

Gomti and Revati rivers amongst others. The removal of minerals from the riverbeds is causing serious threat to the flow of the river, forests on river banks and most seriously to the environment of these areas. Similarly, the illegal beach sand mining from the coastal areas is also creating a lot of environment problems. This should be checked and the Government is requested to take strong action for protecting the environment. The mining mafia who are very powerful must be controlled through stringent measures.

But, at the same time, the Government have to ensure regulated mining of river sand and beach sand for the developmental purposes. The principle of sustainable growth is to be followed in deciding policies related to mining. The Supreme Court and the National Green Tribunal have directed the States to ensure regulated mining. Sand is an important ingredient for all kinds of construction in the country. Lakhs of workers are engaged in sand mining and in construction activities. The beach sand in the coast of Kerala and Tamil Nadu contains lakhs of tonnes of rare earth which cost thousands of crores of rupees. Even rare metals like titanium, zircon and products like thorium, monosite, etc., are coming from the sand. Employment and economy-wise this sector is very important.

But, recently, the National Green Tribunal has banned the river sand and beach sand mining. It directed for new clearances from environmental authorities. Through this order, almost all mining activities in the country have come to a standstill. In the case of Kerala, the authorities are not allowing the ongoing regulated mining which resulted in the job loss of lakhs of workers both in mining sector and construction sector. The IRE unit in Kollam district is also compelled to stop its production. Hence, the urgent intervention from the Environment Ministry and other Departments is needed to protect the regulated sand mining in the country.

**Demand to provide reasonable relief to compensate destruction caused by  
wild elephants in several districts of Assam**

SHRI SANTIUSE KUJUR (Assam): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards the attacks by wild elephants which continue in villages along the India-Bhutan border in Assam's Udalguri district.

Sir, almost every day, elephant herds are entering from multiple locations to the villages, human settlements and tea garden estates from hills and adjoining forests damaging houses and crops. People are scared and worried. The population of the affected area has to pass sleepless nights and to live in panic all the time. The villagers

