

Orders of Hon'ble Supreme Court, the State Government of Haryana has constituted a District Level Task Force under the Chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner with Superintendent of Police and other Senior functionaries as member in each of the concerned district. The task force is entrusted with the responsibility of keeping a watch and ensuring complete compliance of the orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

(c) and (d) The Central Government has amended the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, to empower the State Governments to take action against illegal mining by giving them powers to enter and inspect any mine, penalize transportation and storage of illegal mined materials, confiscate illegally mined minerals, tools, equipment and vehicles, and frame separate Rules under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 for curbing illegal mining. This was followed by regular monitoring by Central Government of the action taken by the State Governments. Recently, all the State Governments have been requested to prepare an Action Plan using modern technology to curb illegal mining. Further, a Coordination-cum-Empowered Committee has been set up to ensure elimination of delays in grant of mineral concessions. A draft State Mineral Policy has also been circulated to all the State Governments.

#### **Off-shore mining**

3314. SHRI SHADI LAL BATRA: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) the prospects of off-shore mining in the country and its economic viability;
- (b) the allocation made during 2009-10 on such off-shore activities by the Geological Survey of India (GSI);
- (c) the details of off-shore activities undertaken by GSI during the last two years in the country;
- (d) the details of sea-bed mapping and sea-bed sediments samples collected by GSI during the said period;
- (e) whether GSI proposes to explore the commercial production of the modules and hydrates; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) GSI and other Government agencies have delineated offshore areas having prospect for economic mineral in offshore areas. Government have notified Offshore Areas Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act, 2002 and Offshore Areas Mineral Concession Rules, 2006 for systematic development of offshore minerals. The viability of mining of any offshore deposit is a commercial decision of the miner.

(b) Expenditure incurred by GSI on offshore survey and mineral exploration during the Financial Year 2009-10 is Rs. 2,97,20,532/-.

(c) and (d) The details of offshore activities of Field Season (F.S.) 2008-09 and 2009-10 alongwith the details of sea bed mapping and sea bed sediments samples collected by GSI during the last two years is given in Statement (See below).

(e) and (f) The aspect of commercial production of nodules and hydrates does not come within the purview of off shore activities of GSI.

***Statement***

*Details of Sea-Bed Mapping and Sea-Bed Sediments Samples collected  
by GSI during Field Season (F.S.) 2008-09 and 2009-10.*

**F.S. 2008-09.**

- (i) Five cruises were taken up by vessel RV Samudra Manthan during the F.S. 2008-09. During these cruises 12792 lkm. of bathymetry, 15782 lkm. of magnetic, 76229 sq.km. of multibeam sounding was done besides collection of 80 sediment and 16 water samples.
- (ii) Thirteen cruises were taken up onboard the Coastal vessels R.V. Samudra Kaustubh and RV Samudra Shaudhikama during the F.S. 2008-09.

Out of the above thirteen cruises, four cruises, two onboard R.V. Samudra Kaustubh and two onboard R.V. Samudra Shaudhikama were undertaken for seabed mapping covering an area of about 3105 sq.km.

Besides the area coverage 1140 lkm of bathymetry, 1107 lkm of seismic, 550 lkm of magnetic profiling, 20 sq.km of swath bathymetry and collection of 282 sediment samples, 21 water samples and current observations at 14 stations has been done.

**F.S. 2009-10**

- (i) Five cruises were taken up onboard RV Samudra Manthan during the F.S. 2009-10. During these cruises 7839 lkm of bathymetry, 7734 lkm. of magnetic, 23540 sq.km of multibeam bathymetry was done besides collection of 24 sediment and 12 water samples.
- (ii) Ten cruises were taken up onboard the Coastal vessels RV Samudra Kaustubh and RV Samudra Shaudhikama during the F.S. 2009-10.

Out of the above ten cruises, one cruise was taken up for seabed mapping of 794 sq.km. Besides, 1814 lkm of bathymetry, 494 lkm of shallow-seismics, 125 lkm of Side scan sonar, 1191 lkm of magnetic, 384 sq.km of swath bathymetry, current measurements from 24 stations and 149 sediment and 36 water samples were collected.

**Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Bill**

3315. SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is introducing a Mines and Mineral (Development and Regulation) Bill where mining in tribal areas would be restricted to State-owned enterprises, co-operative societies and Government controlled joint ventures;