

Privatisation of mining sector

135. SHRI RIPUN BORA: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government proposes to privatise the mining sector of the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) the number of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) and their performance report for the last five years and the status of private players in the country; and
- (d) the details of proposal of Government to modernise the mining technology, safety, growth and reformation plans by amending the National Mineral Policy, 2019?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI): (a) No, Sir. There is no proposal to privatize the mining sector of the country. Both Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) and private players are working together in the mining sector.

(b) Does not arise in view of reply of (a) above.

(c) The PSUs are under different Central Ministries/Departments as well as with different State Governments. The mining leases for Central PSUs are granted through reservation route on the request of the concerned Central Ministries/Departments in consultation with State Governments. The mining leases for State PSUs are granted on the request of the State Government through reservation. The Central/State PSUs may also get the leases through auction route. The private players get the leases through auction route only. Therefore, the data relating to number of PSUs and their performance report and the status of private players are not maintained centrally.

(d) There is no proposal to amend the National Mineral Policy, 2019 to modernize mining technology, safety, growth and reformation. However, there is a proposal to amend the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 to make the mining sector ease of doing business friendly and attract more investment in mining sector which will create more jobs in the sector.

Mining projects without environmental clearance

136. SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of mining projects that have not obtained environmental clearances so far and are currently operating; and

(b) the estimated number of existing mining projects that will come under the scanner or will apply for clearance if the draft Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2020 comes into force?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI): (a) The Environmental Clearance (EC) is granted for projects/activities including mining projects under the provisions of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006 and subsequent amendments. As per the provisions of the Notification, all mining projects are liable to obtain EC irrespective of their size of mining lease area.

As per Indian Bureau of Mines (A Subordinate Office of Ministry of Mines) no mining project is under operation without obtaining environmental clearance.

(b) The Environmental Impact Assessment Notification, 2020 is yet to be finalised by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. However, all mining projects irrespective of their type and size of mining lease area attract the provisions of EIA Notification, 2020 also.

Illegal sand mining in Surguja

†137. SHRI RAM VICHAR NETAM: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that continuous illegal sand mining is being done in the rivers of Surguja region of Chhattisgarh, due to which the existence of these rivers is in danger;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Government;

(c) whether any action has been taken by Government against these sand mafias involved in this illegal sand mining, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the details of policy/plan formulated by Government to prevent this illegal mining?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI): (a) to (d) Sand is a minor mineral, as defined under Section 3(e) of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 ("MMDR Act 1957"). Section 15 of the MMDR Act empowers the State Governments to make rules for regulating the grant of mineral concessions in respect of minor minerals and for purposes connected therewith. Moreover, Section

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.