

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1993
ANSWERED ON:09.03.2006
COOPERATION IN PETROLEUM SECTOR WITH AFRICAN COUNTRIES
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Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

- (a) Whether in its efforts to diversify hydrocarbon reserves, the Government is planning for closer ties with Sub-Saharan African countries in the energy cooperation;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether India has offered some services help to these countries in exchange of oil blocks; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the future strategy chalked out by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL)

(a) to (d) : PSU Oil Companies like Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) through its subsidiary ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL), Oil India Limited (OIL), GAIL (India) Limited, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) are actively pursuing acquisition of exploration and production(E&P) acreages abroad, including in Sub-Saharan African Countries, to enhance the energy security of the Country. OVL has planned investments worth US\$ 1158 million in Sudan, Libya, Ivory Coast and Egypt. The IOCL-OIL consortium, which has won two blocks in Libya, is pursuing (E&P) interests in Gabon, Nigeria, Angola, Congo and Sudan. GAIL is pursuing business opportunities in Ethiopia, while HPCL is pursuing one in Senegal.

In the case of Nigeria, the OVL-Mittal joint venture, OMEL, has entered into an MOU with the Nigerian Ministry of Energy to take up economic development projects in the refining, railways and power sectors, in return for two E&P blocks on nomination basis, a long-term oil contract, and access to LNG when it is developed.

Indian companies will continue to pursue vigorously E&P and downstream opportunities in Sub-Saharan African Countries for future acquisitions and beneficial business ventures.