

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
STEEL  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2836  
ANSWERED ON:14.03.2011  
RADIO ACTIVE MATERIALS  
Panda Shri Prabodh

**Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether highly radioactive isotopes of cesium 137 and cobalt 60 were stolen from inside the Durgapur Steel Plant under Steel Authority of India (SAIL);
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the radioactive materials are kept under high security;
- (d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the action taken against those persons who are responsible for that;
- (e) whether the stolen material has been recovered; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof alongwith effective steps taken by the Government to prevent these thefts?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR STEEL(SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA) (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)

(a)&(b): As per information made available by the Steel Authority of India Ltd (SAIL), a total of fifteen disused and decayed Cobalt-60 isotopes, awaiting to be disposed, were stolen from the storage room near Research and Control Laboratory building of the Durgapur Steel Plant (DSP). However no Cesium 137 isotope was stolen from DSP. CISF personnel deployed on the Plant's premises reported the theft on the morning of 12.1.2011.

On preliminary enquiry, it was noticed that after breaking the wall from the outside, one lead shield transport assembly container containing 12 disused Cobalt 60 isotopes and 3 operation lead shields – each containing one disused Cobalt 60 isotope had been stolen from the storage room.

An FIR was lodged with the concerned Police Station. As per statutory requirement, the matter was also immediately brought to the notice of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board.

(c) Yes, the radioactive materials are kept in an exclusive storage room within the Plant premises. The Plant is guarded by CISF personnel round-the-clock.

(d) The report on the outcome of the investigation has not yet been received. Some arrests in this case are reported to have been made by the local Police which is taking further action in the matter.

(e) One lead shield transport assembly container in cut condition without the isotopes and two operational lead shields (one in intact condition with the isotope and the other in cut condition with the isotope) have since been recovered.

(f) DSP-SAIL have taken action to shift the recovered and the balance disused isotopes (awaiting disposal) to a more secured place. Moreover, guarding and patrolling by CISF have been intensified in all areas round-the-clock for preventing theft incidences in the plant. CISF personnel have also been advised to be more vigilant.