

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:979
ANSWERED ON:16.08.2012
DEEP WATER OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION
Swamygowda Shri N Cheluvarya Swamy

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

- (a) whether the Government has any proposal to allow the entry of major players having experience in deep water oil and gas exploration in the petroleum sector;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) the steps being contemplated by the Government to ensure expeditious approval of oil and gas deep water explorations?

Answer

Minister of state in the Ministry of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIR.P.N. SINGH)

(a) to (c) Government has so far awarded 80 deep water blocks in Andaman Offshore (11), Eastern Offshore (43) and Western Offshore (26) under various rounds of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP). Out of these, 12 blocks were awarded to major Exploration & Production (E&P) companies having deep water experience as under:-

| Operator | No. of Deepwater blocks awarded |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| BHP Billiton | 7 |
| ENI | 1 |
| SANTOS | 2 |
| BG Exploration and Production | 1 |
| India Ltd. (BGEPIIL) | |
| BP Exploration (ALPHA) Ltd. (BPEAL) | 1 |
| Total | 12 |

(d) Exploration blocks for oil and gas under NELP policy are awarded in a totally transparent manner through the International competitive bidding process which provides a level playing field to private, foreign and national oil companies. Before launch of NELP round, actions such as finalization of bid documents, bid closing/ opening, bid evaluation, recommendations for award of blocks, necessary approval for award of blocks and signing of Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) with the awarded company/ consortium are taken in a time bound manner.