

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1507
ANSWERED ON:15.07.2009
MINING IN FOREST AREAS
Patasani Dr. (Prof.) Prasanna Kumar

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

- (a) whether mining activities are increasing in the forest areas in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government is considering any amendment in the Forest Rights Act to give power to environmentalist to prevent mining in forest areas;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to prevent mining activities in forest areas?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) & (b): So far, 1631 projects pertaining to mining of various ferrous and non-ferrous minerals have been accorded approval by the Central Government involving approximately 1,22,157 ha of forest land since promulgation of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. The forest areas involved in mining had varied from year to year depending upon the number of proposals received and types of mineral resources mined as per the developmental needs of the Country.

(c) to (e): The diversion of forest land for non-forestry purposes is regulated under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. The provisions of the Act and the mechanism established thereunder permits diversion of forest land only when no alternatives were available. Further, the land use for different purposes is optimized. As a result we could achieve large saving of forest areas from getting diverted (from 1.5 lakh ha per annum during pre-FC Act (25.10.1980) period to about 31,000 ha per annum at present).