

HPCL had explored the feasibility of setting up a refinery in northern India and in this regard had also explored certain sites in Rajasthan. On the basis of their study, they decided to take up the refinery project at Bathinda (Punjab) as their preferred location. As regards locating a refinery in Rajasthan, the Possibility of locating a well-head refinery in the Barmer area is under the consideration of M/s. Cairn Energy, who are the operator for the oil discovery made there. The refinery project come up in the public sector as a Joint Venture.

### **International gas pipeline project**

**115. SHRI G.K. VASAN:** Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to meet India's oil needs through international gas pipeline project; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

**THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKARAIYAR):** (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Owing to environmental and techno-economic considerations, gas is now the preferred fuel. Substantial gas imports are needed to satisfy our growth requirements, to reduce our dependence on crude oil, as well as to reduce the cost of our energy imports. There is a severe shortage of natural gas in the country from domestic sources, both current and projected, which seriously jeopardizes the prospects for our energy security. Therefore, it is proposed to import natural gas in the form of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) as well as through transnational pipelines from gas rich countries in West Asia (including Iran), Central Asia and South East Asia. Government is particularly pursuing gas imports through pipelines from Iran through Pakistan and from Myanmar through Bangladesh. The negotiations with Iran are at an initial stage. For the pipeline from Myanmar through Bangladesh following tripartite Ministerial-level discussion at Yangon on 12-13 January, 2005, a draft MoU was concluded at the technical level in Yangon on 24-25 February, 2005, and is likely to be signed shortly at Dhaka by the Ministers of the three countries concerned.

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(b) the reasons for non-completion of these projects for such a long time;

(c) any time-frame within which the projects are going to be completed; and

(d) whether there is any possibility of withdrawal of some of these projects?

**THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI):** (a) to (d) The Pagladiya Dam Project located at Thalkuchi village in the Nalbari district of Assam is the only Central Sector multipurpose project having flood control, irrigation and hydro power generation benefits associated with it. The project is being implemented by the Brahmaputra Board. Rs. 28.32 crore has been released to the Brahmaputra Board against this project. The project is scheduled to be completed by December 2007. However, its completion within the stipulated time depends upon the completion of Zirat survey which is to be completed by the State Government of Assam. However, several apprehensions have been made by local people and organisations within Bodo Territorial Council, Assam Government is negotiating the matter.

### **Production of alternative fuels**

**\*12. SHRI SANJAY RAUT:** Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the trees like pungan, neem, karanji, ratanjyot or jatropa can be grown to produce oil and this oil can be converted into bio-diesel after esterification and used as fuel in diesel engines;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken for using and producing alternative renewable energy to the petroleum products in the country?

**THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR):** (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Bio-diesel, derived from the vegetable oils mentioned in the question can be used as an automotive fuel after mixing with diesel. The process technology for the production of bio-diesel from vegetable oils is available in the country. Under instructions from the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas to the Oil Marketing