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## OIL to invest Rs 10,000 cr in State in next 5 years

R DUTTA CHOUDHURY

year for a period of five years from the next financial year, which would include drilling of oil wells, infrastructure development, etc. He pointed out that the increase of crude production would be beneficial for the State as a whole. He said that crude production by the OIL has started showing an increasing trend after going on a decline for a few years and revealed that the OIL has been making all-out efforts to further increase production.

He said that under the provision of the new Hydrocarbon Licence policy of the Government of India, the OIL has placed bids for 10 blocks in



OIL CMD Utpal Bora

the North East, one in Rajasthan and one in the Krishna-Godavari basin.

Replying to a question, Bora ad-

mitted that the OIL has not placed any bid for offshore exploration as of now. He pointed out that the capital investment for offshore exploration is much higher and at present, the OIL is not in a position to go for such an exploration. However, at the same time, he said that the OIL can become partners with other companies for offshore exploration. He also said the Assam Hydrocarbons Limited has approached the OIL for limited partnership in oil exploration and discussions are on with the government company.

The OIL CMD pointed out that

connecting the North East with the national grid would give a major economic boost to the region. He revealed that for connecting the region with the National Gas Grid, the Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) has been entrusted with the responsibility of laying a 750-kilometre long gas pipeline from Barauni to Guwahati. He also stated that the OIL, along with the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), the Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), GAIL and the Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL), would form a company to take up the

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## OIL to invest ...

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job of connecting the State capitals of the region with gas pipelines. The project would also include connecting the gas-producing areas. Around 15,000 kms of gas pipeline would have to be laid at a cost of Rs 6,000 crore under the project. Once the project is completed, it would be possible to provide piped natural gas to households.

Bora said that apart from catering to the domestic need, connecting the region with the National Gas Grid would have other major benefits. He pointed out that gas is also required for power plants and other industries, while it would be possible to set up CNG stations so that vehicles can run with CNG, which would be cheaper and cleaner. With the Government pursuing the Act East Policy, connecting the region with the National Gas Grid would open up an ocean of opportunities, he added.

However, he admitted that there is presently a gap between demand and supply of gas in the region. In fact, around 40 per cent of gas requirement in the country is met with imports. Moreover, the price of gas in the international market is also expected to come down soon and this is the appropriate time to connect the region with the national grid.

Meanwhile, the OIL is implementing several major projects in the State under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) project. The beautification of the Kamakhya temple premises is one such project, while it is also taking the lead in setting up of an oil museum in the city, where other public sector undertakings are also involved. The OIL has provided Rs 2 crore for a project to restore the Barry White Medical School heritage building and a skill development centre has already come up in North Guwahati. He also said that the Super 30 scheme of the OIL to provide free coaching to poor students has yielded desired results, as around 500 students have got admission in engineering colleges, including IITs and NITs. He said that in addition to the existing centres of the scheme at Dibrugarh, Jorhat, Tinsukia and Guwahati, one more centre at Nagaon has been opened recently.