

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO 138**  
**TO BE ANSWERED ON 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2026**

**Hydrocarbon Exploration in Kangra-Mandi Petroleum Exploration License Area**

138. Shri Anurag Singh Thakur:

**पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्री**

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

(a) the current status of hydrocarbon exploration in the Kangra-Mandi Petroleum Exploration Licence (PEL) area including details of recent 2D/3D (two dimensional and three dimensional) seismic data acquisition and reprocessing of vintage data by ONGC or other agencies indicating renewed or significant gas shows seepages or reservoir potential in the area;

(b) whether recent drilling or geological modelling has established the commercial viability of thermogenic gas reserves in the Subathu and Dharamshala formations particularly within the complex 'Triangle Zone' structures of Jwalamukhi, if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total expenditure incurred to date and the projected expenditure for further exploration and appraisal in the above blocks;

(d) the likely timeframe for completion of appraisal and commencement of commercial production, if found viable along with the challenges involved, if any; and

(e) the policy roadmap for further Himalayan exploration and the measures proposed to make commercially viable the untapped resource potential in the Himalayan formations ?

**ANSWER**

**पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री**  
**(श्री सुरेश गोपी)**

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

(a): The Kangra-Mandi Petroleum Exploration Licence (PEL) block covering an area of 3800 sq.km.was awarded to ONGC as Nomination Block w.e.f 10.11.1997. During the exploration phase, ONGC acquired 1212 Line Kilometers (LKM) of 2D seismic data, conducted geochemical surveys over 300 sq. km, and drilled five exploratory wells in the area.The PEL, including re-grants, expired on 28.11.2021.

In addition, one block (HF-ONHP-2017/1) in the Mandi area was awarded under OALP to M/s Vedanta Limited. The PEL for this block expired on 30.05.2025 and was relinquished without

undertaking exploration activities.

(b) & (d): The commercial viability of thermogenic gas reserves in the Subathu and Dharamsala Formations, including the structurally complex Triangle Zone around Jwalamukhi, has not been established so far. No discovery has been notified in the area till date. As no hydrocarbon discovery has been established, the question of appraisal, determination of commercial viability, or commencement of production does not arise at this stage.

(c): ONGC has incurred a cumulative expenditure of ₹582 crore in the Kangra-Mandi PEL up to FY 2021–22. No expenditure has been reported in OALP block HF-ONHP-2017/1, as the contractor relinquished the block without executing the committed work programme. At present, no further exploration expenditure is envisaged in the area.

(e): Government launched the National Seismic Programme (NSP) in 2017 to improve geological understanding of poorly explored basins, including the Himalayan region. Under NSP, about 709 LKM of seismic data and 1,817 FLKM (flight line kilometers) of Airborne Gravity Gradiometry (AGG) data have been acquired in the Himalayan Foreland Basin. Further, one exploration block covering 990.86 sq. km in the Himalayan Foreland Basin has been carved out under OALP Bid Round-X, reflecting continued policy efforts to reassess and unlock hydrocarbon potential in the region.

\*\*\*\*\*