

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1199
ANSWERED ON:08.08.2011
FOREST LAND FOR MINING
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a substantial area of forest land in the country, including Bihar, has been leased out for mining;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether illegal mining without any lease is being carried out in the forests in Bihar;
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the action taken against the offenders;
- (e) whether the Government has made any assessment of the consequences of mining activities in terms of damage to dense forests areas, environmental impact and the effect on the local population;
- (f) if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN)

(a) & (b) The Central Government so far accorded 1,718 approvals under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of 1,42,022.06 ha. forest land for mining. State/ UT-wise details of the same are annexed.

(c) & (d) As per the information received from the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Government of Bihar, instances of illegal mining do occur in forests areas in Bihar. Such instances generally occurs in the areas in proximity of mining leases sanctioned outside forest areas but very close to the forest boundaries. The staff of the Forest Department keeps watch and action as per law, such as institution of cases against the offenders, seizure and confiscation of vehicles etc. are taken, as and when such instances of illegal mining in the forest land are detected.

Division-wise details of cases filed and vehicles seized during the last two years in respect of the illegal mining in forest areas are as below:

Name of Division	No. of cases filed	No. of Vehicles seized
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Rohtas Division	51	72
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Munger Division	171	-
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Gaya Division	49	29
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Nawada Division	13	5
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Valmiki Tiger Project 4 0

Aurangabad Division 21 0

Total 309 106

The State Government of Bihar has taken a decisive step to curb illegal mining in the state by changing its mining policy in 2010. The state government has stopped issuing new licenses for mining and the existing leases will not be renewed after their expiry.

(e) to (g) All mining proposals involving more than 5.00 ha. or more land, need to obtain environmental clearance in accordance with the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and the EIA notification, 2006 issued there-under. Assessment of the impacts of proposed mining activities in terms of damage to dense forest areas, other environmental impacts, effect on local population etc., and preparation of an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) containing detailed provisions to mitigate the identified adverse impacts are integral part of the process for grant of Environment Clearance to mining projects.

Environment clearance accorded to the mining projects is subject to the condition that the project proponent shall execute the mitigation measures indicated in the EMP, and such other measures as the Central Government may stipulate, to mitigate the adverse impacts of mining.