



Ajay Murali

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Summary

Seasoned energy professional with 10+ years in oil and gas sector, spanning operations, maintenance, projects and turnarounds. Experienced in planning, budgeting, capex monitoring, cross functional leadership and stakeholder management, with a strong track record of improving reliability, cost and operational performance.

Professional Experience

Senior Manager | Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd | Kochi

Apr 2025-Mar 2026

- Coordinated the Solomon Benchmarking Study - a global refinery performance benchmark - for the Maintenance Department, leading cross functional analysis of maintenance cost, manpower efficiency and turnaround KPIs against international peers.
- Planned and executed a Rs 6 Cr incinerator-heater revamp shutdown for the petrochemical unit, improving equipment efficiency and reliability of the equipment.

Manager | Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd | Kochi

Apr 2021-Mar 2025

- Lead role in the Refinery Planning Cell as planner for contracts & materials involving centralized contract formulation, scope review, technical evaluations, contract negotiations, & material planning within the Maintenance Department.
- Lined up critical contracts worth Rs 150 Cr & handled material procurement worth Rs 140 Cr, involving critical materials like pressure vessels, columns, reactor internals etc.
- Spearheaded Capital & Revenue Budget planning for Maintenance, involving estimation and scope monitoring of 20+ Capex projects worth over Rs 1,000 Cr & Revex jobs worth over Rs 300 Cr, providing key insights for identification of weak areas.
- Full cycle turnaround management involving SAP based scope compilation, planning & procurement of materials & lump sum turnkey contracts, and monitoring & execution of more than 10 major turnarounds.
- Coordinated the planning and execution of a Rs 90 Cr crude unit turnaround project; accelerated the schedule by mapping the critical path, and optimizing resources, while ensuring on schedule completion of multiple high risk execution milestones.
- Led the Rs 50 Cr VGO HDT shutdown, delivering 5% capacity enhancement in 3 weeks during India's largest public-sector refinery turnaround, managing 1,500+ blue-collar workers with successful overall completion.
- Part of the team that conceptualized and executed the CSR project of installing a 2 km dedicated oxygen supply line from the refinery to the Govt Treatment Centre in 7 days, meeting the oxygen demands of 1,000+ patients during the 2021 Covid crisis.
- Introduced & coordinated the implementation of digital monitoring solution for turnaround monitoring, establishing real time, equipment wise progress tracking that eliminated communication silos and enabled immediate critical path delay identification.

Assistant Manager | Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd | Kochi

Apr 2018-Mar 2021

- Commissioned the "Food Grade Hexane" & "Benzene Maximization" process piping schemes, which contributed to energy performance improvement & savings of Rs 35 Cr per annum.
- Spearheaded crucial reactor catalyst replacement jobs in the DHDS (Diesel Hydrodesulphurization) unit, helping to produce BS6 grade petrol and diesel to keep up with market standards, thereby preventing significant revenue loss.
- Led the Rs 25 Cr Fluidized Catalytic Cracking unit shutdown, involving the revamp of the main fractionator column, resulting in process efficiency improvement of the unit.
- Successfully carried out multiple reliability initiatives in Sulphur Recovery Units, like metallurgy upgrades, waste heat recovery boiler overhauling, and steam leak reduction, resulting in annually recurring cost savings of Rs 5 Cr.
- Formulated & executed vendor development to outsource routine static equipment maintenance and servicing, reducing core workload and shifting internal engineering focus toward critical jobs.
- Designed preventive maintenance strategies and day-to-day scheduling, diagnosing breakdowns and resolving start up issues to minimize unplanned downtime of critical process units.

Engineer | Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd | Kochi

June 2015-Mar 2018

- Key role as Engineer-in-Charge of maintenance jobs for critical equipment under major refining process units like Hydrotreaters, Continuous Catalytic Cracking units, offsite tankages, & offsite piping facilities in BPCL Kochi Refinery.
- Overway a team of 15 maintenance technicians & more than 200 contract employees for the timely resolution of breakdown and planned maintenance jobs.
- Involved in project commissioning & spares optimization for the Sulphur Recovery Complex of the Rs 16,000 Cr Integrated Refinery Expansion Project of BPCL Kochi Refinery.

Education

B.Tech – Mechanical Engineering

College of Engineering , 2011-2015 | Trivandrum , Kerala , India

Accomplishments and Awards

- Won ‘Excellence Award’ for Energy Intensity Index Improvement in Diesel Hydro Desulphurization Charge Heater Revamp Project of BPCL Kochi Refinery.
- Won ‘Net zero’ initiative award for the implementation of various process improvement schemes in BPCL Kochi Refinery.
- Consistently rated in the ‘Excellent’ category of BPCL's performance appraisal bell curve distribution over the 10 year career.
- Earned back-to-back fast track promotions in recognition of sustained contributions at BPCL.

License & Certifications

- Lean Six Sigma Green Belt | KPMG
- Management development Programme - Finance for Non Finance Executives | IIM Calcutta
- Pre-MBA Statistics | Coursera
- Excel Skills for Business: Advanced | Macquarie University, Coursera
- Design & fabrication of pressure vessels - ASME SEC VIII Div-1 | American Society of Mechanical Engineers

Co/Extra-curricular

- Served as volunteer at CROA (BPCL Kochi Refinery Officers Association) – Supported in delivering 1000+ food packets during flood in Kerala in 2018.
- Served as Goalkeeper and Vice Captain of BPCL Kochi Refinery Officers Association Football League Team and won the Football League Cup in 2023 during the annual sports meet.