

India steps up talks with Iran

RAY OF HOPE. Tehran says expect good news on energy supply in near future after Modi dials Iranian President

Rishi Ranjan Kala
New Delhi

India has stepped up negotiations with Iran, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi dialling Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, and the government conceding that continued blockade of the Strait of Hormuz is a "matter of concern", especially with regard to LPG supplies.

On Friday, Iran's Ambassador to India Mohammad Fathali, said: "We are trying to solve the problem and you can expect good news in the near future."

Meanwhile, domestic refineries have increased production of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), and the government has maintained that there is "no crisis" or "shortage" for households.

"This is an issue of concern for us, particularly with a major portion of our imports [of LPG] coming from the Strait of Hormuz. The closure of SoH is a little matter of concern," said Sujata Sharma, Joint Secretary at the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, on Friday.

India consumed 33 million tonnes (mt) LPG in

FY25, of which 20.67 mt was imported. Of the total imports, almost 90 per cent came from West Asia via the Strait.

"The government's highest priority is to ensure uninterrupted LPG supplies to households. Supplies are also being ensured for critical sectors like hospitals, educational institutions and other essential services," she said.

SUFFICIENT STOCKS

Sharma noted that domestic LPG production from refineries has increased by over 30 per cent (since March 5) compared to production before the crisis.

Based on Oil Ministry's data, India's average daily production of LPG stood at 37,355 tonnes in January 2026. Compared with January's output, India's average daily LPG production may have increased to 48,562 tonnes.

The MoPNG official stressed that the country has no shortfall of natural gas (liquefied natural gas). Besides, India's crude oil supply is in "good position" and refinery inventory is "fine". She also



Prime Minister Narendra Modi

emphasised that there is "no shortage" of piped natural gas (PNG), which is supplied to households for cooking. Sharma said there are roughly 60 lakh LPG-using households that are near city gas distribution (CGD) centres and can "immediately" switch to PNG.

More than 1.5 crore PNG households in India are currently being provided with natural gas and this will continue without any hindrance, Sharma said.

"In order to ease supply concerns related to LPG, the government is directing CGD entities to offer new PNG connections to the affected commercial and in-

dustrial consumers in urban centres," she added.

The government has also requested all concerned local bodies, highway authorities and State governments to expedite clearances for laying of pipeline by CGD entities.

IRAN PARLEYS

As India rushed to manage its limited LPG supplies, PM Modi on Thursday night dialled Iranian President Pezeshkian over the "serious situation" in West Asia.

"Had a conversation with Iranian President, Masoud Pezeshkian, to discuss the serious situation in the region. Expressed deep con-

cern over the escalation of tensions and the loss of civilian lives as well as damage to civilian infrastructure," the Prime Minister posted on social media platform X.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar also held talks with Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi on Thursday and Friday. Both leaders have spoken four times since the US-Israel offensive against Iran began (February 28).

On Friday, Iran's Ambassador to India Fathali said, "We are trying to solve the problem, and you can expect good news in the near future."

Iran's Supreme Leader in India, Abdul Majid Hakeem Ilahi said: "A complete solution is that leaders of the world have to come together."

They should convince President Trump that this war is against civilians and that it has to stop, he added.

"They should also put pressure on the Zionist regime to stop this war. We didn't create this war. We are ready to share our blood on the earth, but not ready to sell our dignity," he said.