

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1376
ANSWERED ON:21.03.2012
OIL EXPLORATION IN SOUTH CHINA SEA
Ramasubbu Shri S.

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether India and China are under dispute over oil exploration projects in South China Sea off the cost of Vietnam;
- (b) if so, the details alongwith the reasons therefor;
- (c) the estimated loss to the country as a result of the dispute;
- (d) whether any steps were taken to find an amicable settlement over the project;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SMT. PRENEET KAUR)

(a) to (f) Sovereignty over areas of the South China Sea is disputed between many countries in the region. India is not a party to this dispute. As two developing countries with growing energy needs, India and Vietnam have been cooperating in the oil and gas industry to enhance their energy security. China, which is a party to the South China Sea dispute, has raised its concerns on India's hydrocarbon exploration and exploitation projects in the South China Sea off the coast of Vietnam. Government has clearly conveyed that such activity by Indian companies is purely commercial in nature and that sovereignty issues must be resolved peacefully by the countries which are parties to the dispute in accordance with international law and practice.