

## Kolkata all set to get CNG supply

*With the Great Eastern Energy Corporation Limited (GEECL) planning to extend its operations, Kolkata looks all set to get compressed natural gas (CNG) supply.*

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The GEECL, the first commercial producer of coal bed methane in India, already retails CNG from the Indian Oil Corporation's outlets in Asansol, Durgapur, Ranigunge and other cities. Coal bed methane is considered to be of better quality than the CNG available in the market. It has 96 per cent methane, contains no sulphur and has very little carbon dioxide, while the natural gas contains about 7 per cent carbon dioxide.

'The network will expand to other areas of West Bengal, including Kolkata, in due course,' GEECL president and chief operating officer Prashant Modi said in an email to The Indian Express.

The company has already spoken to the state government about extending CNG supply to Kolkata. 'The response from the state government has been very positive,' said Modi. While no specific time frame has been set till now, a feasibility study is being conducted to see the costs involved and other modalities are being finalised, he added.

The company estimates a CNG demand exceeding 35 million cubic feet in Kolkata alone. Initially, the supply will begin with truck-mounted cascades. It may lay a pipeline, if needed, to Kolkata to cater to the demand.

The GEECL's licence area covers 210 square kilometres and as per its market survey, it has found that the demand in the area is around 150 to 200 million metric standard cubic feet per day, which is more than double of the company's peak expected production level. A UK-listed company, GEECL has already completed 23 vertical production wells. In January, GEECL has commissioned its new rig, Atlas Copco RD 20 III. It plans to invest approximately Rs 4,000 crore in upstream, midstream, and downstream activities in the state.

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