

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ATOMIC ENERGY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2570

ANSWERED ON:22.07.2009

EXPANSION PLAN OF IREL

Majhi Shri Pradeep Kumar;Patel Shri Kishanbhai Vestabhai

Will the Minister of ATOMIC ENERGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether expansion plan of Indian Rare Earths Limited for exploitation of raw sand at Manavalakurichi has been finalized;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) the present status of the project;
- (d) the funds allocated for the project during the last and the current Five Year Plan period and the amount utilized therefrom;
- (e) the reasons for unutilization of funds; and
- (f) the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY AND EARTH SCIENCES (INDEPENDENT CHARGES), PMO, PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS(SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN)

(a) & (b) Expansion plan of Indian Rare Earths Limited (IREL) for exploitation of raw sand at Manavalakurichi Plant is held up for want of clearance from the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MOEF) and renewal of mining leases by the Tamil Nadu government.

(c) MoEF in their Terms of Reference (ToR) meeting held on 25.11.2008 have rejected the Manavalakurichi expansion project on the ground that expansion of industrial activity is not permissible in Coastal Regulatory Zone (CRZ) area. Appeal filed before the National Environment Appellate Authority (NEAA) on 4.2.2009 was also rejected on the ground of maintainability of the appeal and NEAA has directed IREL to approach MoEF for reconsideration. Accordingly, IREL filed an appeal with MoEF for reconsideration.

(d) & (e) An amount of Rs.11 crore and Rs.45.50 crore were allocated for the project in the X and XI Plan respectively from Internal and Extra Budgetary Resources of the Company. However, as the project has not yet received requisite clearances, no amount has been spent so far.

(f) IREL has submitted proposal to MoEF requesting to introduce suitable modification in the notification SO 550 (E) dated 21.5.2002, for carrying out mining of rare minerals not available outside CRZ areas. IREL is also pursuing with State Government authorities for activities pertaining to land acquisition and renewal of mining lease.