

Ethiopia Signs Ogaden Gas Deal With Petronas

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Ethiopia Signs Ogaden Gas Deal With Petronas addis Ababa, August 10 (qna) -the Ogaden National Liberation Front Have Warned Oil Companies To Stay Away From Ogaden Basin, Home To Somalis And A Gas-prolific Area Covering 350,000 Square Kilometers, Believed To Contain Gas Reserves Of Some 4 Trillion Cubic Feet.

Ogaden Which Was Part Of Somaliland Protectorate Before It Was Annexed To Ethiopia On 28th February 1954 By The United Kingdom According To A Secret Agreement Signed Between Britain's King George VI And Ethiopia's Emperor Menelik II In 1898.

The Somali Republic Went Into War Against Ethiopia On The Issue Of Ogaden In March 1964 And Again In 1977.

Ethiopia Has Signed A \$1.9 Billion Deal Allowing Malaysian State Oil Firm Petronas To Develop Natural Gas In Its Ogaden Region Where Onlf Has Warned Oil Companies To Stay Away.

Ethiopian Minister Of Mines And Energy Alemayehu Tegenu Signed The Agreement With Petronas In Kuala Lumpur Last Month After The Malaysian Firm Won A Tender For The Kalub And Hilal Areas, An Official Source Said. The Official Said Under The Accord Petronas Was Expected To Lay Down A Pipeline To Transport The Gas To A Nearby Port. Ethiopia Is Landlocked And Possible Options Would Be In Neighboring Somalia Where Ethiopian Troops Are Helping The Interim Government -- Either To Bosasso In The Puntland Region Or Berbera In Breakaway Somaliland, Analysts Say.

The Ogaden National Liberation Front (onlf) Attacked A Chinese-run Oil Exploration Field In April Killing 74 People And Has Repeatedly Warned Foreign Energy Firms From Operating In This Somali Area. "pursuing Oil And Natural Gas Exploration Activities In Ogaden At This Stage Can Only Be Characterised As Gross Corporate Irresponsibility," The Onlf Said This Week. Petronas Is Also Engaged In The Exploration Of Oil In The Gambella Basin In Western Ethiopia.