

# Agarwal seeks lower taxes to lift oil output

**The Hindu Bureau**

NEW DELHI

Vedanta chairman Anil Agarwal on Friday sought urgent reforms in India's oil and gas sector, including lower taxes and expedited clearances to lift domestic exploration and production, which was 'falling every year' because of constraints including 'endless litigation with the government'.

Observing that India's proven oil and gas reserves were three times its annual consumption, yet the country still imported almost 90% of its fuel re-



Anil Agarwal

quirements, Mr. Agarwal emphasised that exploration efforts were critical to tap those reserves.

The entire scenario could be transformed with reforms that could be undertaken within months, he asserted.

# Vedanta seeks PLI scheme for oil and gas sector

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

VEDANTA GROUP Chairman Anil Agarwal urged the government to give incentives for the oil and gas exploration in India in line with production-linked Incentive (PLI) scheme.

Agarwal, in a social media post said that the government is giving subsidies or incentives in all key sectors, but nothing to the oil and gas sector.

"Government is giving subsidies or incentives in all key sectors whether agriculture, electronics or pharma. But not for anything below the ground including oil and gas despite im-



ports touching almost \$100 per barrel," said Agarwal.

Vedanta's Cairn Oil & Gas is one of the India's largest private sector exporter and producer of oil. The company tar-

gets to contribute around 50% to India's total oil and gas production. The company's footprint covers a total acreage of 65,000 square kilometres, and during FY 2023, the Company reported average gross operated production of 143 kboepd.

Agarwal suggested various reforms including slashing taxes to maximum 30% in line with international benchmarks. He also batted for reforms in licensing norms. Agarwal said that currently, a licence for a well is given only for 10 years, and thus he asked the government to give license for

life of the well or at least 70 years for maximum investment. "Clearances take a very long time and delay the process of exploration and production. We

need to introduce self-certification to avoid these delays," said Agarwal.

Agarwal said India is rich in oil and gas, and has reserves three times of its annual consumption. Despite the reserves, the country has to import almost 90% of its energy needs. He also highlighted that India's oil demand will double in the next 20 years from 5 million barrels per day to over 10 million barrels a day.



# Society of petroleum geophysicists 14th biennial International conference & expo commences at Kochi

KOCHI/NEW DELHI: The 14th edition of Society of petroleum geophysicists (SPG) Conference, scheduled to take place from November 3-5, 2023, commenced on Friday at the Lulu Bolgatty International Convention Centre (LBICC) in Kochi, Kerala. This event is expected to draw over 2000 participants, including more than 100 foreign delegates and over 700 Indian delegates.

Director Exploration, ONGC & patron SPG-India, Sushma Rawat inaugurated the three-day event. Dr. V P Joy, IAS (Retd.), Former Chief Secretary, Kerala, as the Chief Guest, MD-ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL), Rajarshi Gupta, Executive Director, ONGC & Presi-



ONGC-2 MD (OVL) Rajarshi Gupta addressing the event

dent SPG-India, Vishal Shastri, CEO- European Association of Geoscientists & Engineers (EAGE)-Netherlands, Marcel Robert Van Loon, Board

Member & Director at Large, Constantine Tsingas, Society of Exploration Geophysicists (SEG)-USA were also present. The conference seeks to

address the complex challenges of balancing 'Energy Affordability', 'Energy Reliability', and 'Environmental Sustainability', often referred to as the 'Energy Trilemma'. The current edition of the conference SPG 2023, has been convened to explore the pivotal theme of the conference "New Age Geosciences: A Fulcrum for Energy Trilemma".

The theme is very apt in the current scenario and presents extraordinary challenges and opportunities that hold the potential to shape the trajectory of India's energy landscape. India's journey towards energy sustainability is at a crossroads. Our nation, with its burgeoning population and growing demands, stands as a critical

player in the global energy landscape.

The pathway ahead is complex, demanding that we address the 'Energy Trilemma' – a trio of challenges that often pull us in opposing directions, effectively.

"New Age Geosciences" represent the fulcrum upon which we balance these ambitions. The strides made in geoscience hold the promise of unveiling innovative solutions that harmonize our aspirations. The SPG conference has become an apex level event over the past three decades, showcasing contemporary benchmarks and breakthroughs in petroleum sciences, technological innovations and emerging trends. MPOST



## ● NATURAL GAS

# We just cannot let sustainability run out of gas

The journey to electrification will be through gasification

■ RAJESH KAUL

**INDIA IS MOVING** towards sustainable mobility — battery electric vehicles, followed by hydrogen powertrains and alternative fuels. But we need an interim solution that can reduce tailpipe emissions. Natural gas is that 'transition fuel'.

### Stepping on the gas

As per a 2022 NITI Aayog report, the number of trucks could quadruple by 2050. Switching to natural gas (CNG and LNG) is vital not only for the environment, but also makes economic sense for the CV industry. Emission and import bill reduction, and energy security are the top drivers for India, especially as 50% of CNG sourcing is within the country.



### CNG versus diesel

CNG is environmentally friendlier than diesel, with its GHG emissions 20% lower. CNG trucks have lower cost of ownership (primarily due to low maintenance costs).

### Building the ecosystem

The government recently noted that, by 2030, there could be more than 17,000 CNG stations. Measures like setting up a national gas grid, building more LNG terminals, and promoting bio-CNG under the

SATAT (Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation) scheme will enhance access to natural gas across the country. Another welcome development is the government's approval of the new natural gas pricing mechanism, which has enhanced CNG's affordability vis-à-vis petrol and diesel.

### Shaping the future

We, at Tata Motors, have the widest CNG range of CVs across segments, and have a target to achieve net zero emissions by 2045. At the Auto Expo, we showcased multiple green fuel options — natural gas, electric and hydrogen — leading the charge in sustainable logistics.

### Demand for CNG trucks

The demand for CNG-powered CVs saw a sharp rise in FY22, due to the increasing differential between CNG and diesel prices, and more fuelling stations, driving operating economics in favour of CNG vehicles. Even though there has been an increase in CNG price in the last financial year, in the long term favourable operating economics and better availability is expected to keep driving demand of CNG vehicles. It's clear that the journey to electrification will be through gasification. We expect that by the end of this decade, natural gas adoption in CVs will be at par with diesel.

*The author is business head, Trucks, Tata Motors. Views are personal*

