

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ATOMIC ENERGY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3210

ANSWERED ON:16.03.2016

Illegal Smuggling of Atomic Minerals

Mahadik Shri Dhananjay Bhimrao;Patil Shri Vijaysinh Mohite;Radhakrishnan Shri T.

Will the Minister of ATOMIC ENERGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the recovery of tonnes of beryl, which is used in nuclear reactors, from some persons in Rajasthan for illegal smuggling to neighbouring countries and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has conducted any inquiry in this regard and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the corrective steps taken by the Government to prevent such incidents in future; and
- (d) the other steps taken by the Government to stop and fight the threat of nuclear assets being drained out of the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES & PENSIONS AND PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (Dr. JITENDRA SINGH):

(a) Yes, Sir. The Government is aware of the recent recovery of approximately 31 tonnes of beryl from some persons involved in illegal export of the mineral from Rajasthan.

(b) Yes, Sir. Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD), a constituent unit of Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), received the information on illegal export of beryl through an anonymous letter. The information was shared with the Central intelligence agency (IB) by DAE for enquiring into the facts and taking necessary action. After due verification by the Central agency, the information was shared with Rajasthan Police, who took up subsequent gathering of criminal intelligence in the matter. An FIR, under Section 14/24 of Atomic Energy Act, 1962 and Section 3 of Prevention of Damage to Public Property (PDPP) Act, 1984 was registered by SP, Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS), Rajasthan Police, Jaipur on the written complaint of Regional Director, Western Region, AMD, Jaipur. During the course of the investigation, ATS, Rajasthan Police apprehended six accused persons. The Public Prosecutor filed the charge sheet against the six accused, under judicial custody, in the court of District Judge, Jaipur on 27.02.2016.

(c) Beryl is one of the "Prescribed Substances" (PS) notified by DAE vide Notification No. S.O.61 (E) dated 18.01.2006 under Section 2(1)(g) and Section 3 of the Atomic Energy (AE) Act, 1962 (Category OA 304). The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act 1957) lists beryl as one of the "atomic minerals" in Part B of First Schedule. The AE Act, 1962 and MMDR Act, 1957 and the rules made there under contain safeguards with respect to mining, milling, processing and/or handling of PS and "atomic minerals". In addition, beryl (Category OA 304 – SCOMET list) also attracts the export control regulations and Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) [FTDR] Act and orders there under, being administered by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Vide Gazette Notification S.O. 428(E) dated 15.12.2015, the Central Government authorised Director, AMD or such other officers of the AMD as may be duly authorised by Director, AMD to exercise the powers of entry and inspection under Section 8 of the Atomic Energy Act 1962 for the purpose of Atomic Energy (Working of Mines, Minerals and Handling of Prescribed Substances) Rules, 1984.

(d) The existing Acts and Rules are sufficient to stop and fight the threat of nuclear assets being drained out from the country.
