

Qatar open to meet India's growing LNG demand: CEO of QP



The Peninsula

DOHA: Qatar, the world's largest exporter of liquefied natural gas (LNG), is open to supply more gas to India to meet the country's fast growing requirements for clean energy.

India, one of the major importers of Qatari gas, is giving more focus on the use of natural gas (reducing the use of coal, diesel and petrol) to transform into a gas-based economy. "India is a very important country for us, especially with regard to our growing LNG production, and India's rising demand for energy. We are always open to enhance cooperation to meet its energy requirements," Eng Saad Sherida Al Kaabi, President and CEO of Qatar Petroleum (QP) said in response to a question from The Peninsula.

Al Kaabi added: "Currently we are supplying over 8 million tonnes of our LNG to India every year under long-term

agreements. We intend to supply more. A few months ago I visited India and have had meetings with top officials of all the important Indian companies that are buying LNG. We have had discussions on these issues, and we are looking forward to increase the level of cooperation to satisfy India's growing LNG demand." He reiterated that he is always open to have discussions and supply more LNG to India. "We have good relationships with Indian companies. India is a strategic business partner of QP. Indian energy companies are good reliant customers, and we hope to grow that business because that's very important for us," said Al Kaabi.

India with a population of over 1.3 billion people, which is also the Asia's third largest economy, is investing heavily on developing needful infrastructure to boost the consumption of gas. It has set an ambitious target of enhancing the share of gas to 15 percent of its primary energy basket within next few years, which is currently 6.5 percent. The energy-hungry economy, which is currently the third largest consumer of oil and gas, is also working to develop a gas trading exchange to create new market, aiming to boost domestic consumption of gas as well as re-exporting it to neighbouring countries.

Al Kaabi said that during his visit he also met with India's Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Dharmendra Debendra Pradhan, and had fruitful discussions to boost energy cooperation between the two friendly countries.

Pradhan, a big supporter of gas and other forms of clean energy, reaffirmed his commitment to boost India's gas consumption in a recent TV interview. "Today India's re-gasification capacity is about 26 million tonnes per annum (mtpa), which is adding another 30mtpa of re-gasification facility in the eastern coast of the country. This is the biggest jump of re-gasification capacity ever," said the Minister in a TV interview.

Pradhan added that currently about 150 districts of the country are linked with piped gas supply, and by the end of 2019, India will have another 200 districts connected with piped gas, taking the total to 350 districts, covering more than half of the country of 1.3 billion people.

India is revamping its several key industries, including fertiliser, steel, and other industries to transforming them into gas-fuelled facilities.

In addition, the country also has plans to use gas as primary fuel for its huge transport sector, including the maritime and inland transport. "We are very focused to use more LNG, PNG (piped natural gas) and CNG (compressed natural gas). I am confident that India (in terms of gas consumption) will achieve more than the world average of 24 percent of gas in the global energy-mix. In the state of Gujarat we already have achieved 26 percent, which we want to replicate across the country," the Minister said.