

Gulf states spend \$50bn to boost oil capacity



Bahrain's Minister of Oil and Gas Affairs Abdul Hussain bin Ali Mirza delivers his opening speech during the inaugural session of the conference on Tuesday. (AN photo)

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MANAMA: The oil producing countries in the Gulf region, by the year-end, will have spent approximately \$50 billion to increase their current oil field production capacities or to develop new discoveries, Bahrain's Minister of Oil and Gas Affairs Abdul Hussain bin Ali Mirza said on Tuesday.

Mirza, in his opening remarks at the three-day conference titled Energy Evolution Middle East, said main expansions to enhance the oil production capacity have taken place mainly in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar Bahrain.

The minister, who is also the chairman of Bahrain's National Oil and Gas Authority (NOGA), said the conference aimed at addressing the most critical debatable issues facing the global energy sector, including climate change, the need to diversify the energy mix, renewable energy sources, and the effective and efficient utilization of clean technologies in all energy sources, and reduction of their impact on the atmosphere and environment.

"Energy evolution is the concern of governments worldwide and this morning I would like to leave you with the message that NOGA in Bahrain has taken action on our energy evolution journey to protect the environment, and we see the next decade as a breakthrough for clean technologies and alternative energy," Mirza said.

“The sustainability of modern societies and economies is dependent on the availability of energy and we are all aware that fossil fuel, the major energy source, will not last indefinitely,” he added.

“On the one hand in terms of fossil fuels, new energy sources have been explored to diversify the energy mix. New technology has been applied to both the upstream and downstream sectors of the oil industry to sustain conventional energy sources and manufacture cleaner fuels. On the other hand technological breakthroughs have been achieved to increase the use of renewable energy sources be it solar, wind, fuel cells, or even nuclear,” the minister said.

Mirza said to make such a paradigm shift in sustainable energy, the right and proper political and economic atmosphere must be created. He said this is embodied in Bahrain’s Economic Vision 2030.

He said the commitment of the GCC countries to diversify their energy base has already materialized through implementation of various initiatives, stretching from solar energy to nuclear energy.

“One must also recognize that, at the same time, the GCC commitment toward ensuring supplies of oil to the international markets calls upon them to make huge investment in developing and increasing production capacities,” he added.

“We believe that the global manufacturing and transportation industry sectors can offer as much effort as the producing and consuming countries in securing the sustainability of energy supply and contributing to improving fuel quality,” he said.

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