

Technology

# Cairn Looks to Hire Americans to Build India's Shale Sector



Anil Agarwal at the CERAWEEK by S&P Global conference in Houston March 25. *Photographer: Aaron M. Sprecher/Bloomberg*

By [David Wethe](#)

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Vedanta Ltd.'s [Cairn Oil & Gas](#) is looking to quadruple daily output to the equivalent of 1 million barrels over the better part of the next decade as India's largest private sector oil producers basks in the war-drive surge in crude prices.

Cairn executives are in Houston this week looking to spend as much as \$5 billion with oilfield contractors who will help the company develop fields at home that include shale formations, Vedanta Chairman Anil Agarwal said during an interview.

Cairn's aim is to hire 10 Americans to apply the US shale playbook in India, where the company hopes to shave drilling and completion times by one-third to accelerate the ramp up of output, he said. It's a significant move for the broader India economy, which is almost wholly reliant on imported cargoes for crude.

"They produce the fastest shale in the world – they're the master – so we would like to take that also to India," Agarwal said on the sidelines of the CERAWEEK by S&P Global conference on Wednesday. "If we are not at least 50% energy secured, we are in bad shape. So we are friendly with everybody."

Cairn's outreach to the hired hands of the North American crude sector dovetails with efforts by oil contractors to expand internationally as activity in the US shale patch decelerates.

Cairn has drilled four shale wells that are awaiting completion, said Agarwal, the 72-year-old founder of Vedanta. War in the Middle East that has closed the vital Strait of Hormuz to most tanker traffic for weeks has left Agarwal feeling "definitely miserable."

"Our prime minister is very focused to make sure there is not a single day you have a gas connection that goes away or there is no petrol in the petrol pump," he said.



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