

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
OCEAN DEVELOPMENT  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1296  
ANSWERED ON:30.07.2003  
SCIENTIFIC EXPEDITIONS UNDER SEA MINING ON INDIA`S COASTS  
AMBATI BRAHMANAIAH

**Will the Minister of OCEAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether it is a fact that the Government have launched scientific expeditions to study the potential of under sea mining on India`s coasts;
- (b) if so, the details of such expeditions undertaken in the last five years;
- (c) whether there is any possibility of commercial exploitation of India`s undersea mineral wealth; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT ( DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI )

(a),(b), (c) & (d) Yes, Sir. Government is carrying out systematic seabed survey in Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea within the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of India. The surveys are being carried out onboard the Research Vessel Samudra Manthan and two coastal research launches, Samudra Kaustubh and Samudra Shaudhhikama since 1983 for seabed mapping and locating non-living resources by the Geological Survey of India. The important findings of the surveys during the last five years are given below:

- (i) Placer minerals like ilmenite, sillimanite, garnet, monazite, zircon and rutile are found off the coasts of Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Maharashtra. These minerals could be exploited in near future for industries related to paint, alloy, refractories and also as strategic atomic minerals;
- (ii) Lime mud occurrences having high calcium oxide content are found off Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat coasts, and
- (iii) Huge sand occurrences are found within the territorial waters in east coasts and west coasts.