

PETROLEUM POTENTIAL OF THAILAND

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The history of oil exploration in Thailand could be dated back to the 1940's when the first exploratory well for petroleum was drilled with little success at Fang Basin of Tertiary age, located at the northern top of the country. At any rate, it was not until the year 1964 when off-shore exploration began in the Gulf of Thailand and the Andaman Sea. The hydrocarbon accumulation in the Tertiary sedimentary basins in the Gulf bears its first petroleum potential while the pre-Tertiary sedimentary basins offer the possibility of the second petroleum potential target. The recent discovery of natural gas in the Gulf is of the order of 9 trillion cubic feet which will serve the demand of the country for at least 20 years at the production rate of 750 MMCFD. Condensate at the rate of 10,000 barrels per day will also be recovered. In the Andaman Sea, the pre-Tertiary sedimentary basins which lie within the deep water area bear more favourable conditions for hydrocarbon potential than the shallow water area. Although the onshore exploration has been started for a number of years all over the country, it is still requires the carrying out of detailed seismic survey. It is believed that the rocks of Mesozoic-Paleozoic age which underlie the Khorat Plateau and the Chaophraya Basin of the northeastern and central part of Thailand, respectively, are the most possible potential area for petroleum exploration.
