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'Oil national wealth, foreign firms have no say in North Oil Project'

Minister allays MPs fears, says project will go ahead

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 8: Minister of Energy Sheikh Ali Jarrah answered questions of MPs Faisal Al-Muslim and Waleed Al-Tabtabaei on employing foreign companies in Northern Oil Fields project and Al-Khafji Joint Operations project, reports Al-Qabas.

The minister made it very clear that the government will maintain and develop oil fields in the North and in the Al-Khafji oil field. However, to take advantage of the experience and technology of foreign companies, the government forwarded a proposal to employ limited services of foreign companies in the Northern Oil Field project.

The Economic and Finance Committee in the parliament is still studying the proposal. The committee in its latest report had stated that oil is the national wealth of the country and that the government is fully responsible for protecting it. However, it did add that the government has the right to employ a qualified private company to maintain or develop oil wells in the country, including those in the Northern Oil Field Al-Sabriya, Al-Rawdatain, Al-Retqa and Al-Abdalli.

Al-Jarrah said the proposal states that foreign companies will be utilized to contribute to the development of the Northern Oil Field by their experience and technology. He said they will be paid to maintain and develop projects and will have no say in other affairs of the project.

Replying to Al-Tabtabaei, Al-Jarrah said Kuwait Gulf Oil Company (KGOC) has taken a share in Al-Khafji Oil Field. KGOC hopes to discover more oil in the southern part of Al-Khafji and is carrying out drilling operations.

Meanwhile, MP Faisal Al-Shaya asked the minister to give details of the Al-Shuwaikh Electricity Station Project. The project was awarded to a Korean company, which was the only contender for the project. He asked whether the ministry created such conditions that only the Korean company could fit the bill or was there any other reason behind it. He asked the minister to submit all documents related to this project.