

Quantum of thorium reserve with india

†2952. SHRI RASHEED MASOOD: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) the quantum of thorium reserves with India;
- (b) the quantity of thorium exported by India over the years; and
- (c) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) A total quantity of 10.70 million tonnes of in-situ reserves of Monazite has been established in the country. This contains approximately 0.856 million tonnes of Thorium. Thorium does not exist in nature as metal. Thorium is present to an extent of about 8% in monazite which is a naturally occurring Beach sand mineral; and further, monazite always co-exists with other Beach sand minerals such as ilmenite, rutile, leucoxene, sillimanite, garnet and zircon.

(b) and (c) Thorium is a processed output product of monazite, which is a 'prescribed substance' under the Atomic Energy Act 1962. Thorium itself is also a prescribed substance under the Atomic Energy Act 1962. Further, under the Atomic Energy (Working of the Mines, Minerals and Handling of Prescribed Substances) Rules 1984, License from the Government of India, DAE is required to handle/import/export/transport/store etc. any prescribed substance, including Monazite.

The only entity that has been given a licence by DAE to export thorium, in the form of thorium compounds, is Indian Rare Earths Limited (IREL), a Public Sector Undertaking under DAE. A total of 11.16 tonnes of Thorium nitrate and 151 kilograms of Thorium oxide has been exported by IREL in the ten years period upto 2011-12; as under:

Year	Export of Thorium Nitrate (in tonnes)	Export of Thorium Oxide (in kgs)
1	2	3
2002-03	0	0
2003-04	0	0
2004-05	0	0

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

1	2	3
2005-06	0	0
2006-07	0	0
2007-08	0	0
2008-09	0.660	100
2009-10	1.250	51
2010-11	5.200	0
2011-12	4.050	0

Dumping of nuclear waste

2953. SHRI T.M. SELVAGANAPATHI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) has been facing a serious problem regarding handling of nuclear waste;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the local peoples have been objecting dumping of nuclear waste in their respective places;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the NPCIL is considering to adopt any technology to dispose off the nuclear waste; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) In India, nuclear wastes are safely stored and disposed as per the international practices. As a national policy, each nuclear plant in India has a designated storage facility co-located in the plant site and, as needed, such waste is further processed in designated DAE facilities for compaction and immobilisation. There is no objection from the local people about storage and management of waste at such sites.