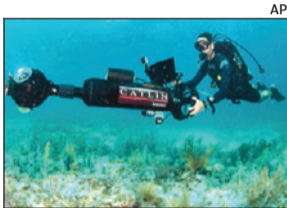


GNLU to draft two key laws on deep sea exploration

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Ahmedabad: The Union ministry of earth sciences has asked Gujarat National Law University (GNLU) to prepare two draft laws that will lay the guidelines for deep sea mining in the Indian Ocean off India's territorial waters, and in Antarctic Ocean. The draft laws will be called 'Deep Seabed Mining Act', and 'Antarctica Act of India'. The Indian Ocean seabed is rich in precious metals and can yield natural resources of great value.

The US, China, Japan, Russia and South Korea lead this



race for the natural wealth that lies untapped beneath the seabed. So far, India has done little for commercial exploration of the seabed despite excellent opportunities to tap nearly 1.5 million sq km of sea floor beyond its territorial waters.

GNLU director Dr Bimal N

Patel will play a key role in drafting the new laws. Talking to TOI, Patel said: "With global appetite for minerals and rare metals growing, a proper legal and regulatory framework will help India tap the huge economic potential of the ocean."

India is party to the Antarctic Treaty, the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, and the Protocol on Environmental Protection for the Antarctic Treaty. In this backdrop, the Antarctica Act of India will try to ensure that the Antarctic remains a natural reserve, to be explored for peace and science.