

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3969

ANSWERED ON:20.04.2010

ASSISTANCE FROM ISRO AND NRSA .

Gowda Shri D.B. Chandre;Maadam Shri Vikrambhai Arjanbhai;Raghavan Shri M. K.;Ram Shri Purnmasi

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) Whether the Government/Indian Bureau of Mines has sought assistance from Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA) and other concerned agencies to detect illegal mining in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the extent to which such assistance is likely to check illegal mining;
- (c) whether the Governments has sought any report on the finding of Lokayuktas of State Government on irregularities in the mining sector and the State Governments have submitted action taken reports to the Union Government on such activities;
- (d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and the action taken by the Government in this regard; and
- (e) the other steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to curb such menace?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF MINES AND MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION (SHRI B. K. HANDIQUE)

(a) and (b) : The assistance of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and other remote sensing agencies have been sought to obtain satellite imagery on areas of mining in some States like Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, etc. This imagery is used to correlate with the mining lease coordinates for assessing the extent of violations by lease holders. In a particular instance in Orissa, the Indian Bureau of Mines detected illegal mining in Keonjhar district using the satellite imagery and based on this, the State Government was able to initiate action against illegal miners.

(c) and (d) : The Lokayukta had submitted its report to State Government of Karnataka on 18.12.2008 on mining irregularities in Karnataka. The Central Government has requested the State Government of Karnataka to submit an Action Taken Report. The State Government of Karnataka has informed that it has constituted a committee to examine and suggest course of action to be taken by the Government on the report of Lokayukta.

(e) : The Central Government had amended the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, to empower the State Governments to take action against illegal mining by giving them powers to enter and inspect any mine, penalize transportation and storage of illegal mined minerals, confiscate illegally mined minerals, tools, equipment and vehicles, and frame separate Rules under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 for curbing illegal mining. This was followed by regular monitoring by Central Government of the action taken by the State Governments. Recently, all the State Governments have been requested to prepare an Action Plan using modern technology to curb illegal mining. Further, a Coordination-cum-Empowered Committee has been set up at to ensure elimination of delays in grant of mineral concessions. A draft Model State Mineral Policy has also been circulated to all the State Governments.

Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM) conducted a total of 1978 inspections (till February 2010) in the year 2009-10 and prosecution cases launched in 23 cases and six mines suspended. Further a Task Force was constituted in the IBM which conducted inspection in 106 mines in Orissa, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, and has suspended mining operations in 60 mines for deviation in approved Mining Plan in respect of production, location of pit, overburden production and non-submission of Mining Plan/Mining Scheme, and violation notices have been issued to 28 mines. The State Governments have stopped issuing transport permit (royalty pass) for suspended mines.