

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF INDIA
CIVIL ORIGINAL JURISDICTION

ARBITRATION PETITION NO. 17 OF 2026

EXPRO NORTH SEA LIMITED

PETITIONER(S)

VERSUS

HINDUSTAN OIL EXPLORATION
COMPANY LTD & ANR.

RESPONDENT(S)

O R D E R

1. The instant petition filed under Section 11(6) of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 (Act), seeks the appointment of a Sole Arbitrator to adjudicate disputes arising out of the Operation and Maintenance Contract dated 29.05.2019 (O&M Contract) executed between the Petitioner and Respondent No.1 for providing operation and maintenance services for the Mobile Offshore Production Unit (MOPU), which is a mobile offshore oil/gas production facility, located at Key Gibraltar in the Mumbai Offshore Basin.
2. Briefly observed, the Petitioner, a company duly incorporated under the laws of the United Kingdom, was engaged under the O&M Contract to operate and maintain the production equipment installed on the MOPU. Respondent No.1 subsequently entered into an Assignment Agreement dated 19.06.2023 with Respondent No. 2, transferring its rights, title and obligations under the O&M Contract to Respondent No. 2. Thereafter, on account of the

stated operational difficulties, Respondent no. 1 issued a notice of termination of agreement dated 01.04.2025.

3. Due to the aforesaid termination, it appears that disputes arose between the parties concerning, *inter alia*, non-payment of the outstanding dues claimed by the Petitioner, as well as the Petitioner's removal from the MOPU operations and the subsequent takeover thereof by the Respondents. The Petitioner thereafter claimed outstanding dues aggregating to USD 1,913,715.37 and other contractual claims arising out of the termination. The Respondents, on the other hand, denied bearing any outstanding liabilities to the Petitioner.
4. Owing to this, the Petitioner issued a notice of arbitration dated 29.08.2025 under Clause 20.2 of the O&M Contract, nominating Hon'ble Ms. Justice Chitra Venkataraman (Retd.) as the Sole Arbitrator. The Respondents did not agree to the proposed appointment, prompting the Petitioner to file the instant Arbitration Petition.
5. We have heard learned counsel for the parties and perused the material placed on record.
6. Having regard to the facts and circumstances recorded above and the relevant provision(s) under the O&M Contract, we deem it just and proper to allow the instant Arbitration Petition and appoint Hon'ble Mr. Justice R. Suresh Kumar, former Judge of the Madras High Court, as the Sole Arbitrator to adjudicate the

disputes between the parties. The seat and venue of arbitration, in accordance with the arbitration agreement, shall be Chennai, India.

7. We make it clear that the parties will be at liberty to raise all available contentions before the learned Sole Arbitrator.
8. The learned Sole Arbitrator shall have the liberty to fix her own remuneration/fees. Ordered accordingly.
9. Pending interlocutory applications, if any, also stand disposed of.

.....CJI.
(SURYA KANT)

.....J.
(JOYMALYA BAGCHI)

.....J.
(V. MOHANA)

NEW DELHI;
JULY 31, 2026.

S U P R E M E C O U R T O F I N D I A
RECORD OF PROCEEDINGSPetition(s) for Arbitration No(s). 17/2026

EXPRO NORTH SEA LIMITED

Petitioner(s)

VERSUS

HINDUSTAN OIL EXPLORATION COMPANY LTD & ANR.

Respondent(s)

Date : 31-07-2026 This petition was called on for hearing today.

CORAM : HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE JOYMALYA BAGCHI
HON'BLE MRS. JUSTICE V. MOHANAFor Petitioner(s) :Mr. Sumeet Lall, AOR
Mr. Nikhil Lal, Adv.
Mr. Nicholas Choudhury, Adv.
Ms. Muskaan Gopal, Adv.
Ms. Palak Rawat, Adv.

For Respondent(s) :

UPON hearing the counsel the Court made the following

O R D E R

The Arbitration Petition is allowed in terms of the signed order.

Pending application(s), if any, shall stand closed.

(NITIN TALREJA)
ASTT. REGISTRAR-cum-PS(PREETHI DILEEP KUMAR)
DY. REGISTRAR

(Signed order is placed on the file)