

Restriction on mining of limestone and other minerals in CRZ areas

1867. SHRI PARSHOTTAM KHODABHAI RUPALA:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the mining of limestone and other similar minerals is prohibited within CRZ areas;

(b) if so, whether it is applicable to those mining leases which were granted permission before 1991;

(c) whether it is also a fact that CRZ Notification is getting amended based on the recommendations made by Prof. Swaminathan Committee for making it more scientific and meaningful;

(d) whether some State Governments including Gujarat have taken up the issue of allowing the mining activities in CRZ areas subject to strict compliance of environmental protection measures and also based on the technical studies; and

(e) if so, the action taken up by the Central Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) The Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification, 1991 prohibits mining of sands, rocks, and other substrata material except rare minerals like, monazite, rutile etc., and exploitation of oil and natural gas. All activities which are permissible under the CRZ Notification, 1991 are required to obtain clearance under the said notification.

(c) The Government has initiated steps to implement the recommendations made by Prof. M. S. Swaminathan Committee in its report "Final Frontier" dated 16.7.2009 for strengthening of the CRZ Notification, 1991. The steps include drafting of a Sustainable Coastal Zone Protection Notification with an objective to protect the livelihood of local communities and promoting sustainable development in the coast.

(d) A proposal has been received from Government of Gujarat requesting amendment to the CRZ Notification, 1991 for permitting mining of limestone and other minerals in the CRZ area.

(e) The amendment to the CRZ Notification, 1991 will be based on the recommendations made by the Prof. M. S. Swaminathan Committee Report dated 16.7.2009 including the activities relating to mining and the outcome of the consultation process that the Ministry has been holding with the local communities of the coastal areas for the last four months.