

(c) what steps are being taken to cleanse the senior bureaucracy and retire such forest officers who are found wanting in discharge of their duties?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE): (a) The total sanctioned strength of Indian Forest Service (IFS) officers in Jharkhand is 142 and in-position IFS officers is 113.

(b) While seven (7) IFS officers are currently facing disciplinary proceedings, five (5) IFS officers are facing criminal proceedings in Jharkhand.

(c) As per the provisions of the All India Service (Death-cum-Retirement Benefits) Rules, 1958, the State Governments/UTs are required to review the service of All India Service Officers who have completed 15 years and 25 years of qualifying service or attained the age of fifty years (whichever is earlier). Necessary instructions have been issued to the State Governments and Union Territories from time to time. As of now, no report under this proviso has been received about any IFS officer from the State Government of Jharkhand.

National Mineral Exploration Policy

*88. SHRI ANIL DESAI: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether, in a bid to attract private sector investment into exploration of non-fuel and non-coal minerals, Government has approved the National Mineral Exploration Policy and if so, the details thereof;

(b) what will be States' role in this new policy; and

(c) how the approved policy is different from the earlier one and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL):

(a) Yes, Sir. The National Mineral Exploration Policy (NMEP) has been approved by the Government and is available at the website of Ministry of Mines (<http://mines.nic.in/writereaddata/Content/NMEP.pdf>). The policy, *inter-alia*, proposes:

1. The Government will create baseline geoscientific data as a public good and will make available pre-competitive baseline geoscientific data of the highest standards free of charge in public domain.
2. The Government will carry out aero-geophysical survey of the country in a mission mode initially in the potential areas of around 8 lakh sq. kms. and subsequently in the rest of the areas.

3. A National Geoscientific Data Repository (NGDR) will be set up to collate all baseline and mineral exploration information generated by various central and State Government agencies and also mineral concession holders and maintain these on a geospatial database.
4. The Government will establish a National Centre for Mineral Targeting (NCMT) in collaboration with geoscientific organisations, academia and industry to target concealed and deep-seated mineral deposits.
5. The Government will carry out auctioning of identified exploration blocks for exploration by private sector on a suitable revenue sharing basis in case their exploration leads to auctionable resources. In case no auctionable resources are discovered, exploration expenditure will be reimbursed on normative cost basis.

(b) Under the NMEP, identification and delineation of exploration blocks will be carried by the State Governments with assistance from Geological Survey of India (GSI) and other agencies. The exploration blocks will be allotted to private explorers through open competitive bidding/auction process by the State Government with active support from Ministry of Mines and its central agencies. Further, State Governments have a key role to play in building up a steady stream of auctionable mineral prospects. They are required to take mineral exploration reports prepared by GSI or other agencies and build on them to carry out G3 or G2 levels of exploration. Further, States need to build up the exploration capabilities of their staff.

(c) The National Mineral Exploration Policy has been released for the first time by the Central Government. The policy not only facilitates greater role of private sector in carrying out exploration through a revenue sharing mechanism but also *inter-alia* proposes to carry out aerogeophysical mapping of the country, making available baseline data free of cost as public good, collate and share data of various exploration agencies, and provide a structured framework for targeting deep-seated and concealed mineral deposits.

Purchase of ships by SCI

*89. SHRI RITABRATA BANERJEE: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) embarked on reckless purchase of ships when the costs were high;