



DSPL-79



## Felicitation Ceremony of The Heroes of Indian Hockey

Chief Guest

### Sri Mohan Charan Majhi

Hon'ble Chief Minister, Odisha

Convention Centre, Loka Seva Bhavan

5:00 P.M., 21 August 2024

Watch Live:  | Sports Odisha

Bronze in Paris | Pride at Home

### Welcome Roadshow

Biju Patnaik International Airport to  
Kalinga Stadium

12.30 P.M. Onwards



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## FIRST COLUMN

### THE HIGH COST OF FAST FASHION

Sustainable clothing that is produced ethically should be our responsible fashion choice



SHAINY SHARMA

Fast fashion, which refers to the rapid production of inexpensive clothing based on the latest trends, has transformed the global fashion industry. Brands like Zara, H&M, and Forever 21 have led this movement, providing trendy, affordable clothing at an unprecedented speed. By turning runway designs into store-ready garments in just weeks, fast fashion has made the latest styles accessible to a wide audience, particularly young consumers. While this has democratized fashion, it comes with serious environmental, social, and economic consequences. The fast fashion model thrives on its ability to meet consumer demand for low-cost, trendy clothing. The business strategy relies on efficient supply chains that quickly replicate popular styles, keeping consumers constantly engaged with new products. This approach fuels the desire for inexpensive, fashion-forward clothing, allowing consumers to experiment with various trends without spending much. For younger consumers, who often use fashion as a means of self-expression, this is particularly appealing. However, the lower quality and shorter lifespan of these clothes contribute to a cycle of overconsumption, waste, and environmental harm.



One of the biggest drawbacks of fast fashion is its environmental impact. The industry is energy-intensive, relying heavily on fossil fuels for textile production and transportation. It is estimated that the fashion industry is responsible for about 10% of global carbon emissions, surpassing the emissions from all international flights and maritime shipping combined. This is due to the widespread use of synthetic fibers, which are derived from fossil fuels, and the energy required for manufacturing and global distribution. Furthermore, the production process consumes vast amounts of water, especially in the case of cotton, a commonly used fabric that requires thousands of liters to produce just one kilogram. Additionally, textile dyeing and finishing processes contribute significantly to water pollution. Fast fashion's environmental footprint extends beyond carbon emissions and water consumption. Workers in fast fashion supply chains often endure poor working conditions and low wages. In many cases, these exploitative labor practices are linked to environmental degradation, as manufacturers in low-regulation regions cut costs by disregarding environmental standards. Thus, the social and environmental issues of fast fashion are intertwined. Despite these concerns, fast fashion remains popular due to its affordability and the constant influx of new styles. Many consumers, particularly those on tight budgets, are unaware of or choose to overlook the ethical and environmental implications of their purchases. However, there is a growing movement toward sustainable fashion, driven by increasing awareness of these issues. Sustainable fashion prioritizes quality over quantity, using eco-friendly materials and ethical production practices. Some brands are adopting circular economy principles, focusing on recycling, upcycling, and designing products for durability. Consumers must be educated about the environmental consequences of their choices, and governments should implement stricter regulations on textile production and promote recycling initiatives. Encouraging sustainable practices and fostering demand for eco-friendly products can push the industry toward more responsible production methods. The shift from fast fashion to sustainable alternatives is critical for reducing the industry's environmental and social toll. In conclusion, while fast fashion has made high-fashion trends more accessible, its environmental and social costs are significant. Addressing these challenges will require concerted efforts from consumers, industry leaders, and policymakers to move toward more ethical and sustainable fashion practices.

*(The writer is an educator; views expressed are personal)*

# Gas pricing: Reforms turn into a control regime



UTTAM GUPTA

Government's decision to grant a 20 per cent premium on natural gas from the state owned new wells has added complexity to the gas pricing regime



The decision of the Union Government to grant a 20 per cent premium over the APM price (a jargon for administered or controlled price) for any natural gas (NG) that state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India Limited (OIL) will produce from the 'new wells or well interventions' from their nominated fields has made the NG pricing more complicated. It is an outcome of a thought process that focuses on unshackling the oil and gas industry from price controls to start with but ends up exercising more controls. Every year, India consumes 59.5 billion cubic metres (bcm) of NG. Of this, nearly 54 per cent or 32.13 bcm is produced domestically, and the balance is met from imports of liquefied natural gas (LNG). Of the domestic gas, around two-thirds is from blocks given on nomination to ONGC and OIL and from fields given under the New Exploration and Licensing Policy (NELP) (launched in 1999) as well as those given to private firms before the NELP. NG supplies from the aforementioned fields (known in common parlance as 'legacy fields') are governed by a particular pricing regime. Before April 2023, under the pricing guidelines effective since November 2014, supplies from these fields used to be a weighted average (WA) of prices of NG at four international locations: Henry Hub (the USA), Alberta Gas (Canada), NBP (National Balancing Point) (the UK), and Russian Gas. The prices used for arriving at the WA were over twelve months. It was revised every six months in a financial year (FY). The four global hubs have fairly mature gas markets and the prices obtained there are pretty reasonable. Moreover, considering that the prices for twelve consecutive months were used for arriving at the WA, it smoothed out the month-to-month variations thereby ensuring that the price to the consumers was 'stable'. From April 1, 2023, the government changed the above system based on the recommendations of the Kirit Parikh committee (2022). Under the new formula, for any given month, the price expressed per million



EVERY YEAR, INDIA CONSUMES 59.5 BILLION CUBIC METRES (BCM) OF NG. OF THIS, NEARLY 54 PER CENT OR 32.13 BCM IS PRODUCED DOMESTICALLY, AND THE BALANCE IS MET FROM IMPORTS OF LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS

British thermal units (Btu) (energy units used globally for setting NG prices) is arrived at by taking 10 per cent of the monthly average of the basket of Indian crude oil in the preceding month. The price thus calculated is subject to a price band of US\$4 - 6.50 per Btu. The shift to link the price of NG with the crude oil price is flawed as natural gas is not a replacement for crude oil. The pricing of NG has to be on its own, especially when nearly half of the gas is used for urea production and power generation. Given the intimate connection of these sectors for food security and the need for affordable electricity (especially, for farmers and poor household consumers) and heavy subsidies are involved, the gas price has to be 'reasonable' and 'stable'. While the earlier formula met both these requirements, the new one effective from April 2023 doesn't as the volatility in crude prices and monthly revisions in NG price linked to crude can create uncertainties for both sectors. To avoid this, the government has put a price band. What this means is even when the price determined based on crude linkage turns out to be higher (at the current Indian basket price of USD 77 per barrel, the NG price comes to US\$ 7.7 per Btu) than the ceiling of US\$ 6.50 per Btu, the price will be set at US\$ 6.50 per Btu. Given the movement in crude price since April 2023 and considering that in the near term, it will continue to rule well above US\$ 75 per barrel, the formula-based price will always be much more than US\$ 6.50 per Btu. So, the ceiling price will be the price to consumers thus rendering the formula redundant. Effectively, thus there is control on the gas price for two-thirds of domestic production and that too at a level,

the government wants. One wonders whether a premium of 20 per cent allowed on gas supplied from the so-called 'new wells' or 'well interventions' in the nomination fields of ONGC and OIL will make any difference to the situation on the ground. Applying a 20 per cent premium to the formula-determined price of US\$ 7.7 per mBtu (77x0.1), we get US\$ 9.24 per mBtu. But, then there is a cap of US\$ 6.50 per mBtu. So, the price remains at US\$ 6.50 per Btu. The purpose of giving premiums is defeated. On the other hand, if the government intends to build a 20 per cent premium on the ceiling price and give US\$ 7.8 per mBtu then, it makes no sense to put a cap in the first place. The moot point is: if anyway ONGC and OIL are to be given a good price, let this be driven solely by the formula and putting a cap is unwarranted. At least, there is an element of 'predictability'; firms on their own can calculate as to what price they will be getting. But, here we have an APM price namely US\$ 6.50 per mBtu (call it base price) that is arrived solely at the discretion of the bureaucrat. And, yet another price for supplies from the so-called 'new wells' or 'well interventions' which is arrived at by adding 20 per cent to this. This too is at the discretion of the bureaucrat. Moreover, which fields get the benefit of interventions will also be at his discretion. Even the pricing of the remaining one-third of domestic NG supplied from the so-called deep/ultra-deep and high-pressure/high-temperature fields (KG-D6 operated by Reliance Industries and neighbouring KG-DWN-98/2 operated by ONGC in Krishna-Godavari basin off the Andhra Pradesh coast fall in this category) isn't free from 'discretion' and 'arbitrariness'.

Technically though, the firms can go for competitive bidding to determine the price for such supplies (referred to as a 'premium price'), this too is subject to a ceiling linked to the prices of alternate fuels including fuel oil, naphtha, and LNG. On taking charge in 2014, the Modi - government started the process of reforming gas pricing by introducing formula-based pricing for legacy gas and thereafter in 2016 by permitting market-based pricing for supplies from deep/ultra-deep and high-pressure/high-temperature fields. But, it has ended up exercising control of both. Meanwhile, the Kirit Parikh committee had recommended the de-regulation of difficult gas fields' prices by January 1, 2026, and the de-regulation of APM prices for gas supplies from the legacy fields by January 1, 2027. But, the government is silent on these recommendations. In fact, by adding more categories (read: 'new wells' and 'well interventions'), it has given a signal that the administered/controlled pricing regime for NG and attendant bureaucratic red tape is here to stay. Delivering the 75th Independence Day address on August 15, 2021, Prime Minister Narendra Modi set the country a target to achieve self-reliance in energy production by boosting the gas-based economy (besides giving a push to electric mobility and hydrogen production). He wanted the share of NG in the total energy mix to go up from the current around 6 per cent to 15 per cent. But, in the absence of a 'stable' and 'predictable' policy environment particularly when it comes to the most crucial aspect of pricing of gas, this won't be possible.

*(The writer is a policy analyst; views are personal)*

## Healthcare under siege: Rising violence, gender disparity, and the fight for justice

The silent struggles of healthcare workers, often overlooked, reveal a disturbing reality of increasing violence in hospitals and clinics

During his Independence Day address, the Chief Justice of Telangana proudly announced that he had recommended a Protection of Advocates Act to the state government. The applause that followed made me think of the resident doctors marching through the rain in Delhi, gathering their courage to demand a law that protects healthcare professionals from the increasing violence in spaces that are supposed to be the safest. In 2019, the draft Healthcare Service Personnel & Clinical Establishments Bill was introduced, seeking to penalise those who assault healthcare workers. However, the Home Ministry opposed it, stating that no separate law was nec-



SATENDRA SINGH

essary for doctors. A Right to Information (RTI) response from the Health Ministry later revealed that the draft Bill had been withdrawn. On July 26, 2024, the Health Minister further rejected the idea of a central law, asserting in the Lok Sabha that the newly enacted BNS and BNSS laws provided adequate protection for medical professionals. Despite this, healthcare professionals' anger is justified. Why

doesn't the public show the same solidarity as they did during the Nirbhaya case, where the horrific rape and murder of a physiotherapy student led to nationwide outrage? Even amid a national strike by the Indian Medical Association (IMA) over the rape and murder of a doctor in Kolkata, another tragedy was overlooked—the brutal killing of a nurse, a single mother, who went missing from a hospital in Rudrapur, Uttarakhand. Her body was found in Uttar Pradesh after she had been strangled and bludgeoned to death. Similarly, in Gujarat in 2020, an Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) worker was raped while on duty. According to a study published in the

Health Reports\*, 32% of ASHA workers face sexual violence, while 88% experience emotional and economic abuse. Disturbingly, 12% report sexual violence from their husbands, and 64% from beneficiaries and their families. These incidents highlight the pervasive threat healthcare workers face. Last year, a doctor allegedly raped a nurse at a clinic in northeast Delhi. In another case, a Bhopal doctor was accused of confining and raping a 19-year-old patient. Just recently, at the same medical college in Bhopal, a resident doctor was suspended for inappropriate behavior with a cancer patient. Violence against healthcare workers also extends beyond sexual violence. Last month in Manipur, armed assailants



attacked a children's hospital, and two weeks later, a patient was shot dead at Delhi's GTB Hospital due to mistaken identity. These violent acts, whether committed against doctors, nurses, paramedics, or patients, must be addressed with the same urgency and seriousness. However, the IMA has yet to make a statement regarding the rape and murder of the nurse in Rudrapur.

Have they suspended the membership of the Principal of RG Kar Medical College, implicated in the Kolkata case? Has the Indian Orthopaedic Association (IOA) taken action against its accused member? A journalist recently tweeted during a doctors' protest, asking where the female doctors were in leadership positions. This raises a crucial point. According to a study published in PLOS Global Public Health, out of 46 professional medical associations in India, only 9 (less than 20%) are headed by women. Neither the Academy of Hospital Administration (AHA) nor the IOA has ever had a female president. This is despite women demonstrating remarkable leadership in healthcare—both my hospital

and medical college are currently led by women doctors, and more than 50% of the heads of departments are women. Clearly, women are capable of leading in healthcare, but they remain under-represented in top positions. Of the 64 individuals currently serving as presidents and secretaries of the 32 state chapters of the IMA, only three are women. It's time to move beyond token representation. Women doctors must be given more leadership opportunities. One of the most balanced and comprehensive statements on the issue of healthcare violence has come from Women in Global Health India. Their statement calls for an end to sexual violence in all healthcare settings, and it emphasizes that

anyone—whether doctor, nurse, paramedic, or even political party member—who commits such violence must face severe consequences. Eleanor Roosevelt, who played a key role in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, once famously said that human rights begin in small, often overlooked places. In the context of today's healthcare system, that means the seminar room of RG Kar Medical College or the private hospital in Rudrapur—spaces where violence has occurred, but which remain untouched by reforms. *(The writer is director-professor at the University College of Medical Sciences and a disability justice advocate. Views are personal)*





SC reveals why it took suo motu cognisance of Kolkata doctor rape-murder case

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Tuesday revealed why it took suo motu cognisance of the recent horrific rape and murder of a 31-year-old doctor in Kolkata's RG Kar Hospital.

hearing it because this is not just a case of a horrific murder in Kolkata hospital... but this is about systemic issue about safety of doctors across India."

Medical Association (IMA) called for nationwide withdrawal of emergency services for 14 hours. The State was expected to deploy State machinery to maintain law and order and protect crime scene.



parents for cremation late in the night. On the next day, the doctors are on protest and a mob assembles at the hospital.

ected the crime scene. How can the police allow vandals to enter the hospital. After the principal resigned, he is sent to another hospital.

The bench said what has taken place in Kolkata is not just a horrific murder but an incident which has raised systemic issues about the safety of doctors. "We are deeply concerned that there is a virtual absence of safe work conditions across the country, particularly in public hospitals.

submitted that Kolkata police took all necessary action. He said he will place on record all the facts. "Photos and videos were circulated before the police reached the crime scene. We didn't allow anything to happen and cordoned off the area.

the vandalism incident and 37 people have already been arrested. The top court asked the West Bengal government to not take coercive action against people holding peaceful protests and speaking up on social media.

SC observations raise questions on Mamata Govt's mindset, morality: BJP

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Tuesday said the Supreme Court's observations in the rape and murder case of a medic in Kolkata have raised serious questions on the "mindset and morality" of the Mamata Banerjee Government in West Bengal.



what would have been the scenario in the country if any of the constituents of the INDIA bloc had been in power at the Centre.

together to protect each others' crime, Trivedi charged. The Supreme Court on Tuesday came down heavily on the West Bengal government over delay in filing FIR in the rape and murder case of a trainee doctor at Kolkata's RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, terming the incident "horrific".

this incident raises systemic issue regarding safety of doctor across India. "The questions that the Supreme Court has asked in connection with the case are serious questions on the mindset and morality of those running the government," the BJP spokesperson said at a press conference at the party headquarters.

Court on behalf of the West Bengal government in the matter. "There is no if and but left now. They are all standing together to support each other's crimes. They are the same people who stood in support of every separatist and terrorist in the court. They have once again stood in support of a notorious criminal in the court today," he said.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A 35-year-old Border Security Force (BSF) officer has become the first Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) officer to successfully complete the Ironman challenge, one of the toughest triathlon events across the globe.



to complete the event and achieve this historic feat in a time of 12:42:25." The Ironman challenge comprises three events which include 3.8 kilometres of swimming, 180 kilometres of cycling and 42.2 kilometres of full marathon.

guard Indian fronts with Pakistan and Bangladesh, also posted pictures of Kajla holding the national flag as well as the flags of the BSF and NSG at the finish line in the Danish capital.

Regulatory failures can cause long-term dent in investor confidence: Cong amid Sebi row

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Amid row over Hindenberg's allegations against Sebi chief Madhabi Buch, the Congress on Tuesday said regulatory failures and conflicts of interest may be brazened out briefly but they can cause long-term damage to the sentiment and confidence of investors.



growing number of Indians, particularly the youth. The median age of these investors is 32 years, and 40 per cent of all investors are below 30 years of age, Ramesh said, citing the NSE.

tripping by the Adani Group, this becomes a serious matter involving the faith of crores of investors," Ramesh said in a social media post. Regulatory failures and conflicts of interest may be brazened out in the short term but these can cause long-term damage to sentiment and confidence, he asserted.

India, Malaysia elevate ties to comprehensive strategic partnership

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India and Malaysia on Tuesday elevated their ties to a comprehensive strategic partnership after Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Malaysian counterpart Anwar Ibrahim here held extensive talks focusing on expanding cooperation in several sectors, including trade, investment and defence.



ated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership," Modi said in his media statement. The prime minister said the agreement on employment of workers will promote the recruitment of Indians as well as the protection of their interests. Highlighting the importance of India-Malaysia economic engagement, Modi said bilateral trade is being done in Rupees and Malaysian currency Ringgit.

"We should increase mutual cooperation in new technological areas, such as semiconductor, Fintech, defence industry, artificial intelligence and quantum. We have emphasised on accelerating the review of the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement between India and Malaysia," he said. The prime minister said work will also be done to connect India's digital payment system UPI with Malaysia's PayNet.

as an "important partner" of India in the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and Indo-Pacific region. "India gives priority to ASEAN centrality. We agree that the review of the FTA (free trade agreement) between India and ASEAN should be completed in a timely manner," he said. In an apparent reference to the situation in South China Sea that has been witnessing growing Chinese military muscle-flexing, Modi said, "We are committed to freedom of navigation and over flight in accordance with international laws. And, we support the peaceful resolution of all disputes."

The two sides also deliberated upon new possibilities of cooperation in the defence sector as well. Both sides also decided to establish a digital council for cooperation in digital technology, and to form a start-up alliance. In his remarks, Ibrahim said all issues, sensitive or likewise, were discussed in reflection of the true meaning of friendship between the two countries.

RSS, affiliates to discuss better cooperation at Palakkad meet

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



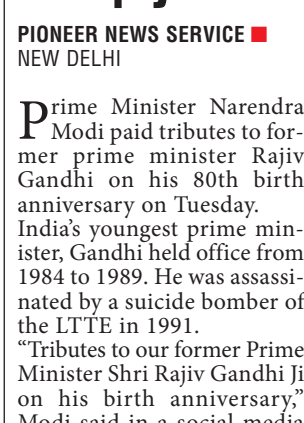
Senior office-bearers of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), its affiliates and the BJP are set to deliberate on various issues of national interest and discuss measures to enhance mutual cooperation at a three-day annual meeting in Kerala's Palakkad district that is scheduled to start from August 31.

happenings and planning regarding the various dimensions of social change," Ambekar was quoted as saying in the statement. All these organisations will talk about measures for strengthening "mutual cooperation and coordination on various subjects", Ambekar said. This year's all-India coordination meet of the RSS assumes significance as it comes on the heels of top leaders of the organisation and the ruling BJP at the Centre discussing a host of issues, including strengthening coordination between the party and the Sangh as well as upcoming elections, at Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's residence last week.

Modi pays tributes to Rajiv on 80th birth anniversary

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tributes to former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi on his 80th birth anniversary on Tuesday. India's youngest prime minister, Gandhi held office from 1984 to 1989. He was assassinated by a suicide bomber of the LTTE in 1991.



goodwill... Papa, your teachings are my inspiration and your dreams for India are my own, I will fulfil them taking your memories with me," Rahul Gandhi said in a social media post in Hindi. In a social media post in Hindi, Kharge said today the country is celebrating 'Sadbhavana Diwas'. "Former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi was a great son of India. He ignited a ray of hope in crores of Indians and brought India to the 21st century with his unprecedented contribution," Kharge said.



"His many pleasant initiatives such as lowering the voting age to 18 years, strengthening Panchayati Raj, telecom and IT revolution, computerisation programme, peace accords, women empowerment, universal vaccination programme and new education policy with emphasis on inclusive education brought about transformational changes in the country," the Congress chief said.

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