

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3451  
ANSWERED ON:14.12.2012  
ADVICE FOR EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION  
Rathwa Shri Ramsinhbhai Patalbhai

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

- (a) the manner in which the Government decides that a particular area is suitable for exploration and production of crude oil and natural gas;
- (b) the names and details of the agencies/experts etc. and their experience in this field which advises the Government on such matters;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to deviate from the extant practice;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and the reasons therefor; and
- (e) its likely impact on the future exploration and production of crude oil and natural gas in the country?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI PANABAANKA LAKSHMI)

- (a) The areas offered under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) bidding rounds consist of the following:
  - (i) New areas identified based on acquiring various geo-scientific data.
  - (ii) Areas relinquished in exploration blocks by the Contractors under the Production Sharing Contract (PSC) regime.
  - (iii) Areas relinquished by National Oil Companies (ONGC and OIL) under Nomination Regime.
- (b) Exploration blocks are carved out for offer under NELP by Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH) based on the availability of geo-scientific data and perceived hydrocarbon prospectivity.
- (c) & d) Government has plan to formulate Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP) in future for award of exploration blocks. Under OALP, the exploration acreages are likely to remain open for offer round the year and prospective bidders will be able to choose areas of their interest. However, details in this regard are yet to be worked out. Actions have been initiated to establish the National Data Repository (NDR), which is a pre-requisite for launching of OALP.
- (e) The pace of exploration in the country is likely to increase after introduction of OALP since bidders will have access to all available data through NDR and also have more flexibility in respect of selecting the blocks of their interest and a much longer bidding period.