

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 764**  
ANSWERED ON 02/12/2024

**THE UNION GOVERNMENT INVITING TENDER FOR OIL EXPLORATION OFF  
THE KANYAKUMARI COAST**

764: SHRI P. WILSON:

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

- (a) the people of Kanniyakumari District are protesting against the Union Government for inviting tender for oil exploration off the Kanniyakumari Coast as it will hugely impact the Wadge Bank Ecosystem and fishermen, whether Government has conducted any feasibility study to analyze the economic and environmental impact of the project, if so, details thereof;
- (b) if not, reason for inviting tender without assessing impact of the project and details thereof; and
- (c) the details of Petroleum and Natural Gas resources found in the state of Tamil Nadu in the past five years and other details thereof?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS  
(SHRI SURESH GOPI)

(a) & (b): Exploration Blocks are awarded by the Government with a view to reduce import dependence in Oil and Gas Sector. The bidders for such blocks participate in the bidding based on their assessment of data, pertaining to the blocks, as available on the National Data Repository. However, the mere award of the blocks does not entitle the awardees to initiate exploration activities. Environmental clearances, including coastal zone clearances for oil and gas exploration as per the laws for the time being in force are essential before commencement of the activities. This typically involves an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) study after the award. The EIA process involves public hearing and ensures proper assessment of exploration activities on environment and only after obtaining necessary environmental clearances, with necessary safeguards measures for environmental protection and compliance, can companies commence exploration activities. E&P activities are undertaken in synergy with steps to enhance the livelihood of the people in the region as well as to ensure minimal impact on the environment.

The block tendered in the IXth round of bidding under Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP) in the Kanniyakumari coast region has not been awarded as yet.

(c) Under the production and revenue sharing contract regimes, no hydrocarbon discovery have been made in the State of Tamil Nadu in last five years. However, two blocks viz. CY-ONN-2002/2 (Madanam) and CY-ONN-2004/2 (Pandanallur) were put on production from October 2015 and April 2019 respectively.

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