

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINES  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2609  
ANSWERED ON:11.03.2011  
EXTRACTION OF PRECIOUS METALS  
Choudhary Shri Bhudeo

**Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government has taken note of huge reserve of precious metals and stones in the deep sea;
- (b) if so, the details of the equipments and technologies used for extraction of these precious metals and stones; and
- (c) the details of metals extracted during each of the last three years and current year so far?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR MINES(SHRI DINSHA PATEL)

(a) : Central Government has taken note of huge reserves of precious metals and stones in deep sea. Geological Survey of India has mandate to conduct mapping and regional exploration in Territorial Waters and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the Indian Coast. Geoscientific investigations of the deep sea beyond EEZ are carried out in few selected parts by Ministry of Earth Sciences and National Institute of Oceanography.

Detailed mineral exploration and geological data is required within territorial waters before taking up mining operations. Therefore, 63 potential blocks with bounding co-ordinates, especially for heavy minerals sand falling in the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal were identified and prioritized by GSI for further detailed exploration.

As an administering authority under section 4(a) of the Offshore Area (Development and Regulation) Act, 2002, Controller General, Indian Bureau of Mines has issued a notification dated 7th June, 2010 inviting applications for the grant of Exploration Licence in the offshore areas of the country. The notification is available on website of Ministry of Mines (<http://www.mines.gov.in>). In response to this, 377 applications have been received in IBM which for grant of exploration licence.

(b) : Geological Survey of India (GSI) presently carries out systematic seabed mapping and mineral exploration of selected tracts within Territorial Waters and EEZ of India. Presently grab samples of the sea-bed sediments are collected by Vibro-Corer technique of sample collection that can penetrate upto a depth of 1 to 3m, in a widely spaced grid pattern and analysed in the Chemical and Petrological Laboratories by standard methods.

GSI is initiating steps to undertake offshore survey for strategic studies of seabed morphology; geochemical scan for thermogenic hydrocarbons, high resolution survey in potential areas of gas hydrates accumulation in Mahanadi Basin and Krishna Godavari Basin through acquisition of the new Ocean Going Vessel

(c) : Does not arise in view of (a) above.