

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
OCEAN DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:823
ANSWERED ON:24.02.2006
TAPPING OF OCEAN RESOURCES
Nayak Shri Ananta

Will the Minister of OCEAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Indian Ocean has vast resources of minerals, oil and natural gas;
- (b) if so, the details in this regard; and
- (c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to tap these resources?

Answer

MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (KAPIL SIBAL)

(a) (b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The resource potential of the polymetallic nodules of the Area in the Central Indian Ocean is estimated at 380 million metric tons on the basis of detailed exploration. Government of India is implementing a dedicated and comprehensive polymetallic nodule programme. An Area of 75000 square kilometer has been retained in Central Indian Ocean for development of deep sea mining technologies and related activities. India has also set up a pilot plant with a capacity of processing 500 kg nodules per day at Hindustan Zinc Limited, Udaipur for extracting Copper, Nickel and Cobalt. As a part of development of technologies for mining the nodules from seabed, India has developed a crawler, which was tested for sand mining at a water depth of 410 m. No exploration of oil and natural gas was undertaken in Indian Ocean owing to deep ocean depth ranging about 4 to 6 km and low sedimentation making it an unlikely resource for hydrocarbons.