

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2241
ANSWERED ON:02.12.2009
ENCROACHMENT OF LAND
Ponnam Shri Prabhakar;Singh Chaudhary Lal

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

- (a) whether the Union Government has received any proposal from the State Government of Chhattisgarh for environment clearance in favour of Bharat Aluminium Company (BALCO);
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has received any complaints against BALCO for illegal mining activities;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Hon'ble Supreme Court has directed the Government to maintain status quo in the case of BALCO for encroaching land and deforestation activities;
- (f) if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

- (a) to (b) Two proposals, involving 639.169 ha for Bauxite mining in Saguja district and 365.056 ha for coal mining in Dharamjaygarh district of Chhattisgarh, were received for environment clearance (EC). The proposal for Bauxite mine was accorded EC on 06-10-2008 by the Central Government.
- (c) to (d) According to the information provided by the State Government majority of the land under possession of BALCO falls in the category of revenue forest / chhote-bade Jhar ke jungle and complaints of illegal felling of trees have been received from time to time. In one such case, a fine of Rs.4,04,000/- was realized from BALCO. Some of the complaints are pending in the Court of Upper Collector, Korba for decision. However, the recent complaint dated 19.02.2006 received from Dainik Jagaran, Raipur about illicit mining of Bauxite by BALCO was found to be baseless by the State Forest Department.
- (e) to (f) The Supreme court vide its order dated 29-02-2008 considered the report filed by CEC on BALCO. It was alleged that BALCO is in possession of illegal encroachment to the extent of land / revenue forest land, they are using for non- forest purpose. The court directed BALCO to file its response on the report of CEC. The Court further directed that BALCO, meanwhile, shall not cut / remove trees, if any. The Forest / Revenue Department shall not permit to remove the trees which are already cut.
- (g) BALCO was directed to pay Rs.30,52,69,839/- as NPV for 325.101 ha of revenue forest land and Rs.4,70,97,382/- as compensatory afforestation as per directions contained in its order dated 17-10-2007 of the Supreme Court in WP (civil) no. 202/ 1995 and 171/1996 and by the High Court, Bilaspur order dated 06-02-2009 in WP no.5328/1996. The matter has not been finally decided by the Hon'ble Supreme Court.