

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:971
ANSWERED ON:03.03.2010
ENCROACHMENT ON FOREST LAND
Jeyadural Shri S. R.

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Union Government sent a team of officials to Orissa to probe the allegation against some companies for grabbing forest land;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the findings of the team;
- (d) whether similar allegations of endangering the lives of people have been levelled against M/s. Vedanta and its subsidiaries which have been permitted mining or other industrial activities in other States;
- (e) if so, the details thereof;
- (f) whether the Union Government has probed/investigated these allegations; and
- (g) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS(SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a)to (c) No, Sir. No team of officials had been sent to Orissa to probe the allegations against some companies for grabbing forest land. However, a team of two officials and one non-official has been sent to enquire into issue of violation of the provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, and impact of a project on Tribal Rights and Wildlife conservation in the case of diversion of 660.749 ha of forest land for mining of Bauxite ore in Lanjigarh Bauxite Reserve in favour of Orissa Mining Corporation in Kalahandi and Rayagade districts in Orissa. The team has not yet submitted its report.

(d)to (g) The Ministry has not received any complaint of allegation of endangering the lives of people by M/s Vedanta and its subsidiaries so far. However, complaints have been received against M/s Bharat Aluminium Company (BALCO), a subsidiary of M/s. Vedanta in Chattisgarh, regarding violation of the provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act. The report from the State Government of Chattisgarh is awaited.