

SPEECH BY SHRI MURLI DEORA, HON'BLE MINISTER FOR PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ON THE OCCASION OF THE INAUGURATION OF THE OFFICE ACCOMMODATION OF PNGRB ON 15TH JULY, 2008

My colleague Shri Dinsha Patel Ji, Minister of State for Petroleum & Natural Gas, Shri L. Mansingh, Chairperson, PNGRB, Shri M. S. Srinivasan, Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, other Officers from the Ministry and the Regulatory Board, CEOs of the Oil and Gas Companies, both in the public sector and private sector.

The different sectors of the Indian economy have progressively moved towards market-driven regimes in the past few years. In the sectors requiring regulatory intervention such as electricity, telecom, etc., statutory regulators have been established. This helped in getting much-needed investments in these sectors and their orderly growth. The consumers have also benefited on account of availability of better services and products at competitive prices.

It gives me immense pleasure to inaugurate the renovated office building of PNGRB. PNGRB has to play a pivotal role in development of oil and gas sector, in order to provide level playing field to all the stakeholders. It has done a commendable job in finalizing regulations relating to the development of city gas distribution networks in the country and for the development of natural gas pipelines.

I have been told that PNGRB has already received Expression of Interests in respect of 61 cities. Suitable entities would be selected for these cities through an open bidding route. The regulations specify a transparent mechanism for selection of an entity for any particular city for the development of CGD network. Such projects are likely to experience an exponential growth taking into account the sizeable gas finds in the KG basin in the country. I am sure that these regulations will facilitate an orderly growth of CGD networks in the country.

I have also been informed that the Board has also approved the regulations on access code, affiliate code and technical specifications of CGD networks. These notifications are in the process of being published. These regulations will play a crucial role in increasing the competition in the natural gas marketing and ensure the adoption of uniform safety standards throughout the country.

One of the main functions of any Regulatory Body is to have a constant interaction with various stakeholders with a view to evolving

regulations, which are, not only fair but are also easily implementable. I am sure that the modern facilities available in this office accommodation would facilitate an effective interaction of PNGRB with various entities to ensure effective implementation of its regulations.

At this juncture, I would like to emphasise that the involvement of all stakeholders in developing and prescribing regulation is a necessity. This will enable equitable growth of the oil and gas sector in a competitive environment. With the increased availability of gas in the country in the coming months, there is a need to develop the regulatory framework at a rapid pace.

I would like to convey my best wishes to PNGRB. I also hope that it would emerge as an effective organization, which would successfully balance the interests of the entities and the consumers and promote orderly development of the sector.

Thank You

Jai Hind