

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2523
ANSWERED ON:08.12.2014
MINING OF MICRO MINERALS
Chaudhary Shri P.P.

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government had issued any notification in 2012 regarding the necessity for seeking environmental clearance for mining of micro minerals;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether such notification has caused operational problems for brick kiln units in the country; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the corrective steps taken by the Government to facilitate smooth functioning of the brick kiln units in the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINES AND STEEL (SHRI VISHNU DEO SAI)

(a) & (b): In order to ensure compliance of the Hon'ble Supreme Court's order dated 27.02.2012 in I.A. Nos.12-13 of 2011 in Special Leave Petition (C) No.19628-19629 of 2009 titled "Deepak Kumar etc. Vs. State of Haryana & Ors. etc.", the Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change (MoEFCC) issued an OM dated 18.05.2012 stating inter alia that all mining projects of minor minerals including their renewal, irrespective of the size of the lease would henceforth require prior Environment Clearance (EC) and that the projects of minor minerals with lease area less than 5 ha would be treated as Category "B" as defined in Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006 and will be considered by the respective State Environment Impact Assessment Authorities (SEIAAs) notified by MoEFCC and following the procedure prescribed under the EIA Notification, 2006.

(c) & (d): MoEFCC received a number of representations conveying problems being faced by the brick kiln manufacturers in obtaining EC for 'brick earth' mined by them for making bricks and by the developers of road projects in respect of mining of 'ordinary earth' used for road construction. The brick kiln manufacturers have requested that as the digging of 'brick earth' for making bricks is a small scale activity requiring digging only upto a certain depth, the activity may be kept outside the purview of EC. Ministry vide OM dated 30.1.13 has constituted an Expert Committee and based on the report and recommendations received from this Expert Committee, the Ministry vide OM dated 24.06.2013 issued guidelines regarding categorization of mining projects of 'brick earth' and 'ordinary earth' having lease area less than 5 ha as category 'B2' subject to certain stipulations. 'B2' Category projects do not require public hearing and preparation of EIA reports. An OM w.r.t. categorization of Category 'B' projects/activities into Category 'B1' & 'B2' listed in the Schedule of EIA Notification, 2006 and its amendments, was issued on 24.12.2013 wherein minor mineral mining projects including 'Brick earth' / 'Ordinary earth' mining projects with mining lease area < 25 ha have been categorized as Category 'B2' projects. These projects will be appraised based on Form-1, Pre-feasibility report and Mining plan approved by the authorized agency for environmental clearance without Environmental Impact Assessment report/Environmental Management Plan and without involving Public hearing.