

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF MINES  
**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2428**  
ANSWERED ON 15.03.2023

**MINERAL BLOCKS IN SEA**

2428. PROF. SOUGATA RAY:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of status of identifying mineral blocks like nickel in the sea;
- (b) whether the Government has formed any task force in this regard; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF MINES, COAL AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS  
(SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI)

(a): Geological Survey of India (GSI) has been exploring the India's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in Andaman Sea and Arabian Sea on reconnaissance scale and observed the locales of occurrences of polymetallic Ferro-Manganese nodules and crusts enriched with Nickel concentration of 0.25% (Average) which goes up to 0.79%. Surveys are continuing to find more occurrence of such nodules and crusts.

Polymetallic Fe-Mn Crust and Nodules in Andaman Sea:

In Andaman Sea, occurrences of hydro-genetic/ diagenetic polymetallic Fe-Mn crust and nodules are found in seamounts like West Sewell Ridge (WSR), located to east of Nicobar Island and Sewell Rise (SR), located further north close to the Andaman Back Arc Spreading Centre (ABSC). Seamounts with nearly flat to undulating summits perceptible between 600 m and 1300 m water depth are enriched with occurrence of polymetallic crusts and nodules. Crusts and nodules in Andaman Sea shows average Ni enrichment of 0.25%.

Polymetallic Fe-Mn Crust and Nodules in Lakshadweep Sea:

Recent survey around Cherbaniani, Byramgore, Perumul par and Bitra Par Reefs, Lakshadweep Trough, Arabian Sea brought out the occurrences of seamount associated crusts and nodules between 1200 m and 1500 m water depth along the flanks of reefs and small seamounts in the northern part of Laccadive Ridge system. Polymetallic crusts and nodules in Lakshadweep Sea show Ni enrichment varies from ~0.1 to 0.54%.

(b) & (c): The marine surveys are done by Marine and Coastal Survey Division (MCSD) of GSI.

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