1	2	3
Upgradation of 4th stream of alumina from 5.25 LTPY to 7 LTPY and that of bauxite mines from 63 LTPY to 68.25 LTPY.	No/June, 2012	Overall progress: 50%
Capacity enhancement of smelter through amperage increase in all four pot lines from 180 Kilo Ampere (KA) to 220 KA for increasing metal production from 4.6 LTPY to 5.67 LTPY.	No/December, 2016	Pre-feasibility report made and technical study completed.

Bharat Aluminium Company Limited (BALCO), erstwhile PSU has been disinvested on 2.3.2001 by transfer of 51% shareholding of the Government of India in favour of a Strategic Partner *viz.* M/s Sterlite Industries (India) Limited alongwith management control.

Allocation of licences under LAPLs

1959. SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any plan to allocate licences under Large Area Prospecting Licences (LAPLs) for mineral deposits on first-come-first-served basis;

(b) if so, the reasons Government is not considering for allocation of the licences through competitive bidding;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) which are those mineral deposit areas, their names and the details thereof, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (c) The total area currently under lease for major minerals is 4914.4 sq. km. mostly of surfacial deposits, such as Limestone, Bauxite and Iron ore, whereas the Obvious Geological Potential (OGP) are for exploration is nearly 5,70,000 sq. km. in most of which minerals are likely to also be available at depth. The National Mineral Policy, 2008, recognizes the need to explore for deep-seated and concealed deposits and states that regional and detailed exploration needs to be carried out systematically in the entire geologically conducive mineral bearing area of the country using state-of-the-art technique in a time bound manner. This requires exploration at a depth of 50 metres or more below the surface based on integrated geological studies and

theoretical concepts developed around the country's cratonic blocks of West Dharwar, East Dharwar, Bastar, Singhbhum and Bundelkhand, etc. where major mineral resources are likely to be located. Advanced geophysics particularly gravity and magnetic surveys, using aircraft and helicopters mounted with very sophisticated, sensitive and expensive sensors is used, which also require complex proprietary software to analyse the huge volume of raw data generated along the flight path. This is a high-cost and high-risk specialized enterprise, which can only be done using venture capital. Unless it is done, the deeper deposits cannot be located and country will continue to suffer from a shortage of these mineral resources, due to failure to locate them.

Recognising this fact, the National Mineral Policy, 2008 has recommended a special exploration licence called the Large Area Prospecting Licence (LAPL) designed to attract large investments and high technology. This licence will only be available to search for deposits of base metals, like copper, and noble metals like gold etc. which occur in thin veins and lodes or in deep stratabound structures and need high cost geophysics and advanced computer modeling software for location. The exploration is generally done initially in large areas (typically upto 5000 sq. km.) through rapid airborne surveys and 'anomalies' in the nature of high or low magnetic or gravity values are analysed to do general exploration including open spaced drilling in a few tens of square kilometers for further geological and geophysical evaluation. This in turn can narrow down the search area to detailed exploration of a few square kilometers for closed spaced drilling to intersect the veins and lodes at depth at various angles to precisely estimate the size and disposition of the ore body. Since a LAPL can be only granted for deep-seated deposits for multiple minerals (other than iron ore, bauxite, limestone etc.) and primarily needs to commence from regional scale exploration over a large area, a bid value can not be estimated at the start of the enterprise as the nature of deposit in terms of the minerals, their quantity, technology of the extraction etc. will not be known at the time of grant of concession. For this reason competitive bidding has not been recommended for LAPL, and it is proposed to grant this concession on the basis of chronological priority of the applicants, who would be required to furnish exploration data to the State Governments and mandatorily surrender a portion of the explored area to the State Government each year over the period of six years (which will be available to other applicants). LAPL as a concession is thus not an asset with a value; rather it is a method of locating an asset of value. However, the licence fee for LAPL is likely to be very high.

(d) Does not arise in view of the fact that LAPL as a concession instrument is still under consideration of the Government, and will need to be included in the legislative framework.