

Title: Appealed to the Minister of Petroleum to instruct the Oil India Corporation Limited (OICL) not to close down their office at Paradip and to continue exploring oil in Orissa.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (BALASORE): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I am fortunate that I am raising this matter when the hon. Minister of Petroleum is sitting here in the House.

About two decades back the Government of India granted lease to Oil India Corporation Limited (OICL) for exploration of oil in offshore and onshore of Mahanadi basin in Orissa. As per the Exploration Strategy 1985-2005 published by OICL, the total oil reserves available in Mahanadi offshore, Mahanadi onshore and NEC offshore come to about 1290 MMT. If the upgradation of prognosticated resources of Mahanadi offshore as per the assessment of the foreign consultant engaged by the OICL is taken into account, the total reserves come to about 1800 MMT. These do not include the huge resources available in the deep offshore basins. It is a matter of sorrow that OICL has hardly done anything during the last two decades. They are now going to close their office in Paradip. Within an area of 50,000 square kilometres, they have only drilled 11 wells out of which five have been abandoned. I appeal to the hon. Minister of Petroleum that he should instruct the OICL not to close down their office at Paradip and to continue to try and explore oil in Orissa.