

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINES
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2204
ANSWERED ON 20.03.2023

MINING OF POLY-METALLIC NODULES

2204. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) the status of mining of poly-metallic nodules in the country;
- (b) whether mining is being undertaken, if so, the details of regions/areas where it is taking place; and
- (c) whether Government has given licence to any domestic or global players for this, if so, the details of each of the players, if not, the plan of Government in going forward?

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THE MINISTER OF MINES, COAL AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS
(SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI)

(a): Geological Survey of India (GSI) has been carrying out offshore exploration in the Indian EEZ (Andaman Sea and Arabian Sea) on reconnaissance scale. Occurrences of Polymetallic Ferro-Manganese nodules and crusts, enriched at places with Nickel and Cobalt has been identified in selected locales of Andaman Sea and Lakshadweep Sea. Surveys are being continued to find more such occurrences within the EEZ of India and beyond.

(b): At present, no mining for poly-metallic nodules has been going on within the EEZ.

(c): No, Sir. Government has not given licence to any domestic or global players for this. Ministry of Mines, through its Marine and Coastal Survey Division of GSI, has been exploring the EEZ for polymetallic nodules. In the current field season FS 2022-2023, two programmes are assigned to take up Polymetallic Fe-Mn nodules/crust investigation within EEZ of India. During FS 2023-2024, three continuation programmes each over Andaman Sea, Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea will be mounted to find more such occurrences within the EEZ of India and beyond and one high resolution seabed mapping programme will be mounted over Lakshadweep Sea in search of polymetallic crust and nodules.
