

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1726
ANSWERED ON- 04/08/2025

NUMBER OF OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION BLOCKS

1726 SMT. RAJANI ASHOKRAO PATIL:

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

- (a) the number of oil and gas exploration blocks awarded under Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP) that remain non-operational as of June, 2025;
- (b) whether lack of environmental and regulatory clearances has delayed progress;
- (c) whether private operators have exited or surrendered awarded blocks;
- (d) the investment lost or stalled due to delays in operationalisation; and
- (e) the steps Government is taking to streamline approvals and attract exploration?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (e): Since 2016, nine OALP bidding rounds have been completed and 172 blocks have been awarded to successful bidders. Out of 172 blocks awarded, a total of 11 blocks remain non-operational as of June, 2025 on account of Petroleum Exploration License (PEL) not being issued by the State Governments of Nagaland, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal. Revenue Sharing Contracts for 28 blocks awarded under OALP Bid Round IX have recently been signed on 15.04.2025. Operators have also commenced application process for grant of Petroleum Lease.

Environmental and Statutory Clearances are required before commencement of Petroleum Operations by operators. However, the contracts provide for extension of timelines in case of delay in such clearances. One private investor has relinquished OALP blocks on account of Petroleum Exploration License (PEL) not being issued by the State Government of Andhra Pradesh. The details of blocks relinquished are as under:

Sr. No	OALP Round	Contractor/Operator	Block Name
1	OALP-I	Vedanta Limited	KG-ONHP-2017/1
2	OALP-I	Vedanta Limited	KG-ONHP-2017/2
3	OALP-I	Vedanta Limited	KG-ONHP-2017/3
4	OALP-III	Vedanta Limited	KG-ONHP-2018/1
5	OALP-III	Vedanta Limited	KG-ONHP-2018/2

Government has taken various steps to streamline approvals and attract investments, which, include, (i) Ministerial Engagement with State Government, Inter-ministerial Coordination and Monitoring Committee (ICMC) convened by MoEFCC, Fortnightly Regional Coordination Meetings (FRCM), and Regional Empowered Committee (REC) meetings at the State level to resolve bottlenecks in pending proposals, (ii) Deployment of dedicated professionals to facilitate approvals in North East (iii) Enactment of the Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Amendment Act, 2025 to promote ease of doing business, including, through lesser documentation.
