

## Interaction with State Governments for expeditious expansion of City Gas Distribution (CGD) networks in the Country

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The Government of India has envisaged ushering a Gas Based economy by increasing the share of natural gas in primary energy mix of the country from current level to 15% in coming years. In order to move forward, the Government has put thrust in enhancing domestic gas production, encouraging the import of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), completion of national gas grid and speedier roll out of City Gas Distribution (CGD) network in the country.

Today, the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas (MoP&NG) has organised an interaction session under the chairmanship of Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister (PNG&SDE) with the all stakeholders to expand the coverage of CGD networks in the country. Senior officials of the Ministry and various State Governments, Chairperson and Members of the Petroleum & Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB), and representatives of the Gas industry including CGD companies were present in the session. The efforts made by the Government so far were highlighted to all. The Central Government has already accorded priority in domestic gas allocation to PNG (Domestic) and CNG (Transport) segment to all CGD networks so as to ensure the availability of an environment friendly clean cooking and transport fuel at an affordable price to the people. In order to expedite the expansion of PNG networks, the Government through the Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD) has also advised the States to rationalize the permissions processes for laying CGD infrastructure in the cities.

At present, 31 City Gas Distribution (CGD) entities are operating CGD networks in 81 cities. These entities have connected about 39.8 lakh households which are availing the benefit of eco-friendly cooking fuel. Government/PNGRB has identified about 140 possible Geographical Areas (GAs) in 21 states where work to develop CGD network can be started in the near future.

Hon'ble Prime Minister has given a target of connecting 1 Crore Households with PNG Connection. In order to have a holistic development of CGD sector in the States, views of all stakeholders including State Governments and others will be factored in while firming up GA's. •The development of CGD networks in the planned Geographical Areas have the potential to generate direct employment opportunity to about 60,000 people at the total investment of about Rs.21000 Cr. in the next 5 years.

Minister (PNG&SDE) urged all to work in synchronization for the development of Gas based economy in the country. He said that CGD should not be seen only as an urban facility. We need to link it to rural areas, industries, food processing units, etc. He emphasised that state Governments should actively participate in this to make it a success and develop Indian Gas sector.

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