

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:549
ANSWERED ON:28.07.2010
FOREST ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Singh Shri Uday Pratap

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

- (a) whether the Union Government has set up a Forest Advisory Committee to tackle the issue of illegal mining in some States, particularly in Karnataka;
- (b) if so, the details of recommendations made by the Committee;
- (c) whether some State Governments have been ignoring the recommendations of the Forest Advisory Committee and continuing to extract iron ore from reserved forest areas; and
- (d) if so, the steps the Union Government proposes to take to prevent such illegal mining in future?

Answer

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

(a) & (b) The Forest Advisory Committee (FAC) is a statutory body under the provisions of section-3 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. The role of the FAC is recommendatory in nature so far as diversion of forest land for the purpose of non-forestry use, including mining, is concerned. The primary responsibility of controlling illegal mining lies with the State / UT Governments because they are the actual custodians of the forest land. However, as and when, any problem of illegal mining is brought to the notice of the Union Government, suitable measures are suggested to the State / UT Governments to control the problems of illegal mining.

(c) & (d) In recent past, some problems of illegal mining have come to the notice of the Union Government. Reacting to the problems of illegal mining in Karnataka, the Union Government has advised the State Government to get the survey done to ascertain the extent of forest land being illegally mined, to erect boundary pillars having numbers, to prepare and maintain mandatory safety zone of 7.5 metre width around the mining lease area, to disallow transportation of illegally mined mineral, to book offences against the offenders and to investigate the cases vigorously to achieve the logical end.