

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2367
ANSWERED ON:17.03.2005
EXPLORATORY DRILLING IN SUNDERBAN AREAS
Acharia Shri Basudeb

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

- (a) whether ONGC has decided to pick up 26% stake in 750 MW gas based power project in Tripura;
- (b) if so, the details in this regard;
- (c) whether ONGC is also considering exploratory drilling in Sunderban areas in the State of West Bengal; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the action proposed to be taken in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS AND PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR)

(a) & (b): Yes, Sir. ONGC Ltd. entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with M/s Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services (IL&FS) on 16.7.2004 to develop a combined cycle gas based power plant in Tripura in the public/private partnership mode of project implementation with a view to monetizing the idle and locked up gas pools in Tripura. Subsequently, IL&FS has created a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) with the Government of Tripura as co-promoters which has been registered on 27.9.2004 as the "Tripura Power Development Company Private Ltd." (TPDC). With the approval of Government, ONGC have decided to acquire 26% equity in this company from the Government of Tripura.

(c): ONGC's present exploration activities do not extend to the Sunderban area of the state of West Bengal. However, exploratory drilling will take place in accordance with the work programme given under the Production Sharing Contract for offshore block WB-OSN-2000/1 located south of the Sunderbans.

(d): Does not arise.