

Pre-bid prospecting and exploration by states

3506. SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA : Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to authorize and incentivize the State Governments to take up pre-bid prospecting and exploration so that adequately prospected ore bodies can command better financial bidding;

(b) if so, whether State Governments are adequately equipped for undertaking this activity; and

(c) whether clearances like environment, consent of majority of people dislocated and their relief and rehabilitation would be obtained before taking up prospecting and exploration activities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL) : (a) to (c) There is no provision in existing Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act) to grant mineral concessions through the method of financial bidding, excepting coal minerals, where the Government has inserted Section 11A in the MMDR Act, 1957, vide Gazette (Extraordinary) Notification No. 43 dated 9th September, 2010 for awarding mining licences for coal minerals through a process of competitive bidding in allocation of coal blocks. However, for non-coal, non-fuel minerals, the National Mineral Policy, 2008, enunciates that transparency in allocation of concessions will be assured, the State Directorate of Geology and Mining will be strengthened to continue to perform exploration and survey of minerals, and that a framework of sustainable development will be designed which takes cares of concerns on environment and protect the interest of host and indigenous populations through developing models of stakeholder interest, A draft legislation to give effect to the policy is under consideration of Government.

Illegal mining of iron ore

3507. SHRI B. S. GNANADESIKAN : Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether illegal iron ore mining is on the rise in our country and such iron ore is exported illegally through ports to other countries;

(b) if so, whether Government has contemplated any mechanism to prevent such iron ore from being exported illegally; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL) : (a) The Government is aware of incidents of illegal mining in the country, including for iron ore. It is also known that illegally mined iron ore has been exported due to lack of proper regulation at the State level.

(b) The Government has amended Rule 45 of the Mineral Conservation and Development Rules, 1988 vide notification G. S. R. 75(E) dated 9.2.2011 making it mandatory for all miners, traders, stockists, exporters and end-users to register with the Indian Bureau of Mines and report on movement of minerals to Indian Bureau of Mines and State Government. Such end-to-end accounting will reduce the scope for transportation illegally mined minerals, including export of iron ore.

(c) The Central Government is responsible for ensuring the proper regulation and development of mineral resources in the country and the Parliament has enacted the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957. While section 23C of the said Act provides for State Government to formulate Rules to control illegal mining, the Central Government has been advising and coordinating activities and initiatives to help all States, to curb illegal mining, *inter-alia* as follows:-

- The State Governments have been advised to set up State Coordination-cum-Empowered Committee (SCEC) to coordinate efforts to control illegal mining by including representatives of Railways, Customs and Port authorities. Separately the State Governments have also been advised to prepare and adopt an Action Plan with specific measures to detect and control illegal mining including, use of remote sensing, control on traffic, gather market intelligence, registration of end-users and setting up of special cells etc.
- State governments to immediately start the process of strengthening their Directorate of Mining and Geology, which has been made a part of the action plan to be monitored by Central Government.
- Eighteen States have framed Rules under Section 23C of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, and twenty one States have set up Task Force at State and/or District level to check illegal mining as per the instruction of Central Government.

- The State Governments detected 82330 cases of illegal mining of minor and major minerals during the year 2010 as compared to 41578 cases detected in the full year 2009.
- All State Governments were requested to include representatives of Railways, Customs, Ports and in case of iron ore producing States, representative of Ministry of Steel in the State Coordination-cum-Empowered Committees set up in the State, for sharing the data on movement of minerals and better monitoring of the transportation and export of ore.
- All State Governments were asked to impose the special condition under Rule 27(3) of Mineral Concession Rules, 1960, for ensuring that all the mining lease holders assess the resources in their leases as per UNFC.
- A Central Coordination-cum-Empowered Committee has been set by Government, with representation from State Governments and Central Ministries concerned, to consider all mining related issues, including specifically, matters relating to coordination of activities to combat illegal mining at regular intervals.
- The Central Government has appointed Shri Justice M. B. Shah Commission of Inquiry under the Commission of Inquiry Act, 1952 to inquire into the large scale mining of iron ore and manganese ore without lawful authority in several States vide Notification S. O. 2817 dated 22nd November, 2010. The Commission has started functioning.
- Central Government through the Indian Bureau Mines had constituted Special Task Forces for inspection of mines in endemic areas by taking the help of Satellite imageries. Central Government through the Indian Bureau Mines had constituted Special Task Forces for inspection of mines in endemic areas by taking the help of Satellite imageries. Special Task Force conducted inspections in a total of 268 mines in the States of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Jharkhand and Gujarat and suspended 107 mines under rule 13(2) of Mineral Conservation and Development Rules, 1988 due to serious violations. Further, the Indian Bureau of Mines have recommended for termination of three leases.