

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3488
ANSWERED ON - 23/03/2026

MISSION ANVESHAN ACROSS SEVEN SEDIMENTARY

3488. SHRI SATNAM SINGH SANDHU:

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

- (a) the details of the ongoing exploration activities being undertaken under Mission Anveshan across seven sedimentary basins, along with their current status and expected outcomes;
- (b) whether Government has taken any steps to ensure environmental safeguards and sustainable practices during large-scale seismic mapping and exploration under the Open Acreage Licensing Programme (OALP); and
- (c) the projected timeline and estimated investment inflows expected from OALP Round X and the manner in which these efforts align with India's broader goal of energy self-reliance?

ANSWER

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

(a): As on February 28, 2026, a total of 13,262.52 Line Kilometers (LKM) of 2-Dimensional (2D) seismic data has been acquired under Mission Anveshan across various Indian basins as follows:

Activity	Basin/Area	Acquired Quantum in LKM till 28.02.2026
2D seismic Acquisition, Processing & Interpretation (API)	Rajasthan	3683.64
	Ganga-Punjab	4264.26
	Chhattisgarh	659.70
	Cuddapah	1485.30
	Krishna-Godavari	2594.10
	Deccan Syncline	538.92
	Saurashtra	36.60
	Total	13262.52

Mission Anveshan will bring out the prospectivity perception of the basins and will help the interested Exploration & Production operators to carve out the blocks for bidding and ultimately increase the production of crude oil and natural gas in the long term.

(b): Under the Open Acreage Licensing Programme (OALP), mere award of the blocks does not entitle the awardees to initiate drilling activities. To ensure environmental safeguards, drilling can commence only after due clearance under the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006 (as amended). The EIA process, which extends to both onland and offshore areas upto 12 nautical miles, involves scientific assessment, necessary coastal regulatory zone clearances (state authority) / clearance from Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC). Only upon securing these clearances / compliances under environmental guidelines, can companies begin drilling operations, with all mandated safeguards in place. Further, operators are required to adhere to the site restoration policy and associated guidelines, ensuring that acquired land is restored to its original condition following completion of operation.

This operational framework reflects Government's commitment to maintain a balance between safeguarding ecosystems and advancing long-term energy security through responsible exploration activity.

(c): The recently launched OALP Round-X with bid closing date 29.05.2026, offering 25 blocks across 13 sedimentary basins covering about 1.82 lakh sq. km., seeks to enhance exploration by offering incentives such as reduced royalty rates, no oil cess, early monetization incentives, exploration rights for the full contract life, stability and dispute-resolution safeguards, infrastructure sharing, collaboration between National Oil Companies and private companies for field development and permission for 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) under the automatic route making the regime more attractive for private investors in line with the new Petroleum and Natural Gas Rules, 2025 thereby helping in achieving India's broader goal of energy self-reliance. The investment inflows are not pre-determined and would depend on the outcome of the bidding process, the number of blocks awarded, and the exploration work programmes committed by the successful bidders.
