

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6635
ANSWERED ON:08.05.2003
OIL EXPLORATION CONTRACTS TO FOREIGN FIRMS
NEDURUMALLI JANARDHANA REDDY

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

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- (a) whether the attention has been drawn to a news-item captioned '4 nations may be barred from Andaman Oil' appeared in 'Times of India' April 21, 2003;
- (b) if so, the norms laid down for awarding contracts for oil explorations especially to foreign firms;
- (c) the countries which have offered to compete for the contracts; and
- (d) the steps taken to ensure that the national safety is not compromised while awarding the contracts to foreign firms?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR)

- (a) Yes, Sir.
- (b) The New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP), which aims at attracting larger private investment including investment from foreign companies, offers a level playing field, where both private and public sector companies are free to compete for the award of exploration acreages.
- (c) Participation of the foreign countries in the fourth round of NELP depends on their response to the Notice Inviting Offer (NIO).
- (d) The exploration blocks put on offer for international competitive bidding under NELP-IV are included only after obtaining requisite clearances.