

Pact with US for tapping of shale gas

739. SHRI N.K. SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has the intention to tap shale gas in order to reduce the country's import dependence;

(b) if so, the steps taken in the direction;

(c) whether Government is considering a technical pact with the United States of America (USA) for exploration of shale gas;

(d) if so, the time by which such pact will be entered into and the terms thereof; and

(e) whether exploration activities have led to indications of shale gas reserves in the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI R.P.N. SINGH) : (a) and (b) Government has initiated actions to identify the potentially prospective areas for Shale Gas resources as well as to formulate a policy. Based on the identification of prospective areas and resource assessment and after formulating an appropriate policy for exploration and exploitation of Shale Gas resources, blocks would be carved out for bidding.

(c) and (d) A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Shale Gas Resources between India and United States of America (USA) was signed on 06.11.2010 in New Delhi. Under the MOU, both the countries would cooperate in the following areas of Shale Gas development:

- Shale Gas Resource assessment in India.
- Technical studies on Shale Gas exploration in India.
- Share best practices on establishing a regulatory framework and safeguard measures for the sustainable development of Shale Gas.
- Promoting sustainable domestic and foreign investment in Shale Gas development.

(e) Based on the geo-scientific data gathered so far during exploration of conventional oil and gas, few onland sedimentary basins/areas in India appear to be prospective in terms of shale gas deposits.