

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EARTH SCIENCES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1385
ANSWERED ON:04.03.2015
MINERAL EXPLORATION IN INDIAN OCEAN
Senguttuvan Shri Balasubramaniam

Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has obtained sanction from the International Seabed Authority to explore mineral deposits off the Mauritian Coast in the Indian Ocean;
- (b) if so, whether any precious metal such as gold has been detected in the undersea deposit of polymetallic sulphides off the coast of Mauritius;
- (c) if so, the approximate quantity of polymetallic sulphides deposits available in the areas for the country to mine; and
- (d) whether the Government has assessed the economic viability to exploit the same?

Answer

MINISTER FOR MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES (DR. HARSH VARDHAN)

- (a) No, Madam. As per United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which has been ratified by 167 State Parties including Mauritius, the exclusive rights of exploration of ocean mineral resources off the coast of a State upto 200 nautical miles (Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)) lies with the State for instance, Mauritius. The International Seabed Authority's jurisdiction is beyond the EEZ.
- (b) Does not arise.
- (c) Does not arise.
- (d) Does not arise.