

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1554
ANSWERED ON:13.12.2013
EXPLORATION OF OIL AND GAS IN ARABIAN SEA
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Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

- (a) Whether the Government propose to re-start exploration for oil and gas in the Arabian Sea along the Kerala-Konkan Coast area;
- (b) If so, the details thereof;
- (c) The amount the Government has spent so far for the above said project; and;
- (d) The time by which the exploration work is likely to be completed.

Answer

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

(a) & (b) Under the Production Sharing Contract (PSC) regime, a total of 19 exploration blocks have been awarded in Kerala-Konkan offshore area under various bidding rounds of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP). Out of these, 17 blocks have been relinquished so far and 2 blocks are currently operational, both operated by ONGC. In both these blocks, seismic data has been acquired and drilling of exploratory wells are planned as per the Minimum Work Programme (MWP) specified in the PSCs.

Further, nine more offshore blocks have been proposed in Kerala-Konkan basin for offer under the tenth bidding round of NELP (i.e. NELP X). The process for obtaining inter-ministerial clearances of the blocks has been initiated.

(c) The Government does not incur any expenditure in the blocks awarded under, the PSC regime. However, an amount of US \$ 584 Million has been spent so far by the Contractors in the awarded blocks in Kerala-Konkan offshore areas for carrying out exploration activities,

(d) Out of the two active blocks in Kerala-Konkan offshore areas, the exploration phase of one block awarded under later rounds of NELP bidding expires in January, 2017. However, the PSCs allow relinquishment of blocks by the Contractors without completing the MWP of all the phases, with certain conditions.