

Work begins on Cairn's 600-km pipeline

The Indian arm of British hydrocarbons exploration major Cairn Tuesday began work on a 600-km pipeline to transport crude oil and gas from Barmer district in Rajasthan to the coastal district of Jamnagar in Gujarat.

'The 600-km pipeline is the first heated and insulated pipeline in the country,' said David Nisbet, director of Cairn India's corporate communications unit.

'It will transport crude from the country's biggest onshore oil field to refineries across India,' Nisbet said at an event to commence the construction work at Bevtia in Banaskantha district near the Gujarat-Rajasthan border.

At their peak, Cairn India's three major oil fields - Mangala, Bhagyam and Aishwariya - in Barmer would produce 175,000 barrels of oil a day and push up India's domestic crude production by approximately 20 percent.

In April, the petroleum and natural gas ministry had shifted the delivery point for crude produced in Rajasthan from Barmer to Salaya at the Gujarat coast.

According to Nisbet, the oil field development work in Rajasthan is proceeding on schedule. The integrated upstream and the pipeline development is on course to produce oil from Mangala in the second half of 2009.

The pipeline is designed to access an extensive existing pipeline infrastructure and refinery network, with a final coastal delivery point providing access to the majority of India's refining capacity, he said.

Apart from the crude, natural gas from the Raageshwari gas field will also run through this pipeline, he said. At least 32 intermediate power feeding and heating stations will be built along the length of the pipeline to help maintain the required temperature inside.

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