

Secretary, Ministry of Mines Virtually Launched Auction of Two Offshore Mineral Blocks; Urges Active Industry Participation

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Shri Keshav Chandra, Secretary, Ministry of Mines, Government of India, today virtually launched the auction of two offshore mineral blocks in the Andaman Sea for grant of Composite Licence, in the presence of Shri Kadam Sandeep Vasant, Joint Secretary and Administering Authority, Ministry of Mines, and other senior officials. The launch marks an important step towards unlocking India's offshore mineral potential and strengthening the country's long-term mineral security.



The two blocks Sewell Rise-01 and West Sewell Ridge-01 are located in strategically significant offshore areas and together cover an area of over 1,632 square kilometres. The blocks contain contain polymetallic nodules and crusts, which host minerals such as cobalt, nickel, manganese, copper and rare earth elements. These minerals are important for advanced manufacturing, clean energy technologies, electric mobility, electronics and other strategic applications.

Details of blocks put up for auction:

S. No.	Name of the Block	Offshore Region	Minerals
1	Sewell Rise -01	Southern Part of Sewell Rise, Andaman Sea	Polymetallic Nodules and Crusts
2	West Sewell Ridge -01	Off Great Nicobar Island, Andaman Sea	Polymetallic Nodules and Crusts



Addressing the participants, Shri Keshav Chandra highlighted the importance of offshore mineral resources as a new frontier for India's mineral sector and noted that systematic exploration of these resources would complement efforts to enhance domestic mineral availability. He also emphasised the need for scientific, technological and environmentally responsible development of offshore mineral resources.

The Secretary urged prospective bidders, industry stakeholders and capable explorers to participate actively in the auction process and contribute towards making the initiative successful. He encouraged greater participation and investment in offshore exploration, along with the adoption of appropriate technological capabilities for responsible resource development.

The launch event was attended by senior officials of the Ministry of Mines, representatives of scientific and technical institutions, industry stakeholders, public sector enterprises, prospective bidders and members of the media.

The sale of Tender Documents commenced on October 01, 2026. The Pre-Bid Conference will be held on November 04, 2026, and the last date for submission of queries is November 13, 2026. The last date for purchase of Tender Documents is December 21, 2026, up to 17:00 hours IST, while bids can be submitted up to December 28, 2026, by 17:00 hours IST.



Detailed information on the blocks, auction terms, eligibility criteria and timelines is available on the MSTC auction platform. The auction will be conducted through a transparent electronic auction process in accordance with the Offshore Areas Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act, 2002 and the Offshore Areas Mineral (Auction) Rules, 2024, as amended from time to time.

The launch of auction of the two offshore mineral blocks marks a further step towards systematic exploration and development of India's offshore mineral resources, with a focus on strengthening mineral security, encouraging investment and building capabilities for their responsible development.

Prajith Kumar MV

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