



पी एन जी आर बी  
PNGRB



INDRAPRASTHA GAS

# Energy Security

## Driving India's Next Wave of Gas Demand

9–10 April 2026 | Hyatt Regency, New Delhi

### POST EVENT REPORT

#### ORGANISED BY:

PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS REGULATORY BOARD  
&  
INDRAPRASTHA GAS LIMITED

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## 1. Executive Summary

The conference brought together India's foremost policy architects, regulatory leaders, industry captains, and strategic thinkers at a moment of acute national significance. Convened against the backdrop of a severe geopolitical disruption in West Asia, which had sharply exposed India's structural energy dependence, the two-day forum provided an authoritative platform to examine the path from near-term crisis management to long-term energy sovereignty. Across six substantive panel sessions, participants converged on a shared resolve: that India must treat the current crisis not as an isolated episode, but as a structural inflection point that demands decisive, sustained reform across the entire gas value chain.

## 2. Conference Overview

### Inauguration and Plenary Session

The conference was inaugurated with a formal plenary session chaired by **Dr. Anil Kumar Jain, Chairperson, PNGRB**, and addressed by the Chief Guest, **Dr. Neeraj Mittal, IAS, Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas**.

The plenary also featured

**Shri Ajay Tyagi, Former Chairman, SEBI;**

**Shri D.K. Sarraf, Former Chairperson, PNGRB;**

PNGRB Member **Shri Anjani Kumar Tiwari** and

PNGRB Member **Shri Jayanta Narayan Das**.



**Shri. K. K. Chatiwal, MD, Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL)**, welcomed the guests and delegates to the conference, “Energy Security through Gas: Driving India’s Next Wave of Demand,” jointly organized by the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) and Indraprastha Gas Limited.

In his address, he highlighted the increasing significance of natural gas in India’s energy transition amid rising energy demand, rapid urbanization, and growing environmental consciousness. Referring to the Government of India’s vision of increasing the share of natural gas in the country’s primary energy mix from 6% to 15%, he noted that this objective is being supported through the expansion of the City Gas Distribution (CGD) network across 307 authorized geographical areas.

He further observed that recent geopolitical developments have affected global energy supply chains and pricing dynamics, prompting policy initiatives by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas to strengthen energy security and accelerate the transition from LPG to PNG in urban and semi-urban regions.

Acknowledging PNGRB's role in establishing a transparent and progressive regulatory framework, Mr. Chatiwal reaffirmed IGL's commitment to infrastructure expansion, operational excellence, and the delivery of sustainable energy solutions. He concluded by emphasizing the importance of addressing challenges related to gas availability, pipeline connectivity, affordability, and innovation, while describing the conference as a valuable platform for deliberating on strategies to drive the next wave of gas demand and further strengthen India's energy security.

**Dr. Neeraj Mittal, IAS, Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas,** delivered the keynote address as the Chief Guest and thanked the PNGRB for organizing the conference, remarking that the timing of the event could not have been more appropriate. He observed that the challenges confronting India's energy sector had, in many ways, brought together the collective resolve of all stakeholders toward ensuring long-term energy security.

Emphasizing that energy security must be founded on the principles of sustainability and affordability, Dr. Mittal stated that natural gas being a clean, versatile, and increasingly indigenous fuel is uniquely positioned to address these priorities simultaneously. He noted that while recent geopolitical disruptions had placed significant pressure on the energy ecosystem, they had also created a much-needed sense of urgency for the sector to accelerate reforms and execution. In this context, he called upon the City Gas Distribution (CGD) industry to respond with greater ambition and operational efficiency.

Highlighting the importance of demand facilitation, Dr. Mittal stressed the need to simplify and standardize the PNG connection process. He observed that the existing customer journey involving application procedures, technical inspections, feasibility assessments, and multiple approvals must be streamlined to enable faster and wider household adoption of PNG.

Drawing a parallel with India's successful ethanol blending programme, he said the initiative serves as a strong example of what coordinated policy support and industry commitment can achieve. He also highlighted ongoing initiatives in compressed biogas, deep-sea exploration, infrastructure expansion, and integrated policy interventions aimed at increasing the share of natural gas in India's energy mix to double digits by 2030.

**Sh. Anjani Kumar Tiwari, Member, PNGRB** delivered the welcome address and set the context for the conference on "Energy Security through Gas: Driving India's Next Wave of Demand through Regulatory and Industry Action." He welcomed policymakers, regulators, industry leaders, knowledge partners, and other stakeholders, while acknowledging the presence of distinguished dignitaries including Sh. D.K. Sarraf, former Chairman of the Vision 2040 Committee, and Sh. Ajay Tyagi, former Chairman, SEBI. In his address, he emphasized the growing importance of energy security and resilience amid geopolitical uncertainties, global conflicts, and supply disruptions. He highlighted the need for India to balance sustainability with energy security through diversification of energy sources, policy stability, and greater self-reliance by leveraging domestic resources such as natural gas, coal, renewables, and CBG.

He further highlighted two significant initiatives - the Vision 2040 document led by Sh. D.K. Sarraf and the Expert Committee recommendations chaired by Sh. Ajay Tyagi on promoting competition in the gas transmission and distribution sector-describing them as important blueprints for future policy and regulatory action. Stressing PNGRB's role as both regulator and facilitator, he underlined the importance of reforms in tariff, pricing, market development, infrastructure expansion, and consumer protection. He also emphasized the need for expansion of the natural gas network, faster PNG connectivity, and coordinated efforts across

ministries and states to ensure accessibility, affordability, and reliability for consumers. Concluding his address, he expressed confidence that the conference deliberations would lead to actionable outcomes for strengthening India's energy security and driving the next phase of growth in the gas sector.

**Dr. Anil Kumar Jain, Chairperson, Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB)**, in his address invoked the vision of the “golden era of gas”- a concept that has featured prominently in India's energy discourse since the early 2000s and remarked that the urgency created by the current geopolitical situation makes 2026 a defining year for translating that vision into reality.

The Chairperson observed that the conference was being held at a critical juncture for the natural gas sector, amid evolving global energy dynamics and renewed optimism for the role of gas in India's energy transition. He emphasized that infrastructure expansion alone would not be sufficient unless complemented by sustained demand creation, enabling policy frameworks, and a vibrant, competitive market ecosystem.

In this context, Dr. Jain elaborated on the rationale behind constituting industry-led committees to develop medium-term demand projections up to 2040 and recommend reforms aimed at improving market access, infrastructure utilization, transparency, and private sector participation. He underlined that the exercise was intended to evolve as an “industry product” rather than remain a purely regulatory initiative, thereby ensuring wider stakeholder ownership in shaping the future trajectory of the gas sector.

He further noted that recent global supply disruptions had reinforced the need to approach energy security from both supply-side and demand-side perspectives. Highlighting the growing importance of natural gas in the cooking segment, he

stressed the need to expand PNG connectivity, strengthen gas storage infrastructure, and encourage broader participation across the gas value chain.

The Chairperson stated that the present environment offers a significant opportunity for the City Gas Distribution (CGD) sector, particularly in light of rising consumer demand and strong policy support from the Government for cleaner fuels and gas-based development. Concluding his address, he called upon all stakeholders to collectively seize the opportunity to accelerate the growth of India's gas ecosystem and transform the current momentum into long-term energy security and sustainable economic growth for the country.

The plenary session was followed by two technical presentations: **Shri Puneet Goel, Director (Fuels & Resources), ICF**, presented highlights of the Vision 2040 report on Natural Gas Infrastructure, and **Ms. Payal Goel, Director (Oil & Gas), Deloitte**, spoke on promoting competition and establishing a level playing field in gas transmission and distribution.

### 3. Day 1 Sessions — 9th April 2026

#### 3.1 Panel 1: Vision 2040 — Inside the Minds Shaping India's Gas Future



**Session Chairman:** Shri D.K. Sarraf, Former Chairperson, PNGRB

**Panelists:**

- Shri Arvinder Singh Sahney, Chairman, IOCL;
- Shri R.K. Jain, Director (Finance), GAIL;
- Shri Kartikeya Dube, Country Head, BP India;
- Shri Manoj Jain, MD, Torrent Gas

**Moderator:** Shri Gurpreet Chugh, MD, ICF

This leadership conversation focused on the Vision 2040 Committee's 71-plus recommendations, developed over nearly one year in consultation with 76 stakeholders. **Shri D.K. Sarraf**, as Committee Chairman, underscored that the exercise was intentionally pluralistic and that the industry as a whole stand to benefit when the gas market expands the size of the collective opportunity grows with demand.

Key themes discussed:

- **Strategic gas storage:** Shri R.K. Jain presented a hybrid financing model combining Viability Gap Funding, commercial leasing of partial capacity and infrastructure bonds to build LNG and underground storage. He noted that national gas storage is miniscule, while Europe maintains approximately 70 days of storage. The imperative to close this gap was underscored.
- **Upstream E&P and capital attraction:** Shri Kartikeya Dube called for radical fiscal measures including zero taxation on upstream investments for 10–15 years, to attract international capital and accelerate domestic production under initiatives such as Samudra Manthan.
- **CGD expansion:** Shri Manoj Jain stated that the journey from one crore to ten crore household PNG connections should be multiplicative, not incremental, given the convergence of government policy support, reduced operational barriers, and the energy security imperative.
- **Emerging fuels:** Shri Arvinder Singh Sahney highlighted that India's LPG production was raised by 40–45 percent within 40 days of the current crisis through domestic refinery reorientation - a testament to the industry's resilience. He also noted that Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF), with regulatory clearance

already in place and the first plant at Panipat commissioning by mid-2026, represents India's next major clean energy milestone.

- **Compressed Biogas (CBG):** The Vision 2040 report carries extensive recommendations on CBG - a fuel with a mapped potential of 1.5 times India's current gas consumption, social employment benefits, and zero food-versus-energy trade-off. The panel noted that CBG suffers from insufficient policy attention relative to its transformative potential.

### 3.2 Panel 2: India's Gas Market 2.0 — Enabling a Competitive Ecosystem in NGPL and CGD Sectors – Strategic Panel on Market Design, Infrastructure Governance and Regulatory Pathways



**Session Chairman:** Shri Ajay Tyagi, Former Chairman, SEBI

**Panelists:**

- Ms. Avantika Singh Aulakh, IAS, MD, GSPL;
- Shri Sanjay Kumar, Director (Marketing), GAIL;
- Shri Subhankar Sen, Director (Marketing), BPCL;
- Shri K.K. Chatiwal, MD, IGL

**Moderator:** Shri Amit Khara, Sr. Partner, McKinsey & Company

This session examined the structural prerequisites for a competitive gas ecosystem, with lively debate centered on the timing and design of market liberalization. Panelists addressed the following pivotal issues:

- **Unbundling of transmission and marketing:** Shri Ajay Tyagi argued that unbundling, a mandate contained in the PNGRB Act of 2006, needs to be implemented without further delay. Separate entities for infrastructure ownership and gas marketing, even if under common ownership initially, would create the conditions for genuine competition. An opposing view cautioned that the market requires further maturation before full structural separation is practicable.
- **Independent System Operator (ISO):** Some panelists expressed on the need to establish an Independent System Operator (ISO), drawing from the existing institutional framework of the power sector. They observed that such a mechanism, operating under the supervision of the PNGRB, would facilitate fair and transparent access to infrastructure for smaller market participants, while addressing the commercial inefficiencies arising from capacity booking across multiple fragmented platforms.
- **Private capital in pipelines and unbundling:** Shri Sanjay Kumar observed that major cross-country pipeline investments in India have largely been driven by public sector entities, while private capital participation has remained limited

even after the PNGRB 2006 Act. He emphasized that enhancing commercial viability, strengthening market maturity, and ensuring clearer pricing signals would be important for expanding gas infrastructure connectivity across central and eastern regions of India, otherwise this could continue to face inadequate gas connectivity and infrastructure gaps. On unbundling issue, he said that the priority needs to be on developing the full gas market, the full infrastructure, (like USA and Europe), controlling the common carrier capacities of the pipeline then only as per the earlier panels projection of 300 MMSCMD of gas flow, more maturity will come to take up the issue of unbundling..

- **CGD market exclusivity:** With the marketing exclusivity period having elapsed for many Geographic Areas, panelists argued that customers in mature GAs should be offered supplier choice. Incumbent operators should compete on the quality and price of their service, not on regulatory barriers to entry.
- **Common carrier framework:** As an intermediate reform prior to full unbundling, panelists called for enhanced monitoring and enforcement of the common carrier framework ensuring that third-party capacity booking on transmission pipelines is accessible, transparent, and equitable.

The session closed with the moderator noting that while the principle of a competitive market commands consensus, the sequencing and pace of structural reform remain matters for careful, data-driven deliberation by the regulator.

### 3.3 Panel 3: LNG and Energy Security — Terminal Regulations, Strategic Storage and Energy Transition



**Moderator:** Shri Sanjay Sah, Partner, Deloitte

**Panelists:**

- Shri Prabhat Singh, Former MD & CEO, Petronet LNG Ltd;
- Shri Nakul Raheja, Country Head, Shell;
- Shri Rajeev Kumar Singhal, Director (BD), GAIL;
- Shri Debasish Goswami, CEO, HPLNG

This session addressed what the moderator described as the most operationally urgent dimension of the ongoing crisis: India's structural vulnerability in LNG supply and storage. The discussion was structured around three action buckets:

**Demand diversification:** Panelists identified LNG as a transport fuel for heavy-duty vehicles and LNG for marine bunkering as significantly underserved market segments. India currently participates negligibly in the global LNG bunkering market, which represents a strategic and commercial opportunity that warrants deliberate policy intervention.

**Strategic storage — the core debate:** India currently holds approximately 3.8 million cubic metres of LNG storage across 23 tanks at eight terminals amounting to roughly 10 percent of annual import volume, or approximately 7 days of annual natural gas demand. Against Europe's standard of 70-plus days of storage, this gap was characterised as a national vulnerability.

Two schools of thought emerged:

- The *term policy* school: build dedicated strategic LNG storage without commercial return, treating the cost as a sovereign security premium estimated at approximately ₹20,000 crore of equity per year to achieve a transformative gas infrastructure buildout. The capex can be funded through contributions from various OMCs.
- The *commercial hybrid* school: establish a shared-cost model involving government viability gap funding, terminal operator participation, and a modest consumer tariff surcharge phased and scalable, with recommendations submitted to a government committee.

Underground storage, while theoretically viable, was assessed as economically challenging for Indian conditions due to low seasonal demand cyclicality, high cushion gas requirements, and withdrawal costs. Terminal-based LNG storage, expanded and grid-connected was favoured as the more practical near-term solution.

**On reform sequencing:** The panel concluded that GST on natural gas, expanded online capacity booking at LNG terminals, an Independent System Operator, and a pressure-vessel grid architecture across all four directions of the country represent the reform agenda estimated to require ₹7,000 crore per year in equity investment (excluding debt) and achievable within five years.

### 3.4 Panel 4: Balancing Ease of Compliance and Regulation



**Background Setting:** Prof. (Dr.) Naveen Sirohi, Founding Head, School of Finance, Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA)

#### Panelists:

- Shri Anjani Kumar Tiwari, Member, PNGRB,
- Shri Anuj Jain, Director (Finance), IOCL;

- Shri Subhash Kumar, DG, ACE (Former CMD, ONGC);
- Shri Kumar Shanker, MD, MNGL

**Moderator:** Shri Manas Majumdar, Partner, PwC

This session, the final one of Day 1, examined the balance between regulatory rigor and operational agility. Prof. Sirohi framed the context: India aspires to be a 25 trillion economy by 2047 requiring approximately three times the current energy supply and gas is among the cleanest, most versatile transition fuels available.

Key perspectives included:

- **Regulatory philosophy shift:** Sh. Anjani Kumar Tiwari, Member, PNGRB, articulated the evolution of the regulatory framework from the traditional “VIP” approach meaning Violation, Investigation and Penalty towards a more compliance-oriented, enabling and facilitative model of regulation. He emphasized that modern regulatory decisions should be guided by economic analysis, data-driven insights, transparency and practical implementation considerations, with a strong focus on consumer interest and ease of doing business. He further highlighted that PNGRB’s approach increasingly seeks to balance regulatory oversight with stakeholder facilitation through collaborative and evidence-based decision-making.
- **CGD sector consolidation:** Panel noted that 307 Geographic Areas served by 41 entities constitutes a fragmented market structure. Drawing parallels with the telecom and aviation sectors where three to five large companies efficiently serve the entire market the panel argued that consolidation would improve investability, digital capability, and service quality.

- **Risk-based safety regulation:** The panel recommended tiering compliance obligations by risk level: high-pressure transmission stations warrant intensive third-party oversight, while medium and low-pressure domestic connections could appropriately be self-certified by operators consistent with how LPG, a more hazardous fuel, is currently governed.
- **Multi-agency regulatory overlap:** A recurring complaint from CGD operators was the need to interface with multiple, often four to five, regulatory bodies on overlapping subjects. The panel called on PNGRB ensure that compliance reports submitted to PNGRB are accepted as sufficient by all other bodies.
- **Structural mandate question:** Panel raised a structural observation: PNGRB uniquely combines development, regulatory, and safety mandates within one body unlike telecom, electricity, airports, or ports, where these functions are institutionally separated. Given India's scale, this structural question merits serious policy deliberation, including whether a unified Ministry of Energy absent from India's executive architecture should be created.

The session concluded with the moderator noting that India's extraordinary regulatory response over the preceding four weeks of west Asia war - the March 25<sup>th</sup> executive order enabling accelerated PNG connections demonstrated what data-driven, rapid regulatory action can achieve when the national interest is aligned.

## 4. Day 2 Sessions — 10th April 2026

### 4.1 Day 2 Special Session: Dr. Ajay Mathur, Former Director General, International Solar Alliance



Dr. Mathur framed his address as a practical roadmap for PNGRB as a "proactive enabler" — arguing that regulation, traditionally viewed as a set of brakes, must function as an accelerator in a period of imperative transformation. He organised his recommendations across three timeframes:

#### Short-term priorities:

- **CBG injection into pipelines:** Accelerating both production and pipeline injection is an urgent, commercially sound priority.

- **Compressor electrification:** Running gas compressors on electricity is demonstrably cheaper than using gas- an immediate operational efficiency gain. A detailed study may be required to capture the opportunity.
- **Leak Detection and Repair (LDAR):** Investment in LDAR yields better margins than sourcing equivalent additional gas volumes. It must be treated as a profit strategy, not a compliance obligation.

#### **Medium-term priorities:**

- **Single zone pricing:** PNGRB's progression from three tariff zones to two should culminate in a single unified national gas price, preventing the lopsided industrial clustering within 300 kilometers of pipeline origination points.
- **Common carrier status:** A White Paper from PNGRB on the timeline and commercial framework for transitioning to common carrier pipeline access was strongly urged.
- **MSME loan guarantees:** Working with SIDBI and NABARD to provide guarantees for gas equipment adoption by MSMEs was identified as the single most powerful lever for demand creation in this segment.

#### **Long-term priorities:**

- **Hydrogen-ready pipelines:** All new pipeline specifications should mandate materials that resist hydrogen embrittlement, embedding a 20–30 year investment horizon into current infrastructure decisions.
- **Digital twins:** Every gas facility should create and maintain a digital twin the foundational tool for LDAR, operational optimisation, and network planning.

- **Green gas certification:** PNGRB should lead the development of a Green Gas Certification framework, using the Indo-German Green Hydrogen Partnership as the bilateral foundation for what could become a global standard.

#### 4.2 Panel 5: Decoding the Sustainability Imperative in Oil & Gas Sector— From Global Mandates to Indian Boardroom Action



#### Panelists:

- Shri V Arul Muthunathan, Executive Director (BPCL);
- Dr. Vibha Dhawan, DG, TERI;
- Shri Akshay Wadhwa, CEO, Jio BP;
- Shri Maqsood Shaikh, MD, Ultra Gas;
- Shri Mohit Bhatia, Director (Commercial), IGL

**Moderator:** Shri Ashish Kulkarni, Partner, Boston Consulting Group

This session examined how the sustainability agenda is being embedded into corporate strategy in the oil and gas sector, and what enabling conditions are necessary for the transition to scale.

Dr. Vibha Dhawan drew attention to the fragility of India's energy system — noting that the achievements of programmes like Ujjwala need supply continuity and affordability for rural households. She called for multidisciplinary solutions including nanotechnology for combustion efficiency, coupling of improved cookstove programmes with carbon credits, and sustained investment in R&D to move technologies from the laboratory to commercial deployment.

Shri V Arul Muthunathan presented its Project Nishchay- a dual-pillar strategy investing in both core business strengthening and future energy platforms (gas, biofuels, hydrogen, and renewables). BPCL has committed to a Net Zero target of 2040 for Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions, with renewable energy, green hydrogen (5 MW plant operational), and 26 number of CBG plants underway.

Shri Akshay Wadhwa emphasised the strategic pivot from "fuel retailer" to "mobility service provider," with a multi-energy portfolio spanning traditional fuels, CNG, EV charging, and hydrogen. Infrastructure, it was argued, must lead demand citing ₹500 crore invested in EV infrastructure as a forward-looking commitment before the economics fully justified it.

Shri Mohit Bhatia highlighted IGL's leadership in CBG offtake absorbing approximately 50 tonnes per day, representing 13–14 percent of the country's total CBG output — as well as its LNG corridor strategy for heavy-duty trucking and a 500 MW solar park joint venture at Jaisalmer.

Shri Maqsood Shaikh underscored that 38 million metric tonnes of diesel flows annually into heavy-duty transportation in India, contributing approximately 13 percent of national carbon intensity. Switching to LNG monofuel trucks which offer 80 percent Scope- 3 emission reduction for logistics customers represents one of the most actionable near-term decarbonisation levers.

The moderator crystallized the central debate: regulation and economics are not adversarial. Regulation must create the enabling conditions; economics must sustain them over a 10-year investment horizon. India, uniquely, is in a phase of energy infrastructure buildout the opportunity exists to build future-ready infrastructure from day one, rather than retrofitting existing assets.

**A key asks from panelists:** PNGRB should develop a structured sustainability regulation framework for the CGD industry setting benchmarks, enabling carbon credit mechanisms, and providing financial incentives for sustainable operations. If sustainability pays, it will scale.

### 4.3 Panel 6: Reimagining Secure Energy Supply Chains in Light of New Geopolitical Challenges



**Opening Keynote:** Shri Anish De, Partner & Global Leader, KPMG

**Panelists:**

- Dr. Anil Kumar Jain, Chairperson, PNGRB;
- Shri Arun Kumar Singh, Chairman & CEO, ONGC;
- Shri Gurdeep Singh, CMD, NTPC;
- Shri B.C. Tripathi, Operating Partner–Energy, Essar (Former CMD, GAIL)

**Moderator:** Shri Anish De, Partner & Global Leader, KPMG

The closing session was the most strategically expansive of the conference, addressing India's energy sovereignty in the context of a structurally altered geopolitical order.

**Anish De's Keynote — "Seven Lessons in Seven Weeks"** framed the preceding weeks of west-Asia conflict and disruption through the following analytical lens:

1. **History and geography remain determinative** — the West Asia crisis to bring in structural change.
2. **The multilateral order is shaken** — bilateralism is now the operative framework for energy alliances.
3. **Sanctions work — but only partially** — India's strategy of maintaining diverse, non-aligned energy relationships has been vindicated.
4. **Technology will surprise** — asymmetric capabilities, from drones to generative AI, continue to reshape the calculus of conflict and energy systems.
5. **Interconnectedness makes long conflicts unaffordable** — the time dimension of supply disruption must be part of storage and resilience planning.
6. **Security, affordability, and sustainability are coinciding — not competing goals** for India.
7. **Move from energy security to energy sovereignty** — actual control over the full energy value chain, not just access to supply contracts.

Shri De highlighted that approximately 90 percent of India's crude, 55 percent of its LNG, and 90 percent of its LPG passes through the Strait of Hormuz a 35-kilometre stretch of water. That India navigated this crisis as effectively as it did represents, in his words, "a phenomenal achievement worth documenting."

**Dr. Anil Kumar Jain, Chairperson, Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board**, reflected on the evolution of India's energy security doctrine from the five-pillar oil-centric model of 2003–2008, comprising strategic reserves, long-term contracts, intensified exploration and production, acquisition of equity oil abroad, and

diversification of import sources, to today's sovereignty-driven approach centred on maximizing domestic resources, promoting electrification as a non-oil energy dimension, and advancing CBG and renewable energy as sovereign fuel choices. He emphasized that the present strategy reflects India's focus on self-reliance, resilience, and diversified technology pathways in response to changing global geopolitical and energy dynamics.

**Shri Arun Kumar Singh (ONGC)** offered four imperatives: pursue every domestic barrel of oil, gas, and coal regardless of cost; build large strategic reserves; diversify energy types; and deliberately shift import sources away from the Middle East toward Africa and Russia. He noted that the assumption underlying decades of LNG investment in Qatar that the world would remain globalised and supply chains stable has been "fundamentally threatened."

**Shri Gurdeep Singh (NTPC)** presented a perspective from the power sector: India's renewables capacity has grown strongly, coal stock at NTPC plants is comfortable, and the operational challenge is now managing solar surplus and grid flexibility — not generation shortfall. He highlighted NTPC's coal-to-Synthetic Natural Gas research and CO<sub>2</sub> battery storage as strategic hedges and expressed strong support for nuclear as the third pillar of long-term energy security.

**Shri B.C. Tripathi** called for three structural actions: the articulation of a formal National Energy Policy (long pending), deliberate geographic diversification of energy imports; and a sovereign fund for a large-scale domestic exploration and storage program. He cautioned that energy storage, like pollution policy, tends to be debated during crises and forgotten thereafter — a cycle that must be broken through institutional anchoring.

The session concluded with Shri Tripathi offering a compelling counterpoint to energy nationalism: India, with one-sixth of global humanity, has been one of globalisation's foremost beneficiaries. Pragmatic global engagement combined with aggressive domestic resource development is the only viable long-term strategy.

## 5. Closing Session

The conference was formally closed by **Shri Jayanta Narayan Das, Member, PNGRB**, who summarised the two days as a defining moment in the evolution of India's gas sector. The vote of thanks was delivered by **Indraprastha Gas Limited**, followed by a networking lunch.



## 5.1 Cross-Cutting Themes and Key Takeaways

The proceedings across both days surfaced a set of converging themes that warrant attention from policymakers, regulators, and industry:

### I. The Crisis as Catalyst

Every panel acknowledged that the geopolitical disruption in West Asia which disrupted supply through the Strait of Hormuz has functioned as an accelerant for reforms that were long overdue. The March 25<sup>th</sup> 2026 government order enabling accelerated PNG connections was cited repeatedly as evidence of what is achievable when collective will align. The challenge, as multiple speakers noted, is to sustain reform momentum beyond the immediate crisis. The Secretary, MoPNG specifically called upon the CGD industry to match the gravity of the moment translating government intent and policy support into ground-level ambition and execution at scale.

### II. From Energy Security to Energy Sovereignty

The conference collectively elevated the discourse from supply security to sovereignty a higher standard that demands domestic resource maximization, strategic reserves, indigenous technology, and diversified supply alliances not contingent on any single geography.

### III. Infrastructure as the Prerequisite

Whether the subject was CGD expansion, LNG storage, pipeline access, or the hydrogen transition, the conference consistently returned to infrastructure as the foundational enabler. Completing the national gas grid, building evacuation capacity from all regasification terminals, deploying grid-connected LNG storage, and making

all new pipelines hydrogen-ready were identified as the material interventions that would unlock market development.

#### **IV. GST on Natural Gas - The Universal Demand**

Across every panel, panelists from regulation, industry, and policy aligned on a single reform: the inclusion of natural gas under the Goods and Services Tax regime. The anomaly of gas being the only clean fuel outside the GST framework was characterized as the single most actionable policy correction for sector competitiveness.

#### **V. Data-Driven Regulation and Sustainability Integration**

PNGRB's evolution toward evidence-based, facilitative regulation was broadly welcomed. Panelists called for PNGRB to develop sustainability benchmarks for the CGD industry, move forward on CGD exclusivity agenda, and lead the development of a Green Gas Certification framework positioning India not merely as a consumer of global energy standards but as an architect of them.



# Conference MEMORIES



