

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2544  
ANSWERED ON:10.12.2012  
CHECK ON EXTRACTION OF SAND FROM RIVER BED  
Kateel Shri Nalin Kumar;Raghavendra Shri B. Y.

**Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government has noticed that sand mining is rampant in the country;
- (b) if so, whether over extraction of sand would badly impact on ecology in the country;
- (c) if so, whether the Government is taking any measures to study the impact on the ecology and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has received any suggestions in this regard;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the steps taken by the Government to check over extraction of sand from river bed?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN):

(a) & (b) Sand mining is regulated in terms of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 and the rules framed therein. All mining activities of minor minerals, including sand, require prior environment clearance. This is with a view to ensuring that the mining is done in a scientific and sustainable manner.

(c) to (f) The Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF) had constituted on 24.03.2009 a group under the Chairmanship of the Secretary (Environment & Forests) to look into the environmental aspects associated with mining of minor minerals. The group submitted its report in March 2010 and made several recommendations relating to definition of minor mineral, size of mine lease, period of mine lease, cluster of mine approach for small sized mines, requirement of mine plan for minor minerals, river bed mining etc. MoEF have asked the States to examine the report and to issue necessary instructions for incorporating the recommendations made in the report in the Mineral Concession Rules for mining of minor minerals under Section 15 of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957. The Hon'ble Supreme Court vide its order dated 27.02.2012 in IA No.12-13 of 2011 in SLP(C) No.19628-19629 of 2009 in the matter of "Deepak Kumar etc. vs. State of Haryana and Ors." has ordered that the State Governments and UTs should take immediate steps to frame necessary rules under Section 15 of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 taking, inter-alia, into consideration the recommendations of MoEF in its report of March, 2010.