

AAEA demands accountability for mishaps in 'abandoned' oil/gas wells



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Guwahati: Expressing concern over the Sivasagar crude-oil well gas leakage in the last few days, a northeast India based forum of graduate engineers have urged both Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India Limited (OIL) to come clear about the so-called 'abandoned' wells, which have the potential to harm human life, property and environment, as the concerned private parties operating such wells often do not come forward to take responsibility. All Assam Engineers Association (AAEA), in a statement, also appealed to the Union government in New Delhi to hold the concerned ONGC/OIL officials accountable for any disaster at an oil or gas well after having declared it 'dried up'.

“It’s apprehended that some corrupt ONGC/OIL officials declare certain oil/gas wells as ‘old one’ so that private parties can then enter, seize the opportunity to drill, and extract benefits (with the secret understanding of sharing such benefits with the concerned corrupt officials of state-sponsored ONGC/OIL). Is there any mechanism to monitor the concerned officials after they declare a loaded oil/gas well as 'dry one', and thereby facilitate private parties in oil/gas extraction in lieu of personal gain?” said AAEA president Er Kailash Sarma, working president Er Nava J Thakuria and secretary Er Inamul Hye.

The Bhatiapar-Bari Chuk (Sivasagar) and 2020 Baghjan (Tinsukia) OIL well blowout remind the same story where private parties were operating the well (after these were assumed to be lacking sufficient oil /gas reserves) and accidents took place. It means that no lessons have been learnt on how to prevent such practices. Shockingly, India as a nation still does not have an efficient response team to deal with disasters of such magnitude, so expert teams from countries like Canada or USA have to be urgently brought in to address the problems, added the AAEA statement.

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