

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2507

ANSWERED ON:18.03.2005

EXPLORATION OF DIAMOND

Ahir Shri Hansraj Gangaram;Mahtab Shri Bhartruhari

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether diamonds have been explored in the country specially in Mahanadi river bed in Hirakund of Orissa;

(b) if so, the details thereof, location-wise; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken for exploration of diamond from that area ?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO)

(a) : Yes, Sir. Geological Survey of India (GSI), Public Sector undertakings like Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited (MECL), National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) and some State Directorates of Geology and Mining / State Mining Corporations of Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Orissa etc. have been engaged in exploration for diamond and other precious and semi-precious stones.

GSI has been engaged since long in exploration of diamond in the various parts of the country particularly in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra and Orissa including the Mahanadi river bed in and around Hirakund.

(b) : Search for diamond bearing rocks (Lamproite, Kimberlite) in Mahanadi river bed (from the entry point of the river Mahanadi in the State of Orissa to the Hirakud Reservoir and up to the confluence with Tel river in the State of Orissa) is being carried out by GSI during the current field season. However, the source rock for diamond has not yet been discovered.

Search for diamond in Mahanadi River Bed is reported since 1855. In 1969-1970 GSI has carried out of prospecting of diamond between Hirakund and Baudh areas. However, all these exercises did not yield any positive targeting for source rock.

From 1993-94 GSI is engaged in the search for pipes of Kimberlites / Lamproites which are primary source rocks for diamond in Mahanadi river basin as well as the prominent tributaries of Mahanadi, viz. IB, Tel, Ong, Sutkel and Indravati in Bargarh, Bolangir, Sonepur, Jharsuguda, Nuapada, Sundergarh and Sambalpur districts. So far the primary source could not be located.

(c) : The search is still continuing in Kasipani-Khandhadhap area, Bargarh and Nuapada districts. Government also grants Reconnaissance Permits (RPs) and Prospecting Licenses (PLs) to interested private entrepreneurs for exploration of minerals. As per National Mineral Policy (NMP) 1993, the exploration and exploitation of all non-fuel and non-atomic minerals have been thrown open to private investment.