

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1498

ANSWERED ON:03.08.2010

ILLEGAL MINING

Ray Shri Rudramadhab ;Tewari Shri Manish

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is evidence available with the Government that large scale illegal mining of iron ore is taking place in Karnataka;
- (b) if so, the details therewith;
- (c) the details of natural resource and revenue loss to the Nation, Central and State Government included as a result of this illegal mining of iron ore;
- (d) whether there are other States also where such illegal mining of iron ore is taking place;
- (e) if so, the steps that the Government proposes to take to check this menace;
- (f) whether the Government proposes to amend the current enactments that govern the entire spectrum of the mining industry in India;
- (g) whether the draft law that seeks to amend the mining enactments has been put out in the public domain to ascertain the views of the various stakeholders including environmentalists; and
- (h) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

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

(a) to (e): The Central Government has received complaints on illegal mining and irregularities in six iron ore mines located in Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh sharing common border with Bellary district of Karnataka. The main allegation is that a particular lease holder, M/s. Obullapuram Mining Company and its associates have encroached into the neighboring lease hold areas and also in the reserved forest areas, cross the border into Karnataka. The Government of Andhra Pradesh on the basis of direction of the Central Government, had suspended the mining operations in six iron ore mines in Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh sharing common border with Bellary district of Karnataka including transportation of already mined material, which was taken up in the Supreme Court of India. The Apex Court has ordered Survey of India to complete its survey of the area. The matter is sub-judice. As per recent information from State Government, mine development work is underway in two mining leases of M/s. Obulapuram Mining Company. However, no mineral transportation is reported.

In order to curb instances of illegal mining, 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. In view of recent increase in the instances of illegal mining, being reported in the media, the Central Government has requested State Governments to prepare Action Plans to monitor and curb illegal mining, which includes the use of Satellite imagery and other intelligence inputs. So far, 10 States Government of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamilnadu, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand have prepared Action Plan in terms of advice of Central Government. Nine States (Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamilnadu, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand) have started monitoring issue of transport permits and six States (Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand) have started hologram marking/bar-coding of transport permits. Further, there is a Central Empowered-cum-Coordination Committee which has been meeting six monthly to discuss various issues relating to the mining sector including illegal mining and measures to prevent, detect and control it. Ten State Governments (Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Goa, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan and West Bengal) have set up Coordination-cum-Empowered Committee. A draft Model State Mineral Policy has been prepared by the Central Government and circulated to all the State Governments. Indian Bureau of Mines has constituted Special Task Force Teams, which conducted inspections in 106 mines in endemic areas in five States (Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Jharkhand and Gujarat) between 7.12.2009 to 17.12.2009 and suspended operations in 60 mines and issued violation notices to 28 mines. The Special Task Force conducted second round of inspections from 17.4.2010 to 27.4.2010 in Karnataka. It inspected 67 mines and found serious violations in 18 mines, which were suspended. Similarly, less serious violations were found in 16 mines, which have been issued violation notices for compliance. The matter is being closely monitored by the Central Government.

(f) to (h): A high level Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri Anwarul Hoda, was constituted on 14th September, 2005 in the Planning Commission to suggest to review the National Mineral Policy, 1993 and the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957. Based on the recommendations of the Hoda Committee, Government has announced a New Mineral Policy, 2008. Further, Government has undertaken an exercise to introduce a new Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act in the Parliament. The draft Act was put on website of Ministry of Mines on 05.8.2009, 17.9.2009, 17.11.2009, 08.01.2010, 31.3.2010 and 03.6.2010 for effective consultation with the stakeholders including environmentalists.