

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:775
ANSWERED ON:27.11.2012
SECURITY TO MINING AREAS
Kumar Shri P.

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the iron ore mines catering to Bhilai Steel Plant and other establishments of the Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL) are facing naxal threat;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken to ensure safety of the said mines and establishments?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI R.P.N. SINGH)

(a) & (b): The present captive iron- ore mines of Bhilai Steel Plant (BSP) at Dalli-Rajhara in Chhattisgarh are on the verge of depletion and are likely to last only for about 4-5 years. The iron-ore deposits in Rowghat area of Bastar region is the proposed future captive iron-ore mine of BSP, for which, all statutory clearances have been obtained.

The BSP has an iconic status since it is a symbol of India's self-reliance since the early years of our nation-building process. To maintain the iron ore supply to BSP, it is necessary to start operations at Rowghat as early as possible. There are two issues connected to the development of Rowghat mines. The first issue is preparing an area of around 2030 hectares in Kanker and Narayanpur Districts of Chhattisgarh for extraction of iron-ore. Further, to transport the iron-ore from Rowghat, construction of a railway line of around 90 kms passing through Balod-Kanker-Narayanpur-Kondagaon-Jagdarpur is necessary. An attractive compensation package has been put in place for people likely to be affected by this project.

However, the CPI (Maoist), its front organizations and some activists are vehemently opposing this project. The CPI (Maoist) have threatened violent reprisals if work on this project is carried out. Their main fear stems from the fact that this area, once opened up for development, will cease to provide them with cadres and hideouts to carry on their so-called 'protracted peoples war' against the Indian State. A systematic disinformation campaign has also been launched that this mining activity has corporate linkages, which is completely untrue. Further, the Maoists have also carried out frequent attacks on the existing NMDC mines at Kirandul and Bacheli, in which a number of security forces have lost their lives.

Due to the threat of CPI (Maoist) and its front organizations, the work at Rowghat is running behind schedule and the contractors are facing serious danger to their lives. This is just one instance of the myriad ways in which the Maoist insurgency has emerged as a serious impediment to the nation-building process, wherein they are obstructing even public sector projects.

(c): In view of the above, the Ministry of Home Affairs has held meetings with the Ministry of Steel, the Ministry of Railways & the State Government of Chhattisgarh and decided to enhance the level of security for this project. However, it is also necessary to create public opinion against the disruptive activities of CPI(Maoist) and counter their disinformation and propaganda campaign against this project.