



Inter-Ministerial Briefing on Recent Developments in West Asia

CGD companies offering incentives to promote PNG connections

LPG supply continues to be monitored in view of prevailing geopolitical situation

Domestic LPG production increases by 36 percent

Online LPG cylinder bookings increase from about 84% to around 90%

State Governments undertaking enforcement measures to prevent hoarding and black marketing

LPG Carrier Shivalik to Reach India Today; Nanda Devi Expected Tomorrow Morning

Around 2,20,000 passengers returned from the West Asia and Gulf region to India since February 28th

Embassy of India in Tehran remains fully operational

Posted On: 16 MAR 2026 5:09PM by PIB Delhi

Inter-Ministerial Media Briefings on developments in West Asia are being organised regularly at the National Media Centre. In today's briefing (16 March 2026), the Ministries of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Ports, Shipping and Waterways, and External Affairs shared updates on energy supplies, maritime operations, the welfare of Indian nationals in the region and related public information efforts. Earlier briefings were held on 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th March.

Energy Supply and Fuel Availability

In the context of the situation arising from the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas briefed the media on the status of fuel supplies and the measures being taken to ensure continued availability of petroleum products and LPG. As per the Ministry:

Crude and Refineries

- All refineries are operating at high capacity and maintaining adequate crude oil inventories. India remains self-sufficient in petrol and diesel production and no imports of these fuels are required to meet domestic demand.

Retail Outlets

- **No cases of fuel dry-outs** have been reported at retail outlets by Oil Marketing Companies, and supplies of petrol and diesel continue to be maintained regularly.
- Citizens are advised not to resort to panic buying as adequate stocks of petrol and diesel are available.

Natural Gas

- Priority sectors continue to receive protected gas supplies, including 100 percent supply to PNG and CNG, while supplies to industrial and commercial consumers are being regulated at around 80 percent.
- Commercial LPG consumers in major cities and urban areas are encouraged to switch to PNG, and establishments such as hotels, restaurants, hospitals and hostels can obtain PNG connections through authorised City Gas Distribution (CGD) entities.
- Consumers can apply for PNG connections through email, customer portals, letters or call centres of CGD companies, and connections can be provided quickly where pipeline networks already exist.
- Several CGD companies are offering incentives to promote PNG connections, including free gas worth ₹500 for domestic consumers by Indraprastha Gas Ltd. and GAIL Gas Ltd., waiver off registration charges of ₹500 for domestic PNG consumers and security deposits for commercial consumers by Mahanagar Gas Ltd., and waiver of security deposits for all commercial connections by BPCL.
- The Government is expanding the CGD network and PNGRB has advised CGD entities to accelerate deployment of resources, encourage utilisation of existing connections and reduce timelines for supply commencement.

LPG

- LPG supply continues to be monitored in view of the prevailing geopolitical situation.
- **No dry-outs have been reported at LPG distributorships.**
- Online LPG cylinder bookings have **increased from about 84% to around 90%** across the industry.
- Delivery Authentication Code (DAC) coverage has been **expanded from 53% before the crisis to about 72%** to prevent diversion of cylinders at the distributor level.
- Several States and UTs including Bihar, Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, Manipur and Maharashtra have issued orders to allocate Non-domestic LPG in line with Government of India guidelines.

Meetings conducted by State Governments

- State Governments and UTs continue to play a key role in monitoring supply of essential commodities including Petrol, Diesel and LPG.
- Most States and UTs have established control rooms to monitor the situation and are conducting media briefings to keep citizens informed.

Enforcement action

- State Governments are undertaking enforcement measures to prevent hoarding and black marketing of petrol, diesel and LPG.
- Raids are being conducted in several States including Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Assam and Mizoram, to check the hoardings and black marketing of LPG.
- Officials of PSU Oil Marketing Companies have conducted surprise inspections at more than 1,100 retail outlets and LPG distributorships to ensure smooth supply and prevent irregularities.

Other Government Measures

- The Government's highest priority remains ensuring uninterrupted domestic LPG supplies, particularly for households and priority sectors such as hospitals and educational institutions.
- **Domestic LPG production from refineries has been increased by about 36 percent.**
- Under the LPG Control Order amendment dated 14 March 2026, consumers with PNG connections are required to surrender their domestic LPG connections and cannot obtain new LPG connections.
- Booking intervals have been revised to 25 days in urban areas and up to 45 days in rural areas to ensure equitable distribution.
- An additional allocation of 48,000 KL of kerosene has been provided to States and UTs, and alternate fuels such as kerosene and coal have been made available to reduce pressure on LPG demand.
- PSU Oil Marketing Companies are promoting digital LPG refill bookings and discouraging panic bookings, while the State and UT Governments have been requested to conduct coordinated inspections to curb malpractices.

Public Advisory

- Citizens are advised not to panic as the Government remains committed to maintaining adequate LPG availability for households and essential sectors.
- Sale of commercial LPG cylinders, which had been curtailed earlier, has been partially restored and made available to State and UT Governments for priority distribution.
- LPG cylinders can be booked through digital platforms such as IVRS, SMS, WhatsApp, mobile applications of Oil Marketing Companies and popular e-commerce platforms.
- Citizens are requested to avoid panic bookings, use digital booking platforms and avoid unnecessary visits to LPG distributors.
- Consumers are encouraged to use alternate fuels such as PNG and induction or electric cooktops wherever possible and to conserve energy.
- The Government and PSU Oil Marketing Companies continue to spread awareness about uninterrupted LPG refill deliveries, and media organizations are requested to rely on official sources to avoid misinformation and unnecessary panic.

Maritime Safety and Shipping Operations

The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways provided an update on the maritime situation in the Persian Gulf region and the steps being taken to safeguard Indian vessels and seafarers. As per the Ministry:

- All Indian seafarers in the region are safe and no shipping incident involving Indian seafarers has been reported in the past 24 hours.
- At present, 22 Indian-flagged vessels with 611 seafarers remain in the west of the Persian Gulf region. The Directorate General of Shipping continues to monitor the situation in coordination with ship owners, RPSL agencies and Indian Missions.

- Of the two Indian-flag LPG carriers that crossed the Strait of Hormuz on 14 March carrying about 92,712 MT of LPG, vessel Shivalik is scheduled to berth at Mundra Port around 1700 hrs today with documentation completed to ensure priority discharge, while vessel Nanda Devi is expected to reach early tomorrow morning.
- The Indian-flag vessel Jag Laadki, carrying about 80,800 MT of Murban crude oil, sailed from the UAE on 14 March 2026 and is safely enroute to India. The vessel and all Indian seafarers onboard are safe.
- Since activation of the DG Shipping Control Room, 3,030 phone calls and about 5,497 emails have been handled from seafarers, their families and maritime stakeholders seeking assistance, including over 310 calls and 597 emails in the past 48 hours.
- DG Shipping has facilitated the safe repatriation of 286 Indian seafarers from the Gulf region so far, including 33 repatriations in the past 48 hours.
- Major ports across the country are closely monitoring vessel movements and cargo operations and providing support to shipping lines and cargo stakeholders, including concessions in anchorage, berth hire and storage charges.
- Ports are coordinating with Customs and other stakeholders to facilitate cargo operations.
- JNPA has provided temporary transshipment storage for containers bound for the Middle East and granted 100 percent rebate on ground rent and dwell time charges and around 80 percent rebate on reefer container plug-in charges for up to 15 days for containers originating at JNPA.
- There is currently no congestion at any major port, and export-bound containers at JNPA have reduced from about 5,600 to around 3,900.
- Ports are also providing safe anchorage for loaded vessels bound for the Gulf that are currently unable to transit.
- An inter-ministerial group has been formed under the Directorate General of Shipping with members from Customs, ports and other stakeholders to address operational issues.
- The Ministry continues to coordinate with the Ministry of External Affairs, Indian Missions, shipping companies and maritime stakeholders to ensure the safety and welfare of Indian seafarers while maintaining continuity of maritime trade and port operations.

Safety of Indian Nationals in the Region

The Ministry of External Affairs provided an update on the status of Indian nationals in the region and informed that Indian Missions remain in close contact with the Indian community. It said:

- The Government of India continues to closely monitor the situation concerning Indian nationals in Iran, with their safety and well-being remaining the highest priority. Over 550 Indian nationals in Iran have crossed into Armenia through the land border with facilitation from the Embassy of India in Tehran, while over 90 nationals have also crossed into Azerbaijan.
- The Embassy of India in Tehran remains fully operational.
- Over the last few days, they have relocated Indian students from locations outside Tehran to safer places within Iran.
- The Government remains in contact with companies employing Indian seafarers and members of the fishing community in Iran to ensure their safety, and all Indian nationals have been advised to follow Embassy advisories.
- The Ministry of External Affairs continues to closely monitor the evolving situation in West Asia and the Gulf region. The safety, well-being and security of the Indian community remain the Government's highest priority.
- A special MEA control room remains operational to address queries from Indian nationals and their families, while coordination continues with State Governments and Union Territories.

- Indian Missions and Posts across the region continue to operate 24×7 helplines, maintain contact with Indian community organisations and issue updated advisories.
- Missions remain in close touch with local authorities and are extending assistance to stranded Indians and short-term visitors, including visa support, logistical assistance and transit facilitation. Coordination is also underway with the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways to assist Indian seafarers in the region.
- Since 28 February 2026, around 2,20,000 passengers have returned from the West Asia and Gulf region to India.
- In the UAE, flight operations from Dubai International Airport are gradually resuming after temporary suspension earlier today.
- Limited flights by Indian and UAE carriers are also operating from Abu Dhabi, Ras Al Khaimah and Fujairah. As per available information, more than 45 flights are planned for various destinations in India today.
- Passengers are advised to check with airlines for updated schedules and may contact the Indian Embassy in Abu Dhabi or the Consulate in Dubai through 24×7 helplines for assistance.
- Flights are operating from various airports in Saudi Arabia and Oman to destinations in India.
- Qatar airspace remains partially open, with Qatar Airways expected to operate 3 flights to India, today and tomorrow.
- Kuwait airspace has remained closed since 28 February 2026. Special non-scheduled commercial flights by Jazeera Airways are expected to operate to India from Al Qaisumah International Airport in Saudi Arabia.
- For Indian nationals in Bahrain and Iraq, where airspace remains closed, transit through Saudi Arabia continues to be facilitated.
- Following the attack in Sohar city in Oman on 13 March 2026 in which two Indian nationals lost their lives, the Embassy of India in Muscat remains in contact with the families and concerned Omani authorities. Repatriation of the mortal remains is expected shortly. The Embassy is also monitoring the condition of the injured Indian nationals, none of whom are critically injured.
- The Mission team in Basra continues to assist the 15 Indian crew members of Safesea Vishnu who were safely evacuated and are currently staying in a hotel in Basra. The Mission is coordinating with Iraqi authorities for their early return to India and for the repatriation of the mortal remains of the deceased Indian national.

The Government reiterated that it continues to monitor developments in West Asia and maintain coordination among the concerned Ministries and agencies. Necessary steps are being taken to ensure preparedness across key sectors and safeguard national interests.

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