

(c) The following mine owners have set-up beneficiation plants to upgrade iron ore fines: M/s Sesa Goa Ltd., M/s D.B. Bandothkar & Sons Pvt. Ltd., M/s Sociedade Fomento Industrial Ltd., M/s Damodar Mangalji & Co. Ltd., M/s Chowgule & Co. Ltd., M/s Dempo Mining Corp, M/s V.M. Salgaocar & Bro Ltd., M/s R.V.S. Velingkar, M/s Minería Nacional Ltd., Smt. Ahilabai Sardesai, M/s SOVA, Smt. K.R. Gharse, M/s V.S. Dempo & Co, Sri Badruddin H. Mavani, M/s Bandekar Bros Pvt. Ltd., M/s Salgaocar Mining Industries, M/s Doddanavar Bros., M/s SAIL, M/s Tata Steel Ltd., M/s OMC Ltd., M/s Rungta Mines Ltd., M/s Sarda Mines Ltd., M/s Bonai Industrial Co. Ltd., M/s NMDC, M/s Mineral Sales Pvt. Ltd., M/s Bharat Mines and Minerals, Mineral Enterprises Ltd., M/s Bhilai Steel Plant.

Illegal sand mining

1718. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been a spurt and increase in illegal sand mining in the recent past;

(b) if so, the States/Union Territories which are predominantly subject to this kind of illegal mining or malpractices or both; and

(c) the details of ill-effects of illegal sand mining in rivers and the measures taken or being taken to avert these kind of activities?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUÉ): (a) to (c) As sand is a minor mineral, for which powers to regulate are delegated to the State Governments, details of cases of illegal sand mining are not centrally maintained, However, the State Governments are empowered to frame rules for curbing illegal mining. Further, the State Governments have been asked to frame rules for prevention of illegal mining, transportation, etc., and constitute Task Forces at State/District Level.

Coordination between Central and State Governments on mineral issues

1719. SHRI RAGHUNANDAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) by when a separate forum would be constituted for better coordination between Central and State Governments in order to sort out the problem related to coal and other minerals;

(b) the measures adopted for proper exploration of available minerals wealth in the States;

(c) whether the State Governments are bearing heavy losses of revenue and registration charges from coal companies and what are the measures being taken in this regard;

(d) whether the above said provision would also be applicable on coal companies for sanctioned coal mining under MMRD Act, 1957; and

(e) if so, by when it would be enforced?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) and (b) The Government had constituted a Mineral Advisory Council in the year 2003 which includes important mineral producing States as members to advise on various aspects relating to exploration of minerals in land and on offshore areas, production, annual distribution and consumption of minerals, exports and imports of minerals, human resources development in the mineral sector, measures necessary for protection/restoration of environment and ecology against adverse effects caused by mining operations, mineral policy and legislation. Apart from this, the Government has set up a mechanism through Central Geological Programming Board and State Geological Programming Board for proper exploration of available mineral wealth in the States. Further the Government has taken up a Plan Scheme for promotional exploration of Coal through GSI, MECL and CMPDIL. A separate Plan Scheme is also undertaken for detailed drilling of coal in areas not under Coal India Limited (CIL).

(c) The Government is not aware about any loss of revenue being caused to the State Government towards registration charges from coal companies.

(d) and (e) Does not arise in view of reply to the above.

Rise in mining projects

1720. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO:

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether record 441 mining projects were cleared in 2008, compared to 269 projects approved in the calendar year 2007;

(b) if so, whether nearly 369 out of 441 projects have been proposed in eight States;

(c) whether the rise in mining approvals is specially due to Government's move allowing private sector in mining of 13 minerals;

(d) whether the rise in mining approvals is an outcome of the National Mineral Policy announced by Government in 2008; and

(e) whether Government proposes to take steps to felicitate mine developers and to explore integral mining to the mining projects?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Ministry of Mines has accorded prior approval to 272 mineral concession proposals during the calendar year 2008 in comparison to 230 prior approvals during 2007. Eight States namely Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Orissa account for the largest number of approvals, numbering 260 in 2008.

(c) Since the enunciation of the National Mineral Policy in 1993, mineral sector has been opened up for private sector investment including foreign direct investment for non-fuel and non-atomic minerals, and there has been an increase in the number of applications as well as approvals.