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## Govt. Plans 'ISRO-like' Ocean Mission

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Recently, the Union Earth Sciences Ministry has unveiled a blueprint of the 'Deep Ocean Mission (DOM)' to explore the deep recesses of the ocean.

### Key Points

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- It will develop an offshore desalination plant that will work with tidal energy.
- Also to be developed is a submersible vehicle that can go to a depth of at least 6,000 metres with three people on board.
- The mission proposes to explore the deep ocean similar to the space exploration started by ISRO about 35 years ago.
- The focus will be on technologies for deep-sea mining, underwater vehicles, and underwater robotics and ocean climate change advisory services, among other aspects.

### India's Share

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- India has been allotted a site of 1,50,000 square kilometres in the Central Indian Ocean Basin (CIOB) by the UN International Seabed Authority for exploitation of polymetallic nodules (PMN).
- It is envisaged that 10% of recovery of that large reserve can meet the energy requirement of India for the next 100 years.
- It has been estimated that 380 million metric tonnes of polymetallic nodules are available at the bottom of the seas in the Central Indian Ocean.
- India's Exclusive Economic Zone spreads over 2.2 million square kilometres and in the deep sea, lies "unexplored and unutilised".

Note: Polymetallic nodules (PMN) are rocks scattered on the seabed containing iron, manganese, nickel and cobalt