

(Development and Regulation) Bill, 2010, and give its recommendation to the Government. No time limit has been specified for the Group of Ministers to submit its recommendations.

Reclassification of minor minerals

801. SHRI R.C. SINGH: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the ministry is planning to reclassify minor minerals;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that the Ministry is also working on revamping the guidelines for mineral sector; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) In order to streamline the process of grant of mineral concessions in light of the principles enunciated in the National Mineral Policy, 2008 the Government has issued two guidelines dated 24.6.2009 and 09.2.2010 to the State Governments. Details are available on website of Ministry of Mines (<http://www.mines.gov.in>)

Assessment of environmental impact on illegal mining

802. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the issue of illegal mining in Karnataka has been examined from the perspective of loss of bio-diversity and forest cover and if so, the estimation of such losses; and
- (b) whether the Central Government has appropriate systems to arrest the growth of such illegal mining and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) The Government has enunciated National Mineral Policy, 2008, which stipulates sustainable development of mineral resources, while protecting the forest, environment and ecology. However, data on loss of bio-diversity and forest cover due to illegal mining are not centrally maintained.

(b) State Governments are the owners of minerals and they grant mineral concessions including mining leases. Only in case of minerals listed in the First Schedule to the Mines and

Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, the prior approval of Central Government is necessary before grant of mineral concessions. In terms of provisions of Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, the State Governments have been given powers to take action against illegal mining. However, in view of recent increase in the instances of illegal mining, being reported in the media, the Central Government has requested State Governments to prepare Action Plans to monitor and curb illegal mining which includes the use of Satellite imagery and other intelligence inputs. So far, 10 States Government of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamilnadu, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand have prepared Action Plan in terms of advice of Central Government. Further, there is a Central Empowered-cum-Coordination Committee which has been meeting six monthly to discuss various issues relating to the mining sector including illegal mining and measures to prevent, detect and control it. The Ministry of Mines has been issuing various guidelines and suggestions on the issue and monitors progress through the Central Committee. As per information received, 10 State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Goa, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan and West Bengal have set up Coordination-cum-Empowered Committee. Other States have been requested to ensure setting up of similar Committees at the earliest. A draft Model State Mineral Policy has also been circulated to all the State Governments. Indian Bureau of Mines has constituted Special Task Force Teams which conducted inspections in 106 mines in endemic areas in 5 States of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Jharkhand and Gujarat between 7.12.2009 to 17.12.2009 and suspended operations in 60 mines. Out of the 60 suspended mines, 58 applied for revocation of suspension orders and 2 mines (one each in Orissa and Andhra Pradesh) have been recommended for termination. Out of 28 mines issued violation notices, 4 mines have been suspended, 10 mines have reported compliance. The Special Task Force conducted second round of inspections from 17.4.2010 to 27.4.2010 in Karnataka. It inspected 67 mines and found serious violations in 18 mines, which were suspended. Similarly, less serious violations were found in 16 mines, which have been issued violation notices for compliance.

Working of Maulana Azad Education Foundation

803. SHRI MOHAMMED ADEEB: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the work of Maulana Azad Education Foundation has slowed down in the recent past;