

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1211

ANSWERED ON:10.03.2005

REFINERY IN SAUDI ARABIA

Adhalrao Patil Shri Shivaji; Adsul Shri Anandrao Vithoba

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

- (a) whether Saudi Arabia has invited Indian firms to set up a refinery in the Oil Kingdom for exporting petro products to the third countries;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (d) whether ONGC has also tie up for exploration activities in Iran and join hands with other foreign based companies; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS AND PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR)

(a) to (c): During the bilateral meeting between Minister (PNG) and Minister of Petroleum & Mineral Resources of Saudi Arabia, held on the sidelines of the first Round Table of Asian Oil Ministers in January 2005, the Saudi Arabia Oil Minister stated that there were opportunities for Indian companies to invest in export-oriented refineries in Saudi Arabia. Minister (PNG) stated that Indian companies would examine such opportunities for making appropriate proposals. Indian Oil Corporation have sought details from Saudi Aramco for firming up its response. The subject will be further discussed when Minister (PNG) visits Saudi Arabia towards the end of the month.

(d) & (e): ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL) currently hold a 40% participating interest in the Farsi Exploration Block in Iran along with other Indian PSUs, namely Indian Oil Corporation and Oil India Ltd. Other exploration blocks are under negotiation.