

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1915
TO BE ANSWERED ON 31st July, 2025

Abandoned Oil and Gas Exploration and Production Sites

1915. Shri G M Harish Balayogi:

पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्री

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

- (a) the details regarding oil and gas exploration and production sites (onshore and offshore) that have been declared abandoned across the country during each of the last five years, State- wise and contractor-wise;
- (b) the details of such abandoned sites where site restoration has been completed is currently in progress and is yet to be initiated, State-wise and contractor-wise;
- (c) the details of the funds allocated and utilised for site restoration activities by oil and gas companies during each of the last five years, company-wise;
- (d) whether the Government has issued any comprehensive guidelines for conducting Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) specific to the decommissioning of oil and gas assets and if so, the details thereof;
- (e) if not, whether the Government proposes to formulate such guidelines and if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the details regarding the monitoring and financial accountability mechanisms currently put in place to ensure scientific, timely and environmentally sound site restoration of abandoned oil and gas assets?

ANSWER

पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्री
(श्री सुरेश गोपी)

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

(a) to (c): During last five years (FY 2020-21 to FY 2024-25), a total of 721 oil and gas exploration and production sites (onshore and offshore) have been declared abandoned. The details regarding these sites and where site restoration has been completed or is currently in progress or is yet to be initiated during each of the last five years, State- wise and contractor-wise is provided at Annexure A.

The details of the funds allocated and utilised for site restoration activities by oil and gas companies during each of the last five years, company-wise is provided at Annexure B.

(d) & (e): As informed by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), according to the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification 2006, as amended, Terms of Reference (ToR) are issued to the projects for preparation of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Environmental Management Plan (EMP) incorporating a decommissioning and abandonment plan for restoration of the drill sites to its near original condition.

As per the EIA Notification 2006, offshore oil and gas exploration and production activities are categorized as 'A' under Item 1(b), necessitating prior clearance from the Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) at the central level. The EAC appraises the EMP and subsequently may stipulate additional site-specific environmental safeguards. Based on the recommendations of the EAC, the Environmental Clearances (EC) are granted to the project by the MoEFCC.

(f): The restoration of abandoned oil and gas sites is governed through a combination of regulatory oversight, technical scrutiny and financial safeguards through OISD and the Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH) who serve as the approving authorities for the submitted Site Restoration or Decommissioning Plan. This *inter-alia* includes well plugging, dismantling of surface infrastructure, waste management and restoration of the site to its original or an environmentally acceptable condition. To ensure financial accountability, the Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) and Revenue Sharing Contracts (RSCs) include provisions for the establishment of a Site Restoration Fund (SRF) or Abandonment Fund, into which operators contribute over the productive life of the field. Fund release proposals from the SRF account are however subject to satisfactory decommission work progress and with the approval of the DGH.

Further, the compliance and monitoring of the EC is dealt by IA-Compliance & Monitoring Division (C&MD) of the MoEFCC through its Regional Offices (ROs) and Sub-Regional Offices (SROs). In accordance with the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) established, ROs/SROs conduct periodic inspections and prepare monitoring reports that are submitted to MoEFCC for detailed evaluation and follow up action.

Annexure A Referred to Part (a) to (c) for Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1915 to be answered on 31.07.2025 regarding Abandoned Oil and Gas Exploration and Production Sites

Details of Site Abandoned & Restoration During last Five Years (2020-21 to 2024-25)					
Operator	State	No. of wells Abandoned	No. of wells for which SR Completed	No. of wells for which SR is in progress	Sum of No. of wells for which SR is yet to be initiated
AWEL	Western Offshore	1	1	0	0
BPRL	Gujarat	3		3	
GAIL	Gujarat	1		1	
GSPC	Gujarat	10	10	0	0
M/s Megha Engineering & Infrastructure Limited	Gujarat	1	0	0	1
OIL	Assam	89	88	1	0
	Eastern Offshore	8	9	0	0
	Mizoram	0	2	1	1
	Orissa	2	2	1	0
	Rajasthan	15	19	0	0
	Arunachal Pradesh	2	2	0	0
ONGC	Andhra Pradesh	24	0	0	24
	Assam	86	0	0	0
	Eastern Offshore	1	1	0	0
	Gujarat	265	115	13	47
	Jharkahnd	2	0	0	2
	kutch-Saurashtra offshore	1	1	0	0
	Madhya Pradesh	10		9	1
	Rajasthan	12	6	2	4
	Tamilnadu	17	26	1	0
	Tripura	18	1	11	6
	West Bengal	2	1	1	0
	Western Offshore	116	116	0	0
PMT-JV	Western Offshore	0	38	0	0
RIL	Eastern Offshore	7	7	0	0
Selan Exploration Technologies Ltd	Gujarat	2	2	0	0
Vedanta	Assam	8	1	0	7
	Gujarat	10			10
	Rajasthan	8			8
Total		721	448	44	111

Source: DGH

Annexure B referred to Part (a) to (c) for Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1915 to be answered on 31.07.2025 regarding Abandoned Oil and Gas Exploration and Production Sites

Details of the funds allocated and utilised for site restoration activities During last Five Years (2020-21 to 2024-25) (Rs.)										
Operator	2020-21		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24		2024-25	
	Fund Allocated	Fund Utilized	Fund Allocated	Fund Utilized	Fund Allocated	Fund Utilized	Fund Allocated	Fund Utilized	Fund Allocated	Fund Utilized
PMT-JV	1,29,36,74,254	1,29,66,98,304	20,05,41,379	20,20,66,552			2,64,73,10,437	2,36,36,66,925	0	28,43,30,358
OIL	1,00,00,000	40,89,520	50,00,000	63,47,757	50,00,000	71,98,049	54,42,878	1,61,74,244	5,59,79,948	5,76,65,809
ONGC		44,00,00,000		23,00,00,000		2,67,00,00,000		1,09,00,00,000		3,19,00,00,000
Total	1,30,36,74,254	1,74,07,87,824	20,55,41,379	43,84,14,309	50,00,000	2,67,71,98,049	2,65,27,53,315	3,46,98,41,169	5,59,79,948	3,53,19,96,167

Source: DGH