্টন ও সিএনজি স্টেশনের পরিকাঠামো নির্মাণে এইচপিসিএল ৮,০০০ কোটি টাকা লগ্নি করবে। গেইল ও বেঙ্গল গ্যাসের সম্মিলিত বিনিয়োগের পরিমাণ আরও ৯,০০০ কোটি টাকা।

বৃহস্পতিবার বেঙ্গল গ্লোবাল বিজনেস সামিট (বিজিবিএস)-এর একটি সেশনের ফাঁকে এইচপিসিএল জেনারেল ম্যানেজার, সিটি গ্যাস ডিস্ট্রিবিউশন, সঞ্জয় ঘোষ বলেন, 'রাজ্যে আটটি জেলার দায়িত্ব আগেই পেয়েছিলাম। সম্প্রতি আরও চারটি জেলা পেয়েছি। এর ফলে আমাদের লগ্নি ৫,৮০০ কোটি টাকা থেকে বেড়ে ৮,০০০ কোটি টাকা হবে।'

ওই অনুষ্ঠানের ফাঁকে গেইল-এর ডিরেক্টর (বিজনেস ডেভেলপমেন্ট) এম. ভি. আইয়ার জানান, পশ্চিমবঙ্গে তাঁরা ৪,০০০ কোটি টাকার প্রকল্প বাস্তবায়িত করছেন। এছাড়া বেঙ্গল গ্যাস রাজ্যে আরও ৫,০০০ কোটি টাকা লগ্নি করবে। রাজ্যের ১৫টি জেলায় ৮৪৬ কিলোমিটার দীর্ঘ পাইপলাইন বসাতে গেইল প্রায় ৪,০০০ কোটি টাকা বিনিয়োগ করছে। তিনি বলেন, 'দুর্গাপুর থেকে হলদিয়া পাইপলাইন বসানোর কাজ চলছে। এটা আগামী বছরের সেপ্টেম্বরের মধ্যে কলকাতার উপকণ্ঠ পর্যন্ত চলে আসবে বলে আমাদের আশা।'

জমি অধিগ্রহণ সমস্যার জন্য কি প্রকল্পে বিলম্ব হচ্ছে?

তাঁর সাফ জবাব, 'জমি অধিগ্রহণ গোটা দেশেই সমস্যার। তবে রাজ্য সরকার আমাদের সহায়তা করছে।' উল্লেখ্য, রাজ্য সরকার গ্যাস পাইপলাইনের সমস্ত প্রকল্পের বাস্তবায়ন দেখভালের জন্য একটি কমিটি গঠন করেছে।

অন্য দিকে, উত্তর ২৪ পরগনার অশোকনগরে তেল ও গ্যাস উত্তোলনের জন্য আগামী ৩-৪ বছরে ১,৫০০ কোটি টাকা লগ্নি করবে ওএনজিসি। এর জন্য তাঁরা আরও ১৩টি কুয়ো খনন করবেন বলে জানিয়েছেন সংস্থার ডিরেক্টর রাজেশ কুমার শ্রীবাস্তব।

# ৩.৪২ লক্ষ কোটির লগ্নি প্রস্তাব বঙ্গে

## সম্মেলনে ঘোষণা মুখ্যমন্ত্রীর

**এই সময়:** বেঙ্গল গ্লোবাল বিজনেস সামিট (বিজিবিএস)-এ রাজ্য সরকার প্রায় সাড়ে ৩ লক্ষ কোটি টাকার লগ্নি প্রস্তাব পেয়েছে। এর ফলে রাজ্যে ৪০ লক্ষেরও বেশি কর্মসংস্থান সৃষ্টি হবে।

বৃহস্পতিবার এই পরিসংখ্যান পেশ করে মুখ্যমন্ত্রী মমতা বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়ের ঘোষণা, 'মাত্র ৪৮ ঘণ্টায় আমরা রাজ্যে ৩ লক্ষ ৪২ হাজার ৩৭৫ কোটি টাকার লগ্নি প্রস্তাব পেয়েছি। বিজিবিএস-এর ছ'টি সংস্করণের মধ্যে এটাই সর্বোচ্চ। শিল্পই আমার গন্তব্য। আগামী ১০ বছরে পশ্চিমবঙ্গ যা করবে, কেউ বাংলাকে ছুঁতে পারবে না। আমরা বিনিয়োগ আনবই। শিল্পে বাংলা বিশ্বের ১ নম্বর গন্তব্য।'

কোভিডের আগে শেষবার বিজিবিএস-এর আয়োজন হয়েছিল ২০১৯ সালে। ২০১৫ থেকে শুরু করে ২০১৯ পর্যন্ত বিজিবিএস-এর পাঁচটি সংস্করণ মিলিয়ে মোট ১২ লক্ষ কোটি টাকার মতো লগ্নি প্রস্তাব এসেছিল। মুখ্যমন্ত্রী জানিয়েছেন, সেই সমস্ত প্রস্তাব কার্যকর হওয়ার প্রক্রিয়ার মধ্যে রয়েছে।

এ বারের শিল্প সম্মেলন আগের পাঁচটিকে ছাপিয়ে যাওয়ার কারণ কী?

মুখ্যমন্ত্রীর ব্যাখ্যা, 'বিপর্যয় কখনও ঘটে। কিন্তু তাতে উন্নয়ন থেমে থাকে না। অতিমারী আসবে-যাবে। এলে আমরা তার বিরুদ্ধে লড়ব।

▶ এরপর পাঁচের (এই শহর) পাতায়

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আদানি গোষ্ঠীর বিনিয়োগ

**৮,০০০ কোটি**
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**১,৫০০ কোটি**
অশোকনগরে তেল, গ্যাস উত্তোলন করবে ওএনজিসি

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মুর্শিদাবাদে ব্যাটারি-চালিত বাস নির্মাণ কারখানা

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হিরানন্দানি গোষ্ঠীর ডেটা সেন্টারে বিনিয়োগ

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টেকনো ইন্ডিয়া গোষ্ঠীর বিনিয়োগ

সব অঙ্ক টাকায়

# Omicron's BA.2.12 needs monitoring: Experts

Neha.Madaan@timesgroup.com

**Pune:** New Omicron sub-variant BA.2.12 was more transmissible than BA.2 and would need to be closely monitored for spread and hospitalisation rates, top public health experts told **TOI** on Thursday. The experts said the surveillance data would be key as there was limited information on BA.2.12's severity.

Virologist Dr Shahid Jameel said BA.2.12 was a sub-lineage of the Omicron sub-lineage BA.2. He said: "It is spreading quickly in parts of the United States. It doesn't, however, appear to be significantly more contagious compared to other BA.2 sub-lineage variants. All of these are on average about 12 times more infectious than the original virus. BA.1 is about 10 times more infectious than the original virus. Thus BA.2 variants are about 20% more infectious than BA.1."

BA.2.12 — detected in Covid samples from New Delhi — was unlikely to cause a surge in Maharashtra due to the widespread cross-immunity from Omicron gained during the third wave, state surveillance officer Dr Pradeep Awate told **TOI** on Thursday. "BA.2.12 has been detected in samples from Delhi and NCR. We are still testing samples from Maharashtra for its presence," a top INSACOG scientist said, adding that the sub-variant may be responsible for Delhi's recent Covid spike.

## CORPORATE BUZZ

www.toi.in/psu

### Bengal Gas Company Limited at Bengal Global Trade Expo 2022

Bengal Global Trade Expo (BGTE) 2022 is being held at Science City for five days till April 24. The trade expo covers all aspects related to promotion of trade in the eastern region. Bengal Gas Company Limited (BGCL) has put up a stall at BGTE Expo-2022. MV Iyer, director (Business Development & Marketing), GAIL (India) Limited visited BGCL stall at the expo on April 20, in the presence of S Bairagi, CEO, BGCL; PK Biswas, head (Marketing), BGCL and other senior officials of GAIL and BGCL. BGTE Expo-2022 is covering more than 15 sectors including electric vehicles and allied products, industrial hardware, electronics, solar, food processing, telecom and IT, textiles and garments, chemicals and petrochemicals, leather and footwear, real estate, gems and jewellery, automobiles and auto parts.

### Damodar Valley Corporation news

**Central minister visits Maithon Dam, Hydel Station**

Krishan Pal, minister of state for Power & Heavy Industries, GoI, visited the Maithon Dam and Hydel Station project of DVC on April 18. He was received at the Kolkata Airport by RN Singh, chairman, DVC. Pal was given a cordial welcome on arrival at Maithon and escorted to chairman's Camp House, where a Guard of Honour was presented by the local CISF Unit. He was accompanied by Nishikant Dubey, MP of Godda, Jharkhand, and Aparna Sengupta, MLA of Nirsa, Dhanbad. They visited the Maithon Hydroelectric Power station and were given a tour of the three generating units by DVC engineers.

**Homage to Dr Ambedkar on 131st birth anniversary**
DVC paid homage to Babasaheb Ambedkar on his 131st birth anniversary at the 12th floor lounge of DVC Towers, Kolkata on April 14. The event was graced by RN Singh, chairman; Arup Sarkar, member (Finance); SL Bhalotia, CVO and the EDs of DVC with other officials and employees, who paid their respect to one of the architects of the Damodar Multipurpose River Valley Scheme.

### Board of Practical Training update

National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS) is a central sector scheme implemented by Ministry of Education through four Regional Boards of Apprenticeship/Practical Training (BOATs/BOPT) at Mumbai, Kanpur, Chennai and Kolkata to facilitate qualified Graduates and Diploma holders in a course of training in any industry/establishment. The scheme is run through a portal which caters to the needs of the industries and students. The evaluation of the scheme was done by National Institute of Labour Economics Research and Development (NILERD), under Niti Aayog, in 2019. As per the findings, about 79% of students are getting employed, during or immediately after completion of training. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the continuation of the scheme for five years and a financial outlay of ₹ 3,054 crore has been allotted to provide financial support to the industries contributing in skill development by engaging apprentices. With the central government raising the minimum rate of stipend for Graduates and Diplomas to ₹ 9,000 per month and ₹ 8,000 per month respectively, the MSME sector will find it more attractive in terms of government assistance against each apprentices engaged and more MSMEs are likely to contribute in skill development through NATS.

### WBSETCL wins IPPAI Power Awards

Erstwhile West Bengal State Electricity Board (WBSEB) was divided into two separate power entities, one of which is West Bengal State Electricity Transmission Company Limited (WBSETCL) that started functioning independently from April 1, 2007. WBSETCL, being one of the best transmission utilities in the country, is responsible for transmitting uninterrupted quality power 24*7 to the distribution licensees. The state transmission network of WBSETCL is spread across West Bengal from the Himalayas to the Sagar. WBSETCL has been declared the winner of the prestigious IPPAI Power Awards 2022 (Independent Power Producers Association of India) recently in the following categories — Best Transmission Utility under Public Sector based on the overall operational performance of the company, and Best State Load Despatch Centre (SLDC) for outstanding performance. WBSETCL has been receiving IPPAI Power Award for the past three years consecutively for excellent performance in Transmission sector.

### MSTC happening

CMD MSTC shared the dividend receipt of ₹ 26.93 crore with Ram Chandra Prasad Singh, minister, Steel and Faggan Singh Kulaste, minister of state for Rural Development and Steel of India. MSTC Limited was incorporated as a regulatory body for export of scrap in 1964. At present, it is a premier e-commerce public sector company and has paid all time high interim dividend of ₹ 38.75 in the current FY. Present capital structure of MSTC Ltd — Authorised capital: 150 crore, Paid-up capital: 70.40 crore. The shares of MSTC were listed on both BSE and NSE through IPO during March 2019. Its head office is in Kolkata and it has 19 regional and branch offices covering major states.

# Modi hails Guru Tegh Bahadur, defends CAA

## 'Needed To Provide Relief To Persecuted Sikhs, Hindus'

Times News Network

PM Modi during the 400th Parkash Purab celebrations of Guru Tegh Bahadur at Red Fort on Thursday

**New Delhi:** PM Narendra Modi on Thursday praised Guru Tegh Bahadur Singh for serving as a shield that protected India's faith and culture from the brutal assault launched on it by Mughal emperor Aurangzeb.

In an unprecedented address to the nation from the Red Fort on the 400th Parkash Purab of the ninth Sikh Guru, the PM also defended the Citizenship Amendment Act, calling it a necessary measure to provide relief and security to the Sikhs and Hindus facing religious persecution in neighbouring countries.

Modi referred to Guru Tegh Bahadur as a beacon of hope at a time when India faced the "storm of religious extremism" at the hands of Aurangzeb. "At that time, India faced a storm of religious extremism. An India that perceived religion as a philosophy, science and a subject of introspection was faced with people who, in the name of religion, crossed all limits of violence and torture. At that time, it was Guru Tegh Bahadur who emerged as the hope for the people looking to protect their identity. And Guru Tegh Bahadur ji emerged as the 'Hind Di Chadar'."

The PM also spoke of Aurangzeb's order, issued from the Red Fort, to behead the Sikh Guru after he had refused to convert to Islam. "History, the present and this Red Fort are witness to the fact that though Aurangzeb may have beheaded scores of people, he could not separate us from our faith," Modi said.

The theme of religious persecution also led Modi, who bowed before Guru Granth Saheb amid recitation of Gurbani by 400 Ragis, to justify the CAA saying it was designed to offer refuge to those compelled to flee neighbouring countries because of religious persecution.

"CAA cleared the way for Sikhs and religious minorities in neighbouring countries to obtain citizenship in India. All this became possible only because our Gurus taught us to hold humanity above everything else. Love and unity are parts of our culture," Modi said, adding that the Guru Granth Sahib had served as a guide of self-realisation and an embodiment of India's diversity and unity.

# After Yogi order, Mathura temple disables its loudspeakers

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**Agra:** The management of Mathura's Shri Krishna Janmasthan temple on Wednesday voluntarily disconnected its loudspeakers, used to broadcast the morning *aarti* (*manglacharan*), following UP CM Yogi Adityanath's order directing that religious places "should not cause inconvenience to others".

The temple management, however, stated that it would resume the use of loudspeakers "if mosques in the city do not discontinue using them for Azaan and other prayers".

Shri Krishna Janamsthan Seva Sansthan secretary Kapil Sharma said he took the decision after a discussion with senior members of the organisation. "This initiative was taken to convey the message to other religious places in the district to stop using loudspeakers," Sharma said, adding that this was the first time that loudspeakers had been disabled in the temple, regarded as the birthplace of Lord Krishna.

The temple is one of the few big shrines in Mathura where loudspeakers are used for *aarti* every morning at 5:30 am. Many other temples use mikes with small speakers to conduct the morning *aarti*.

# Shah: No greater violation of rights than terrorism

Times News Network

**New Delhi:** Describing India as worst hit by the scourge of terrorism, home minister **Amit Shah** on Thursday said there was no greater violation of human rights than terrorism and that ending terrorism was intrinsic to safeguarding human rights. Reiterating the Modi government's zero-tolerance policy towards terrorism, he commended NIA for helping in efforts to uproot terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir by cracking down on terror funding and also overground workers offering logistical support to terrorists.

"I have a running argument with rights organisations, about human rights angle of terror. Whenever there is a counter-terror action, human rights organisations come forward to raise concerns...they may have a point...but I believe there is no greater violation of human rights than terrorism... I tell NIA there may be protests despite its successes (in the crackdown on terror). But NIA should continue to move ahead with a firm resolve to crush terrorism," he said while addressing an event to commemorate NIA Day.

Appreciating NIA's role in tackling terror in J&K, Shah said the terror-funding cases registered by it in 2018 and 2019 had played a big role in cutting the money supply to separatists. Recalling how in the 105 cases registered by NIA related to terror-funding, 94 chargesheets were filed against 876, with 796 arrested and 100 convicted, Shah hoped for similar success in cases relating to funding of Left-wing extremists.

The home minister added that the cases registered by NIA against overground terror workers in J&K had helped destroy many sleeper cells.

Pointing to designating of 38 individuals as terrorists under UAPA, Shah said even if they were abroad, they would have to live with the terror tag.

### 'Law enforcement must rely on digital forensics and tech, not third-degree'

Stating that law enforcement agencies needed to rely on technology, data, information and digital forensics for investigation and not redundant "third-degree" methods, home minister Amit Shah on Thursday said the National Investigation Agency had been tasked with preparing databases on seven counts — narcotics, hawala transactions, arms trafficking, counterfeit currency, bomb blasts, terror funding and terrorism, reports **Bharti Jain**.

"Preparation of a national database and allowing investigation agencies probing cases relating to the above seven fields access to this database, while also adding state-level databases, will help both the national investigation agencies as well as the state police," Shah said.

A source later told **TOI** that both NIA and Narcotics Control Bureau would put together the national database on these specialised crimes, many of which had inter-state and international links.

# HC orders cover for Hanskhali family, witnesses

Subrata Chattoraj | TNN

**Kolkata:** Calcutta High Court on Thursday directed the state to provide appropriate protection to the family of the Hanskhali rape-murder victim and witnesses to the case. The court also directed suitable psychiatric/psychological treatment to help them tide over the trauma.

A division bench of Chief Justice Prakash Shrivastava and Justice Rajarshi Bharadwaj directed the state to bear the expenses for giving protection to the witnesses.

It passed the order following the submission by the counsel for petitioners, Phiroze Edulji, who had referred to the "threat" statement made by TMC Bhagabangola block president Afroze Sarkar. The counsel prayed for extending the protection of the witnesses under the Witness Protection Scheme, 2018. Under it, a witness is required to apply in a specific format either by him or through his counsel before the competent authority under the district and sessions judge to decide the measures.

Advocate general SN Mookherjee didn't oppose the prayer.

# BJP's Hanskhali panel calls for Centre's role

**Kolkata:** The five-member BJP 'fact-finding' committee on the Hanskhali rape-murder has, in its report to party national president J P Nadda, urged that the accused lodged in state jails be shifted out of Bengal for impartial investigations.

BJP's Englishbazar MLA and committee member Sreerupa Mitra Chowdhury also sought the Centre's intervention to prevent "deterioration of law and order" in Bengal. "The series of assaults on women and violence in general in the state call for the Centre's intervention under Articles 355 and 356 of the Constitution," the MLA said.

The committee will submit a copy of its report to Union home minister Amit Shah. TNN

# 17.3 lakh in 12-14 age group are fully vaccinated

Sushmi.Dey@timesgroup.com

**New Delhi:** Another age-group is likely to be added soon to India's Covid inoculation programme after the expert panel of the country's drug authority emergency use approval to Biological E's Corbevax shots for kids aged 5-11 on Thursday. Currently, both Corbevax and Covaxin can be used in children aged 12 and above.

"The subject expert committee on Covid-19 of the CDSCO, which deliberated on Biological E's EUA application, has recommended granting emergency use authorisation for use of Corbevax in the age group of five to 11 years," a source said.

**PANEL NOD FOR CORBEVAX**

India began inoculating children aged 12-14 on March 16. So far, around 2.5 crore adolescents in 12-14 years' age have initiated vaccination against Covid-19, whereas 17.25 lakh have been fully vaccinated with two doses. Among those in the 15-18 years' age group, 5.8 crore have taken at least their first dose, whereas over 4 crore are fully immunised.

Overall, over 187 crore doses have been administered across the country which also includes 2.6 crore precaution doses.


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MARVA Qadir d/o Ghulam Qadir R/O Kamal Bra. B/2/101, Greenpark Kol-102 has changed her name to MARWAH QADIR for all future purposes

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# প্রাকৃতিক গ্যাসের রাস্তায় এক ধাপ, অপেক্ষায় রাজ্য

নিজস্ব সংবাদদাতা

বিশ্ব বঙ্গ শিল্প সম্মেলনের (বিজিবিএস) প্রথম দিনে মুখ্যমন্ত্রী মমতা বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় জানিয়েছিলেন, ২০২৩ সালের মধ্যে দেশের প্রাকৃতিক গ্যাস-গ্রিডে জুড়বে পশ্চিমবঙ্গ। বৃহস্পতিবার সম্মেলনের শেষ দিনে হিন্দুস্তান পেট্রোলিয়াম (এইচপিসিএল) জানাল, রাজ্যের বাকি থাকা চার জেলায় সেই গ্যাস বণ্টনের বরাত পেয়েছে তারা। এর ফলে সবক'টি জেলাতেই গ্যাস বণ্টন পরিকাঠামোর বরাত দেওয়ার প্রক্রিয়া সম্পূর্ণ হল। গ্যাস সরবরাহের জন্য প্রধান পাইপলাইনের নির্মাতা তথা গ্যাসের জোগানদার গেল-এর আশ্বাস, নির্ধারিত সূচি মেনেই দুর্গাপুর থেকে কলকাতাকে ছুঁয়ে হলদিয়া পর্যন্ত পাইপলাইন পৌঁছবে ২০২৩ সালের সেপ্টেম্বরের মধ্যে।

মুখ্যমন্ত্রী থাকাকালীন বুদ্ধদেব ভট্টাচার্য রাজ্যে প্রাকৃতিক গ্যাস আনতে গেল-এর সঙ্গে আলোচনা শুরু করেন। পরে মমতা প্রকল্পটি নিয়ে উদ্যোগী হন। জমি ব্যবহারের অনুমতি পাওয়া নিয়ে কোথাও কোথাও জট বাধায় পাইপলাইন বসানোর কাজ কিছুটা ধাক্কা খেলেও, নবান্ন সেই জট দ্রুত কাটাতে নির্দেশ দিয়েছে সংশ্লিষ্ট জেলা প্রশাসনগুলিকে।

বিজিবিএসে এ দিন বিভিন্ন ক্ষেত্রে লগ্নির সম্ভাবনা নিয়ে আলাদা করে একাধিক আলোচনা সভার আয়োজন করেছিল রাজ্য। এর মধ্যে গ্যাস, খনি ও কয়লা ক্ষেত্রের সভায় গেল-এর ডিরেক্টর (বিজ়নেস ডেভলপমেন্ট) এম ভি আইয়ার জানান, ১৫টি জেলা জুড়ে তাদের পাইপলাইন গড়ার যে কাজ চলছে, তাতে লগ্নির অঙ্ক প্রায় ৪০০০ কোটি টাকা। দুর্গাপুর পর্যন্ত পাইপলাইনের কাজ শেষ। সেখান থেকে কলকাতাকে ছুঁয়ে হলদিয়া পর্যন্ত ৩১৫ কিলোমিটারের কাজ ২০২৩-এর জুন-সেপ্টেম্বরের মধ্যে সম্পূর্ণ হওয়ার আশা। গোটা দেশেই পাইপলাইন পাতার জন্য জমি পাওয়ার সমস্যার কথা জানালেও তাঁর দাবি, এ রাজ্যে সরকার জট কাটাতে সাহায্য করছে।

এ দিকে, রাজ্যের চার জেলায় (বীরভূম, মুর্শিদাবাদ, মালদহ এবং দক্ষিণ দিনাজপুর) পরিবহণ জ্বালানি অর্থাৎ সিএনজি এবং পাইপলাইন মারফত বাড়িতে রান্নার গ্যাস এবং শিল্পের জ্বালানি অর্থাৎ পিএনজি হিসেবে প্রাকৃতিক গ্যাস বণ্টনের পরিকাঠামো গড়তে ১১-এ দফায় সম্প্রতি দরপত্র চেয়েছিল এই ক্ষেত্রের নিয়ন্ত্রক পিএনজিআরবি। বৃহস্পতিবার শিল্প সম্মেলনের মঞ্চ থেকে এইচপিসিএলের জিএম সঞ্জয় ঘোষ জানান, সেই প্রক্রিয়ায় জয়ী হয়েছেন তাঁরা। আগে বরাত পাওয়া আট জেলায় বণ্টনের পরিকাঠামো গড়তে সংস্থা ঢেলেছিল ৫৮০০ কোটি। এখন তা বেড়ে হবে ৮০০০ কোটি টাকা। হুগলিতে দু'টি এবং নদিয়ায় একটি সিএনজি স্টেশন খুলেছে সংস্থা। মে মাসের শেষে নদিয়া, দুই ২৪ পরগনা, হুগলি ও হাওড়ায় আরও ১২টি চালু হবে। ২০২৩ সালের মার্চের মধ্যে হুগলি, নদিয়া, উত্তর ২৪ পরগনা এবং উত্তর দিনাজপুরের প্রতিটি জায়গায় ৫০০০টি করে পরিবারে পিএনজি সংযোগ দেওয়ার লক্ষ্য।

অন্যান্য জেলায় গ্যাস বণ্টনের বরাত পাওয়া বেঙ্গল গ্যাস এবং আওইসি-আদানি গ্যাস প্রথম পর্যায়ে যথাক্রমে ৫০০০ কোটি ও ১২০০ কোটি টাকা লগ্নি করছে। সেই কাজ ক'বছর আগেই শুরু হয়েছিল। গত ফেব্রুয়ারিতে আরও কয়েকটি জেলায় আইওসি এবং বিপিসিএল আলাদা ভাবে সেই বরাত পেয়েছে। তারাও বিনিয়োগ করবে। সংশ্লিষ্ট শিল্পমহলের মতে, সবক'টি প্রকল্পের হাত ধরে রাজ্যে এক দিকে যেমন প্রাকৃতিক গ্যাস নির্ভর বিকল্প জ্বালানির জোগান সূত্র গড়ে উঠবে, তেমনই তৈরি হবে নতুন কাজও। এই দিন ওএনজিসি-র ডিরেক্টর (এক্সপ্লোরেশন) আর কে শ্রীবাস্তব জানিয়েছেন, অশোকনগরে অশোধিত তেল ও প্রাকৃতিক গ্যাস খননের কাজে তিন-চার বছরে ১৫০০ কোটি লগ্নি করছেন তাঁরা।

■ বৃহস্পতিবার বিজিবিএসের শেষ দিনে বসেছিল রাজ্যে গ্যাস, খনি এবং কয়লা ক্ষেত্রে লগ্নি ও ব্যবসার সম্ভাবনা নিয়ে বিশেষ আলোচনা চক্র। তারই মঞ্চে দেশ-বিদেশের শিল্প-কর্তারা। *নিজস্ব চিত্র*

## রাজ্যে প্রাকৃতিক গ্যাস

- কয়েক বছর ধরে গ্যাস জোগানের মূল পাইপলাইন গড়ছে প্রাকৃতিক গ্যাস উৎপাদনকারী সংস্থা গেল। ধাপে ধাপে মোট লগ্নির অঙ্ক ৪০০০ কোটি টাকা।
- সেটির একাংশ কলকাতা ছুঁয়ে হলদিয়া পৌঁছবে ২০২৩ সালের জুন-সেপ্টেম্বরের মধ্যে।
- বিভিন্ন এলাকায় সেই গ্যাস বণ্টনের বরাত পেয়েছে— বেঙ্গল গ্যাস, আইওসি-আদানি গ্যাস, ইন্ডিয়ান অয়েল, হিন্দুস্তান পেট্রোলিয়াম, ভারত পেট্রলিয়াম।
- পরিবহণের জ্বালানি (সিএনজি) এবং পাইপের মাধ্যমে বাড়িতে রান্না ও শিল্পোৎপাদনের জ্বালানি (পিএনজি) হিসেবে ব্যবহৃত হবে সেই গ্যাস।

## বিজিবিএসে ঘোষণা

- রাজ্যের আট জেলায় আগেই গ্যাস বণ্টনের দায়িত্ব পেয়েছিল হিন্দুস্তান পেট্রোলিয়াম। বিশ্ব বঙ্গ শিল্প সম্মেলনে সংস্থাটির ঘোষণা, আরও চার জেলায় বণ্টনের বরাত পেয়েছে তারা। এগুলি হল: বীরভূম, মুর্শিদাবাদ, মালদহ এবং দক্ষিণ দিনাজপুর।
- এই চারটি জেলায় বণ্টনের বরাতই বাকি ছিল।
- সব মিলিয়ে রাজ্যে সংস্থাটির লগ্নি বেড়ে হচ্ছে ৮০০০ কোটি টাকা।

Ei Samay dated 26.04.2022

# কর্পোরেট বাজ়

## বেঙ্গল গ্লোবাল ট্রেড এক্সপো ২০২২-এ বেঙ্গল গ্যাস কোম্পানি লিমিটেড

২৪ এপ্রিল পর্যন্ত সায়েন্স সিটিতে পাঁচ দিনের জন্য অনুষ্ঠিত হল 'বেঙ্গল গ্লোবাল ট্রেড এক্সপো (বিজিটিই) ২০২২'। পূর্ব ভারতে বাণিজ্য বৃদ্ধি ত্বরান্বিত করতে সব দিকই তুলে ধরা হয়েছিল ট্রেড এক্সপো তে। এই বাণিজ্য মেলায় স্টল দিয়েছিল বেঙ্গল গ্যাস কোম্পানি লিমিটেড (বিজিসিএল)। গেইল ইন্ডিয়া লিমিটেডের বিজনেস ডেভেলপমেন্ট অ্যান্ড মার্কেটিং বিভাগের ডিরেক্টর এম ভি আইয়ার বিজিসিএলের স্টল পরিদর্শন করেন। উপস্থিত ছিলেন বিজিসিএল-এর সিইও এস বৈরাগী, মার্কেটিং হেড পি কে বিশ্বাস, গেইল ও বিজিসিএল-এর অন্য পদাধিকারীরা। বিজিটিই-২০২২ -এ ১৫টি বিভিন্ন ক্ষেত্রের শিল্প সংস্থা স্টল দিয়েছিল। এর মধ্যে রয়েছে ইলেকট্রিক ভেহিক্যালস ও আনুষঙ্গিক পণ্যগুলি, ইন্ডাস্ট্রিয়াল হার্ডওয়্যার, ইলেকট্রনিক্স, সোলার এনার্জি সংরক্ষণ সংক্রান্ত প্রযুক্তি, খাদ্য প্রক্রিয়াকরণ, টেলিকম, তথ্যপ্রযুক্তি, পোশাক শিল্প, পাদুকা শিল্প, আবাসন ও গৃহনির্মাণ, রত্নালঙ্কার, অটোমোবাইল, পেট্রোকেমিক্যালস, কেমিক্যালস, মোটরগাড়ির যন্ত্রাংশ নির্মাণ ইত্যাদি।

The Statesman(KOLKATA) dated 22.04.2022

# GAIL to invest ₹5k cr for gas distribution in KMC area

## The pipeline network will facilitate supply of natural gas to 38 lakh domestic households

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 21 APRIL

The Bengal Gas Company, a joint venture of GAIL and Greater Calcutta Gas Supply Corporation, is developing a City Gas Distribution Network (CGD) in the Kolkata Municipal Corporation area and parts of adjoining districts to provide eco-friendly and affordable greener fuel to CNG stations, PNG (piped natural gas) connections to domestic households, commercial and industrial units. The investment for the project is Rs 5,000 crore.

GAIL's pipeline network will facilitate the supply of natural gas to 38 lakh domestic households, and CNG to more than 600 stations and a large number of industrial and commercial establishments in major industrial cities and towns of 22 districts in the state within a few years.

Speaking at a panel discussion during the session on mining and allied industries at the Bengal Global Business Summit, M V Iyer, director (business development), GAIL (India) shared details about the company's ongoing natural gas pipeline infrastructure projects in the state of West Bengal.

Mr Iyer highlighted that in West Bengal, GAIL (India) is also executing 846 km of pipeline in 15 districts across the state at an investment of around Rs 4,000 crore. Having completed the stretch of pipeline from Dobhi to Durgapur, gas supply to Matix Fertilizers was commenced by GAIL in August 2021. The 315 km long Durgapur to Haldia pipeline, including a spur line to Kolkata, is under construction and is planned to be completed by September 2023 in phases.

It was highlighted that the establishment of gas infrastructure and its utilisation by the industries, as well as the domestic and transportation sectors, will generate substantial revenue for the state government.

Mr Iyer, while thanking the state government for extending support from time-to-time for the implementation of the project, also said he is looking forward to the same in future for faster and smoother implementation of the balance main pipeline construction and city gas distribution.

Speaking on the sidelines of the Bengal Global Business Summit organised by the West Bengal government, GAIL director (business development), M V Iyer, shared details of the company's ongoing natural gas pipeline infrastructure projects in the state.

GAIL will implement projects worth over Rs 4,000 crore in West Bengal. In addition, GAIL JV company Bengal Gas will invest around Rs 5,000 crore in the state, Iyer said.

Bengal Gas Company Ltd is a 74:26 per cent JV between GAIL and Greater Calcutta Gas Supply Corporation Limited formed to develop city gas distribution network in Kolkata and its nearby areas.

In West Bengal, GAIL (India) Ltd is executing 846 km of pipeline in 15 districts.

After completing the stretch of pipeline from Dobhi (in Bihar) to Durgapur, gas supply to Matix Fertilizers was commenced by GAIL in August 2021. The 315 km long Durgapur to Haldia pipeline including spur line to Kolkata is under construction, Iyer said.

Asked whether land acquisition was hurting progress of the project, Iyer said it is a problem in the entire country but the state government is providing support to the company.

The West Bengal government has formed a committee to oversee execution of the projects in the state.

The Maharatna company is operating 13,840 km of natural gas pipeline network nationwide. Currently, GAIL is implementing its Jagdishpur Haldia Bokaro Dhamra pipeline and Barauni Guwahati Pipeline in Eastern India.

These pipelines are known as the Pradhan Mantri Urja Ganga pipeline project as part of the National Gas Grid to bring green fuel to people and industry.

Meanwhile, ONGC said it will be investing Rs 1,500 crore over the next 3-4 years for gas exploration at Ashoknager in North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal.

Business Standard

# GAIL, Hindustan Petroleum to pump in Rs 17,000 cr to boost Bengal CNG infra

**GAIL, its JV company Bengal Gas Co and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd's combined investment in various CNG projects in West Bengal will be Rs 17,000 crore over the next five years**

**Press Trust of India | Kolkata April 21, 2022** Last Updated at 20:16 IST

GAIL, its JV company Bengal Gas Co and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd's combined investment in various CNG projects in West Bengal will be Rs 17,000 crore over the next five years, senior officials said on Thursday.

The projects include piped gas distribution and setting up of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) stations. Availability of the green fuel is expected to play a role in reducing air pollution.

HPCL will be investing Rs 8,000 crore in city gas distribution and CNG station infrastructure, while, GAIL and Bengal Gas will jointly invest Rs 9,000 crore to set up the pipeline, officials said.

The CNG pipeline from Durgapur is expected to reach Kolkata by September 2023. Of the 315 km long Durgapur to Haldia pipeline, only 60-70 kilometres have been completed in patches.

We had eight districts and now we are set to get four more districts for city gas distribution in West Bengal. Altogether our investment will go up from Rs 5800 crore to Rs 8000 crore, HPCL CGM (City Gas Distribution) Sanjoy Ghosh told PTI.

NEWS18 বাংলা

# Private CNG Buses: শহরে এই প্রথম, এপ্রিলের শেষ থেকেই কলকাতায় ছুটবে বেসরকারি সিএনজি এসি বাস

১৫ নম্বর বাস স্ট্যান্ড (উল্টোডাঙ্গা)থেকে করুণাময়ী হয়ে শাপূর্জি পর্যন্ত চলবে বাসগুলি

**#কলকাতা:** এপ্রিল মাসের শেষ থেকে কলকাতায় বাতানুকুল সিএনজি বাস চলা শুরু হবে। মোট ৫টি বাস আসছে। ১৯ এপ্রিল ইনডোর থেকে কলকাতার উদ্দেশ্যে রওনা দেবে বাসগুলি। স্যাসি বানাচ্ছে 'আইচার' সংস্থা আর বডি বানাচ্ছে 'অডি' সংস্থা। ১৫ নম্বর বাস স্ট্যান্ড (উল্টোডাঙ্গা)থেকে করুণাময়ী হয়ে শাপূর্জি পর্যন্ত চলবে বাসগুলি। রুটের দৈর্ঘ্য ১৭ কিলোমিটার। এই প্রথম বেসরকারি মালিকের হাতে সরকারি সিএনজি বাস চলবে।

জানা গিয়েছে, বাসগুলি একদিকে যেমন পরিবেশবান্ধব, তেমনই সৌখিন, আরামদায়ক। খরচ ডিজেল চালিত বাসের থেকে কিছুটা কম। ডিজেলে এই বাস যত কিলোমিটার যায় তার থেকে কুড়ি শতাংশ বেশি সিএনজিতে। ডিজেলের লিটার ১০০ টাকা পেরিয়েছে,সেখানে সিএনজি ৭৪টাকা প্রতি কেজি। এতে অনেকটাই আর্থিক সাশ্রয় হবে বলে ধারনা বাস মালিকদের।বাসের মালিকদের বক্তব্য, বাস রুটে না চালানো পর্যন্ত লাভ-ক্ষতির হিসাবটা তাঁরা জানতে পারছেন না। সিটি সুবারবার্ন বাস সার্ভিসের সাধারণ সম্পাদক টিটো সাহা জানান, 'পরিবহণ মন্ত্রীর সদর্থক ভূমিকাকে স্বাগত জানাই।পরিবহণ দফতর উল্টোডাঙ্গার ১৫ নম্বর সরকারি বাস স্ট্যান্ড ব্যবহারের অনুমতি দিয়েছে। যাত্রীরা ওখান থেকেই এই বাস ধরতে পারবে।'

প্রতিটি বাসের ভিতর থাকছে সিসি ক্যামেরা । ৩২ জন যাত্রী বসতে পারবেন।একটি সিটের থেকে আরেকটি সিটের মধ্যে অনেকটাই পার্থক্য থাকছে। ফলে যাত্রীরা স্বচ্ছন্দে বসতে পারবেন। অনেক বাসেই পা রাখার ক্ষেত্রে অসুবিধা হয়, অর্থাৎ লেগ-স্পেস কম থাকে, কিন্তু এই বাসে লেগ-স্পেস যথেষ্ট! ওই রুটে সর্বনিম্ন ২০টাকা ও সর্বোচ্চ ৩৫ টাকা ভাড়া হবে।প্রতিটি বাসে ১৬.২ কেজি করে চারটি গ্যাসের ট্যাংক থাকছে। প্রতি কেজিতে বাস চলবে ৫-৫.৫ কিলোমিটার। ১০০ কিলোমিটার যেতে ১৫০০টাকার গ্যাস লাগবে। কিন্তু ওই রাস্তা যেতে ২৫০০ টাকার ডিজেল লাগবে। অতএব এই বাসে অনেক সাশ্রয় বলেই মনে করছেন বাস মালিকরা।

১৫ দিন অন্তর পাঁচটা করে বাস আসবে শহরে। এ'পর্যন্ত ২০টি বাসের অনুমতি দিয়েছে পরিবহণ দফতর। সিএনজি পাম্প বাড়ছে রাজ্যের প্রতিটি জেলায়, আগামিদিনে কলকাতা কিংবা দূরপাল্লায় এই সিএনজি চালিত বাস চলবে বলেই আশা করা হচ্ছে।