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Content

ARTICLE	1
<i>Water vapor - Effect on climate change.....</i>	<i>1</i>

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	2
<i>Climate still waiting on the rich.....</i>	<i>2</i>

Economic Times.....	4
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OIL & GAS	4
<i>PNGRB invites bids for retailing gas in 4 states</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Reliance D6 peak gas output delayed to FY13</i>	<i>5</i>

Indicators	7
<i>Oil mixed in Asian trade.....</i>	<i>7</i>

e-paper Livemint.....	8
<i>India can afford to double share of renewable energy, says study.....</i>	<i>8</i>

e-paper Economic Times	10
<i>GSPC strikes huge gas reserve in Cambay basin.....</i>	<i>10</i>

e-paper Indian express	11
<i>In a first, city to get a carbon footprint report in 6 months</i>	<i>11</i>

e-paper Dainik Jagran.....	12
<i>केजी बेसिन की गैस में बिजली क्षेत्र को तरजीह.....</i>	<i>12</i>

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ARTICLE

Water vapor - Effect on climate change

According to the latest scientific study the water vapor plays much bigger role in global warming phenomenon than previously expected, and according to the new study a 10 percent drop in water vapor ten miles above Earth's surface significantly increased the impact on global warming. The results of this study could also explain the mystery of why temperatures have not risen as fast in the last ten years as they did in the 1980s and 1990s.

The satellite images show that water vapor was increasing in the 1980s and 1990s, and then dropping after 2000, and according to the scientists these ups and downs occurred precisely in a narrow altitude region of the stratosphere where they played the biggest possible role on climate.

Water vapor is one of the less known greenhouse gases, not as famous as its close relatives carbon dioxide, and methane but still important part of greenhouse gases family that plays crucial role in climate change.

Satellite images show that water vapor in the stratosphere decreased by about 10 percent in the last 10 years, and reasons for that are still unknown. Though we still don't know the reason of this decrease, this was quite helpful scenario that was mainly responsible for cooling by causing surface temperatures to increase about 25 percent more slowly than they would have otherwise, with the ongoing increases in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.

Scientists have also concluded that an increase in stratospheric water vapor in the 1990s likely had the opposite effect of increasing the rate of warming by about 30 percent. Once the mystery what triggers the increase and decrease in stratospheric water vapor gets solved we will know much more about the role of water vapor in climate change.

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Climate still waiting on the rich

Date: 28, July 2010

BEIJING - Developing countries once again urged rich nations to keep their promise to help them in the fight against climate change.

The ministers of four major emerging economies said at the conclusion of a meeting on Monday that developed countries should provide detailed and comprehensive information on their pledge to provide a climate-change fund.

Rich countries pledged to provide \$30 billion by 2012 to help developing countries reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impact of climate change, with the commitment to increase that to \$100 billion per year by 2020.

The commitment came on the heels of the Copenhagen conference in December. The financing "will be the key for an effective result in the (next) climate change negotiations in Cancun," said ministers from China, Brazil, India and South Africa after a meeting in Rio de Janeiro on Sunday and Monday.

The BASIC Group, as they are called, also urged that the financing cover adaptation and technology development, and expressed concerns over the lack of guidelines for distributing the funds.

"Public financing should play the major role as a predictable source of financing," said the ministers in a joint statement.

The ministers also highlighted the importance of achieving a balanced outcome in Cancun, Mexico, where the next United Nations Climate Change Conference will be held in November.

The previous meeting failed to reach common ground on a limit for carbon emissions for developing countries, which will be presented to the Cancun conference, said Xinhua News Agency. The four countries decided to hold another meeting in Beijing in October, expecting to achieve a consensus so they can work together in Cancun, Xinhua said.

In building a balanced and comprehensive outcome for the climate negotiations, the ministers said they don't want developed countries to control their carbon emissions.

"Equitable access to carbon space must be considered in the context of sustainable development, the right to which is at the heart of the climate change regime, and which

demands the implementation of ambitious financing, technological support and capacity building," said the ministers in the joint statement.

The ministers also stressed the unity of the Group of 77 developing countries and China and their role in negotiating climate-change regimes.

In addition to ministers from BASIC, a special envoy for climate change from Venezuela, Claudia Salerno Caldera, also attended the meeting in Rio de Janeiro as an observer. The ministers decided to continue their approach of inviting other countries to the BASIC meetings to "foster transparency and benefit from a variety of views on climate change issues."

Economic Times

OIL & GAS

PNGRB invites bids for retailing gas in 4 states

28 Jul 2010, 1916 hrs IST, AGENCIES

Fresh from receiving full powers, oil regulator PNGRB has invited bids for giving licences for retailing CNG to automobiles and piped cooking gas to households in eight cities in West Bengal, Gujarat, Punjab and Haryana.

The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) has invited bids for Asansol-Durgapur (in West Bengal), Bhavnagar, Gandhidham-Anjar, Bhuj-Mundra and Jamnagar (all in Gujarat), Ludhiana and Jalandhar (in Punjab) and Panipat (in Haryana).

According to the public notice, bids will close on December 3, 2010. Nearly three years after it came into existence, the government this month notified a crucial section that now give the regulator explicit powers to issue city gas distribution licences.

The Section 16 of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board Act of 2006 was notified with effect from July 15, official sources said.

The PNGRB, which is to regulate petroleum product and natural gas sector, came into existence in October 2007 but Section 16 of the Act was not notified by the government.

The section gives PNGRB powers to authorise companies to retail CNG to automobiles and pipe cooking gas to households.

Sources said PNGRB, however, did not feel constrained by absence of Section 16 and held two rounds of bidding for giving city gas distribution rights.

In March last year, it conducted the first round for six cities - Kakinada in Andhra Pradesh, Mathura and Meerut in Uttar Pradesh, Kota in Rajasthan, Dewas in Madhya Pradesh and Sonapat in Haryana.

GAIL Gas swept the round bagging five cities. Bhagyanagar Gas, an equal joint venture of GAIL and Hindustan Petroleum, got the sixth city of Kakinada.

In the second round in August, PNGRB invited bids for seven cities, including Ghaziabad, Allahabad and Chandigarh.

Indraprastha Gas Ltd, which claimed it had central government and Supreme Court authorisation for retailing CNG and piped gas in Ghaziabad, challenged in the Delhi High Court the PNGRB's authority to issue licences in absence of the Section 16.

The HC in January ruled that PNGRB had no powers to issue city gas authorisation, leading to scrapping of second round.

After the HC ruling, the authority to issue CGD licenses fell on the central government which authorised winners of the first round of auction conducted by PNGRB and explicitly gave the licence for Ghaziabad to IGL, they said.

Armed with the Section 16, the regulator has now come out with a third round of auction.

Reliance D6 peak gas output delayed to FY13

29 Jul 2010, 0111 hrs IST, REUTERS

Reliance Industries will be able to pump natural gas at full capacity from its deep-sea field during the year to March 2013, the country's oil secretary said, indicating a delay of almost two years.

Reliance is currently pumping about 55-60 million cubic metres a day (mmscmd) of gas, Oil Secretary S. Sundareshan told reporters on Wednesday after a meeting of a ministerial panel that had been set up to look into the allocation of gas from KG D6 block in Krishna-Godavari basin.

Last December, Junior Oil Minister Jitin Prasada told lawmakers that output from KG D6, off India's east coast, was expected to be ramped up to a peak rate of 80 mmscmd by mid-July.

Reliance, which has the heaviest weight on the main index, shed 3.1 per cent, its biggest daily decline in two months, as investors ignored a 32 per cent rise in net profit and focused on gas production concerns.

Reliance said on Tuesday it would increase output at its KG D6 block after undertaking a review of the reserve.

Brokerage Ambit Research said in a report that near-term volumes from KG D6 are likely to remain flat at 60 mmscmd as the company conducted studies of its reservoir.

"Taking cognizance of the same we now factor in average production of 62 mmscmd and 79 mmscmd for FY11E and FY12E respectively against our earlier expectation of 75 mmscmd and 89 mmscmd," it wrote.

India imports more than 70 per cent of its energy needs and is looking to secure assets abroad and attract investment to develop its oil and gas fields at home. Currently it imports 28 mmscmd or 17 per cent of its gas demand to meet demand from the power and fertiliser sectors.

Sundareshan said the power ministry had sought an additional allocation of 8.22 mmscmd in the current fiscal year to March 2011 and 8.3 mmscmd for the following year, on top of the existing commitment of 32.67 mmscmd.

Sundareshan said India's current gas consumption is 170 mmscmd while local output is 142 mmscmd.

He said domestic gas output is expected to rise to 151 mmscmd by March 2012 and 186 mmscmd by March 2013, as gas fields operated by other firms including Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC.BO) and Gujarat State Petroleum Corp are also expected to start production.

Sundareshan said the ministers' panel has decided to divert 2.4 mmscmd gas committed to state-run ONGC's liquefied petroleum gas plant and some industries in Uran in western India.

He said ONGC would meet its own requirement and that of other industries in Uran through its own fields.

"The decision has been taken to lessen the load on KG D6 production to match demand," he said.

Reliance owns 90 per cent in the D6 block in the Krishna Godavari basin, while Canada's Niko Resources NKO.T holds the remainder.

Indicators

Oil mixed in Asian trade

29 Jul 2010, 0908 hrs IST, AGENCIES

Oil prices were mixed in range-bound Asian trade Thursday, with sentiment weighed down by slower energy demand in the United States and weaker Asian stock markets.

Analysts said it was unlikely oil prices would break out of the psychological 80-dollar level in the near term as the global recovery from recession still faces several challenges.

In addition, oil-consuming and -producing nations appear to be comfortable with the current price range of between 70-80 dollars a barrel, they said.

New York's main contract, light sweet crude for delivery in September, was up six cents to 77.05 dollars a barrel in morning trade.

London's Brent North Sea crude for September was down five cents to 76.01 dollars.

"There is no factor to buy crude oil at the moment," said Ken Hasegawa, energy desk manager at Newedge brokerage in Tokyo, referring to fading US consumer confidence and softer Asian stock markets.

"There is no direction especially in Asian hours. Investors are waiting for London to open," he told AFP.

"We need a very strong recovery worldwide in order to see a sharp rise in oil prices."

Reports of a sharp and unexpected jump in US crude stockpiles further soured the oil market, which was already suffering from the effects of weakening American consumer confidence.

The US Department of Energy said crude oil inventories jumped 7.3 million barrels last week. Analysts had expected a drop of 1.4 million barrels.

Gasoline stockpiles rose by 100,000 barrels, below analyst expectations for a build of 500,000 barrels, and distillates, which includes heating oil and diesel, rose by 900,000 barrels.

The United States is the top energy consuming nation and its consumption patterns are a key influence on the oil market.

e-paper Livemint

India can afford to double share of renewable energy, says study

India can afford to raise the share of renewable energy in national power output to 10% by 2015 from under 4% today, says a new report.

A so-called national action plan on climate change recommends India should generate 10% of power from solar, wind, hydro power and other renewable energy sources by 2015, and 15% by 2020. But the high production cost and its effect on state power utilities' budgets is viewed as a deterrent.

The report by ratings firm Crisil Infrastructure Advisory assesses the renewable energy potential of states, the renewable energy purchase obligations of state utilities and its impact on tariffs. It says the additional costs will be minimal.

"The incremental impact on power purchase costs pan-India would be about 1.5 paise a unit in 2011 diminishing to 0.1 paise by 2015," says the report. "The maximum impact for any state would be 4.2 paise a unit in 2011, which would go down to about 1 paise by 2015."

India has to import nearly three-fourths of its energy needs due to a limited stock of conventional energy sources. India's renewable energy potential is 100,000MW from solar energy and another 85,000MW from non-solar sources. Of that, only around 17,220MW has been tapped. This includes 69% from wind energy, 16% from small hydropower units and 8% from co-generation. The remaining 7% covers solar energy and other sources, according to Crisil.

"Though wind-based power has the highest share in total renewable energy installed capacity, it also has the highest gap (between potential and production capacity) among non-solar renewable sources, providing an opportunity for further harnessing wind energy. The biggest potential exists for solar power," the report says.

More reliance on renewable energy will not only help India reduce its import bill but also cut back its contribution to polluting gases that are blamed for climate change worldwide.

The Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) has come up with guidelines on issuing renewable energy certificates (RECs) from September to promote green energy. Certificate holders will be able to sell green energy to states, individuals or other trading entities.

States have been allotted different renewable energy purchase obligations (RPOs). While Gujarat met its target for 2009-10, states such as Tamil Nadu came close.

Sixteen state electricity regulatory commissions have specified the RPOs for their licensee distribution companies. They have also notified regulations to determine the tariff of energy generated from renewable sources.

“While some states had issued final regulations on the REC mechanism, several others were awaiting approval of the norms drafted by the respective state electricity regulatory commissions,” said Pramod Deo, chairperson and chief executive of CERC.

The Crisil report says RPOs reflect the target set out in the national action plan—5% of renewable energy in 2010, followed by a 1 percentage point increase every year, leading to 10% in 2015 and 15% in 2020.

The potential for renewable energy differs across states.

“For instance, most of the wind potential is available in states like Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Kerala. There are also states like Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh where there is moderate RE (renewable energy) potential (primarily small hydropower).

Remaining states have very little RE potential,” the report says.

Sushanta K. Chatterjee, deputy chief for regulatory affairs at CERC, said a standard RPO for all states is neither possible nor desirable. “There will need to be different trajectories for different states at varying potential levels.”

He said most renewable energy projects were located in poorly connected areas, and transmission of power was a major challenge.

e-paper Economic Times

GSPC strikes huge gas reserve in Cambay basin

GUJARAT State Petroleum Corporation (GSPC) is learnt to have struck a huge cache of gas in the Cambay basin of Gujarat. GSPC, in a joint venture with Australian exploration & production (E&P) company Oilex, has found around 20-22 trillion cubic feet natural gas reserve, probably the biggest onshore gas find to date, sources in the Gujarat government told ET.

"The logs from data collected by drilling wells in the block show that we have probably run into 20-22 tcf of natural gas entrapped in the Cambay basin. However, it is geologically trapped gas in tight formation (difficult to extract commercially)," a state government official said on condition of anonymity.

However, the corporation is not going to town with the discovery. A major reason behind the subdued excitement among the GSPC brass is the highly low recovery factor of its latest find.

An industry expert said: "It being tight gas, the operational expenses to recover this gas would be higher. Also, the quantity recoverable could be much lower. GSPC-Oilex would be more than happy to commercially recover even 2 tcf of this find."

Another reason for GSPC underplaying the gas find could be traced to its much-hyped discovery of 20 tcf in the KG basin in June 2007. State chief minister Narendra Modi, who was in his election year, announced the discovery amid much fanfare, terming it as the biggest gas find in the country then. However, the upstream hydrocarbon regulator, the Directorate General of Hydrocarbons contested the claims, and has till date ratified a gas find of just 2 tcf.

A gas industry source in the know of events said, "Analysing tight gas is a difficult job. Oilex appointed three different consultants working in North America, and apparently all of them have confirmed that there is plenty of gas in the basin."

The latest gas find by GSPC-Oilex is significant as it is onshore gas, which is relatively easier to recover and monetise. The DGH will have the final say for establishing the exact quantity of gas.

e-paper Indian express

In a first, city to get a carbon footprint report in 6 months

THE Energy Research Institute (TERI) on Wednesday said it would submit a carbon footprint report for the city in six months, thereby making it the first city in the country to have such a report.

"We have started collecting data on energy consumption to assess the use of carbon at each level," TERI coordinator Anjali Parasnis said. She said all urban activities would be considered while estimating carbon emissions and the inventory would focus on the impact of energy consumption. Additional municipal commissioner Umakant Dangat said the civic body would initiate steps to reduce carbon emissions in the city once its sources were identified.

The TERI has, meanwhile, adopted thematic indicators to assess the environment status of the city in its environment status report (ESR). It has given 73.68 per cent rating for various features related to environment. It has allotted 141.5 out of 250 points for growth, 243 out of 300 for state of natural resources, 181.5 out of 250 for urban services and 129.6 out of 144 points for initiatives to improve city environment. WHAT IT SAID PUBLIC TRANSPORT The report stressed the need to raise the use of public transport by citizens. The usage is a mere 18 per cent now and it should be raised to 80 per cent. The traffic has restricted the speed of vehicles on city roads to 18 km/hour, which should be at least 30 km/hour. Deaths in accidents have been 11 per lakh.

WATER The excessive use of water could have an adverse impact on the future needs. There should be an equitable water supply system besides metering the supply with regular auditing.

HEALTH The report focused on the spread of H1N1 last year and the civic initiatives to contain it.

e-paper Dainik Jagran

केजी बेसिन की गैस में बिजली क्षेत्र को तरजीह

नई दिल्ली, जागरण ब्यूरो : सरकार केजी बेसिन से मिल रही गैस के आवंटन में बिजली परियोजनाओं को प्राथमिकता देगी। रिलायंस इंडस्ट्रीज (आरआईएल) के केजी बेसिन स्थित डी-6 ब्लॉक के उत्पादन में निकट भविष्य में बढ़ोतरी की उम्मीद नहीं है। ऐसे में सरकार ने यहां से सरकारी तेल कंपनी ओएनजीसी को मिल रही गैस भी बंद कर दी है। अब इस ब्लॉक की गैस बिजली के अलावा उर्वरक परियोजनाओं को भी वरीयता के आधार पर मिलेगी। केजी बेसिन से मिल रही गैस के वितरण के संबंध में हुई मंत्रियों के अधिकार प्राप्त समूह (ईजीओएम) की बैठक में बुधवार को ये फैसले लिये गए। ईजीओएम का मानना है कि बिजली और उर्वरक यूनिटों में पावर प्लांटों को गैस आवंटन के मामले में प्राथमिकता मिलेगी। हालांकि ईजीओएम ने रिलायंस पावर के दादरी प्लांट (उत्तर प्रदेश) को गैस सप्लाई के मामले में कोई फैसला नहीं लिया। ईजीओएम ने बैठक में आरआईएल के इस दावे को स्वीकार कर लिया कि निकट भविष्य में केजी बेसिन के डी-6 ब्लॉक में गैस का उत्पादन 6 करोड़ घनमीटर से ऊपर जाना मुश्किल है। लिहाजा अब यहां से मिलने वाली गैस का आवंटन इसी उत्पादन के आधार पर करना होगा। इस बात को ध्यान में रखते हुए ईजीओएम ने डी-6 ब्लॉक से ओएनजीसी को मिल रही 4 लाख घनमीटर गैस का आवंटन रोक दिया है।

मंत्री समूह का मानना है कि इस सरकारी तेल व गैस उत्पादक कंपनी को अपने स्रोतों से गैस की पर्याप्त आपूर्ति हो रही है। लिहाजा अब उसे रिलायंस की गैस की आवश्यकता नहीं है। सूत्रों के मुताबिक मंत्री समूह की बैठक में दिल्ली के बवाना में लग रहे प्रगति पावर प्लांट को आवंटित गैस के कोटे को भी रद्द करने पर विचार हुआ। इस मामले में पेट्रोलियम मंत्रालय की दलील है कि इस परियोजना का क्रियान्वयन अगले वित्त वर्ष 2011-12 तक के लिए टल गया है।