

Press Release

ONGC Spuds First Deepwater Well in Mahanadi Basin under Samudra Manthan Mission

New Delhi, 25 July 2026

In a significant step towards unlocking India's deepwater hydrocarbon potential, Hon'ble Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Shri Hardeep Singh Puri virtually spudded ONGC's exploratory well, MN-DW18-1-H-D, in the Mahanadi Offshore Basin from New Delhi on 25 July 2026.



The spudding marks a major milestone under the Government of India's Samudra Manthan Campaign and the beginning of an ambitious programme to explore India's deep and ultra-deepwater energy resources.

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In his Independence Day address on 15 August 2025, Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi called for harnessing India's untapped offshore oil and gas potential. In line with this vision, the Government has opened nearly one million square kilometres of previously restricted offshore areas, creating new exploration opportunities through forthcoming OALP rounds.

India's eastern and western offshore basins, extending to water depths of up to 3,000 metres, are estimated to hold over 5,600 MMTOE of hydrocarbon potential. Recent exploration successes in the Cauvery, Mahanadi and Andaman basins have further reinforced the promise of India's offshore frontier.

To advance this national mission, ONGC launched its flagship Deepwater Exploration Mission Centre, DeepX, in Mumbai on 5 January 2026. DeepX integrates ONGC's geoscientific expertise, advanced interpretation capabilities, specialised training and strategic global collaborations under the "One Company, One Data" philosophy.

ONGC's recent Utkal and Konark discoveries have strengthened the hydrocarbon prospectivity of the Mahanadi Offshore Basin. Building on these successes, the MN-DW18-1-H-D well is being drilled approximately 23 nautical miles from Konark, off the Odisha coast.

The commencement of drilling marks the beginning of one of India's most challenging deepwater exploration campaigns. Every prospect evaluated, well drilled and discovery made will contribute towards enhancing domestic production, reducing import dependence and strengthening India's energy security and self-reliance.

The next frontier is deep waters. India is ready to explore it.

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