

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1298

ANSWERED ON:17.08.2012

MEETING OF GEO SCIENCE ADVISORY COUNCIL

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Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the meeting of the second Geo-Science Advisory Council was held in the recent past;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the details of the terms of reference of the council; and
- (c) the details of discussions held and decisions arrived therein?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI DINSHA PATEL)

(a): Yes, Madam. The second meeting of Geoscience Advisory Council (GAC) was held at Vigyan Bhawan Annexe, New Delhi on 20th June 2012.

(b): The Term of Reference of the GAC are:

1. Advising the Ministry on geoscientific policy initiatives, including synergetic coordination, with similar activities in other institutions.
2. Prioritising GSI thrust activities, recommending new technologies and methodologies and geoscientific collaboration.
3. Identifying new areas for fundamental and multidisciplinary geosciences (including global/climatic change) and recommending methods for optimizing resources for scientific R&D in such areas, including building of geoscientific partnerships at national and international levels with research, academic and policy making institution.
4. Recommending networking and synergy with regard to sharing of scientific information including organisation of events, publication, policies, internet application etc.
5. To recommend ways of popularizing geosciences for building and inform citizenry.

(c): The following are the gist of discussions held during the meeting -

Discussions were held on the challenges faced by the nation in respect of energy, water, minerals and soil resources to meet the growing demand accentuated by rapidly increasing population and the upfront geological problems like earthquakes, environmental degradation, health hazards etc.

Government and Scientific Institutions need to create a mechanism and coordinate with multiple geoscientific institutions on an appropriate platform to obviate duplication of work and orient geoscientific activities for meeting societal needs.

It was emphasized that GSI should play a vital role in development processes in infrastructure, communication etc. which includes engineering geological projects and fresh water resources, global climatic changes, and mineral resources of the country, and GAC to suitably advise the best approach. The following major suggestions were given and decisions taken during the meeting -

The importance of Research and Development in geoscience was emphasized and it was remarked that more thrust be given on fundamental and applied Research.

It was suggested that since multinational exploration agencies had undertaken mineral search in the country but could not bring out any large mineral deposit, their huge database should be utilised by GSI and in this regard these companies may be asked to transfer database to GSI.

It was also suggested that our focus should be on explorations and making proper use of geophysical investigations for locating new deposits at depths.

Nickel should be searched at the base of Deccan Traps which covers large area in Western and Southern India.

Search should be conducted for coal below the Deccan Traps. For this, it was suggested to go for into MoU with DGH and ONGC.

It was suggested to have multidisciplinary approach including provenance studies for understanding of the subsurface fluvial sediment body architecture of multi-sourced system, which is fundamental for groundwater studies.

It was suggested that in order to augment potable surface and subsurface water resources, there was a need to set up laboratories for studies in geology, biology, soil science, erosion, river science etc. in the country and GSI should set up research groups in this regard.

A long term collaboration was suggested to be framed between GSI and relevant Institutions/ organizations on topics like Palaeobotany and 'Climate Change'. It was suggested to reinforce the Engineering Geology Divisions of GSI in the light of increasing demand of hydel projects etc.

It was suggested that large number of geoscientists from GSI should attend International seminars and conferences and GSI should also organize large number of seminars for international community.

The members proposed that in order to carry out the work effectively, there was a need to formulate multiple committees, for giving suggestions. It was also suggested that each committee would consist about 5 to 6 members, who could be nominated by MoM-GSI in consultation with the Convenors of respective Committees.

The members desired that Terms of Reference may also be framed and experts may give suggestions especially on

(i) Coal,

(ii) Fertilizer and

(iii) REE for its prospective areas where studies should be taken up by GSI or through collaborative programme(s).