

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:88

ANSWERED ON:23.02.2006

INDO- IRAN GAS PIPELINE PROJECT

Adsul Shri Anandrao Vithoba;Nedurumalli Janardhana Reddy Shri

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

- (a) the present status of the Indo-Iran Gas pipeline project;
- (b) whether a team of Indian officials recently visited Iran to discuss the pipeline issue;
- (c) if so, the details and the outcome thereof;
- (d) whether a tripartite meeting of the Joint Iran-Pakistan-India Working Group has also been held with regard to the feasibility of the said project;
- (e) if so, the outcome thereof indicating the precise alignment and the cost thereof; and
- (f) the steps taken/being taken in pursuance thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA)

(a) to (f): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (f) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.88 BY SARVASHRI ANANDRAO V. ADSUL AND N. JANARDHANA REDDY TO BE ANSWERED ON 23RD FEBRUARY 2006 REGARDING INDO-IRAN GAS PIPELINE PROJECT

(a) to (c): As the domestic availability of gas is not adequate to meet the country's demand, we have been pursuing import of gas, both as liquefied natural gas (LNG) and through transnational pipelines. One of the pipeline projects under consideration is the Iran-Pakistan-India pipeline project which envisages a pipeline of about 2000 kilometres length from Assaluyeh in Iran to the India-Pakistan border. To finalize the details of this project, two separate Secretary-level bilateral Joint Working Groups (JWGs) have been set up by us with Pakistan and Iran. So far, three meetings each of these JWGs have been held in which various technical, commercial, financial, legal and other project-related issues have been discussed. The issues under discussion include gas pricing, project structure and the tripartite Government-to-Government Framework Agreement. The Indian side has appointed their financial and technical consultants who are advising the Ministry on various aspects of the project. The Pakistan side has also recently appointed their consultancy consortium.

The project was discussed in Tehran, in October 2005, during the second JWG meeting. After this, the project was discussed with the Iranian side, during the third JWG meeting in New Delhi, in December 2005. At the end of this meeting, it was inter alia, agreed that there would be tripartite meetings at the technical, official and Ministerial levels in the coming months.

A tripartite meeting of the technical teams from the three countries was held in New Delhi, in January 2006, to discuss various technical parameters of the project. Later, the progress of the project was reviewed at Ministerial-level during the visit to India of the Pakistani Minister of Petroleum & Natural Resources, on 17th February, 2006. At these discussions, it was agreed that the second meeting of the technical officials would be held in Pakistan in the first week of March 2006. The two sides also agreed to have a tripartite meeting at the official level in Tehran in mid-March 2006, to be followed by a tripartite Ministerial-level meeting in Tehran in mid-April 2006.

(d): No, Sir. It is scheduled to be held in Tehran in March 2006.

(e) & (f): Do not arise in view of reply to (d) above.