

# Keppel rolls one out for India's Jindal

By *Upstream staff*

**Indian contractor Jindal Drilling & Industries is primed to start a new contract for Oil & Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) in the Bombay offshore area after taking delivery of the Discovery I jack-up drilling rig from Singaporean rig builder Keppel.**

Keppel earned a S\$1 million (US\$700,000) bonus as the new build jack-up was delivered 49 days ahead of schedule to Discovery Drilling, a joint venture led by Jindal Drilling & Industries (JDIL).

Discovery I, is the first of two jack-up rigs being built by Keppel for Jindal, with Virtue I set for delivery in November before starting work with ONGC.

The Indian drilling contractor plans to add at least one or more jack-up drilling rigs per year, either owned or leased to its operated fleet, which currently stands at two units.

Jindal is also positioning itself for the deep-water market, having forged an alliance with a foreign company earlier this year, which resulted in a three year deal with ONGC.

Naresh Kumar, managing director of JDIL, said that the company is bidding several projects outside India, in the South East Asia, Middle East and African regions.

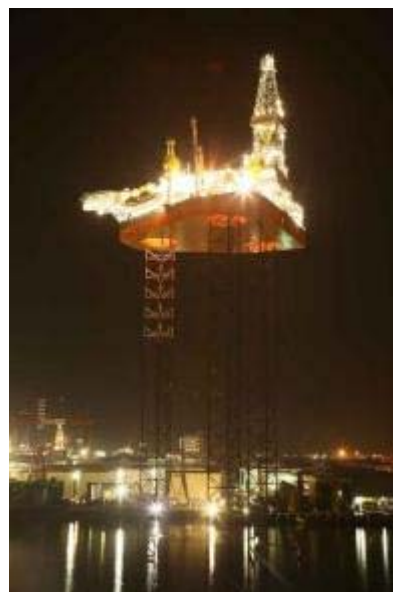
The latest jack-up rig is capable of operating in water depths of 350 feet and drilling down to 30,000 feet.

Over the last five years, Indian offshore and marine companies have ordered a total of nine jack-up drilling rigs amounting to about US\$1.5 billion from Keppel.

All nine rigs are of the KFELS B class category. The design has been developed to meet the requirements of drillers for more powerful jack-ups as the search for hydrocarbons moves into harsher environments and deeper waters.

"We are pleased with the early delivery of the rig. The bonding and coordination of the Discovery Drilling, Jindal and Keppel teams have been excellent. Keppel FELS will always be our preferred partner," Kumar said at the naming ceremony on Saturday.

Singapore's Minister for Finance, Tharman Shanmugaratnam, said at the ceremony that there is much potential for Singapore companies to work with their Indian counterparts as India intensifies the development of oil and gas resources.



*New journey for Jindal Drilling: with the launch of the Discovery I jack-up rig*