

**LOK SABHA**  
**STARRED QUESTION NO.\*45**  
**TO BE ANSWERED ON 28-11-2024**

**PML GRANT FOR ASHOKNAGAR OIL FIELD**

†\*45. SHRI JAGANNATH SARKAR:

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

- (a) the status of the Petroleum Mining Lease (PML) for the Ashoknagar Oil field which has been pending with the Government of West Bengal since 10.09.2020;
- (b) the reasons for not granting PML and the manner in which delay is affecting the Early Development Plan (EDP) for the field; and
- (c) whether the Government has taken/proposes to take any action for withholding the PML, which is affecting the State's economic prospects, particularly in terms of job creation and local development associated with the monetization of the Ashoknagar Oil field and if so, the measures being considered to resolve this issue?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS**  
**(SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI)**

(a) to (c): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

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**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (C) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.\*45 TO BE ANSWERED ON 28-11-2024 REGARDING 'PML GRANT FOR ASHOKNAGAR OIL FIELD ASKED BY SHRI JAGANNATH SARKAR'**

(a) to (c): Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) notified the Asokenagar discovery on 24.09.2018. This has been the outcome of continuous exploration efforts of ONGC in the Bengal sedimentary basin over five decades. ONGC, accordingly, applied on 10.09.2020 to Government of West Bengal for grant of Petroleum Mining Lease (PML) for an area of 5.88 square kilometers (sq. km.) in North 24 Parganas District for the early monetisation of Asokenagar-1 discovery under Early Development Plan (EDP). The recommendation of the Central Government for grant of PML was conveyed to State Government of West Bengal by the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas (MoP&NG) on 21.10.2020

Under rule 5(1)(ii) of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Rules, 1959, the State Government is empowered to grant PML with the prior recommendation of the Central Government. As the PML was awaited from State Government, EDP could not be implemented thereby affecting production of oil and gas. However, ONGC continued appraisal/exploratory drilling activities and established presence of hydrocarbon in other wells namely Asokenagar-2, Kankpul-1, Bhurkunda-1 and Ranaghat-2, thus, enhancing the hydrocarbon prospectivity around Asokenagar-1 discovery in New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) Block WB-ONN-2005/4. Based on the latest data availability and analysis, an area of 99.06 sq. km. with more than four discoveries has been carved out into an integrated Field Development Plan (FDP) which also includes EDP area of 5.88 sq. km. for developing oil and gas discovery of Asokenagar-1. This integrated FDP has been approved by Government of India (GoI) on 10.07.2024. MoP&NG's further recommendation letter for issuance of PML by Government of West Bengal was sent on 29.10.2024. PML application for the approved area of FDP (99.06 sq. km.) was submitted by ONGC on 05.11.2024 to the Government of West Bengal. The grant of this PML is still awaited from State Government of West Bengal.

The power to grant PML for Asokenagar Oil Field lies with the Government of West Bengal. The Government of India and ONGC (Operator) are consistently pursuing for issuance of PML from the Government of West Bengal. The recommendation letter for the grant of PML conveyed to State Government of West Bengal on 21.10.2020 has been followed up with the request letter dated 01.02.2023 and D.O. letter dated 12.01.2024 from Director General, Directorate General of Hydrocarbons to the Principal Secretary, Government of West Bengal, Department of Industry, Commerce & Enterprises. The matter has been flagged to the Government of West Bengal (GoWB) in the Eastern Zonal Council meeting held on 04.07.2024 at Ranchi for expediting consideration of GoWB.

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