

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO - 327
ANSWERED ON 06/02/2025

**ENHANCING THE CAPACITY AND EFFICIENCY OF INDIAN RARE EARTHS
LIMITED FACILITY AT CHATRAPUR IN ODISHA**

327. DR. SASMIT PATRA

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:-

- (a) the steps being taken by Government to enhance the capacity and efficiency of the Indian Rare Earths (IRE) plant in Chatrapur in Odisha;
- (b) the impact of the IRE operations in Chatrapur on local employment, economy and environment;
- (c) the plans, if any, for expanding the IRE plant or introducing new technologies in Chatrapur to boost the production of rare earth minerals; and
- (d) whether Government is considering any measures to address the challenges faced by the plant in terms of infrastructure, technology or market demand?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS
AND PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (DR. JITENDRA SINGH)

- (a) At IREL Plant in Chatrapur, Ganjam, Odisha an Expansion Project has been commissioned in FY 2024-25 to increase the annual capacity of mineral production additionally by 2,00,000 tones and improve the efficiency of the plant.

- (b) IREL plant has contributed to local employment by creating jobs in mining, mineral processing, and associated services. Around 85-90% of the manpower engaged through various contracts are from villages in the near vicinity of the plant.

The operations of IREL have also stimulated economic activities since the minerals produced by IREL are utilized by number of locally operating Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) thus enhancing the economic growth and employment in the vicinity.

IREL operations are environment friendly as no drilling and blasting are undertaken unlike bulk minerals. The mined-out land is simultaneously backfilled and original topography is maintained followed by green belt development. All the regulations laid down by various Government authorities including Ministry of Environment and Forest & Climate Change (MoEF & CC), State Pollution Control Boards, Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) regulations etc. are complied by IREL.

- (c) As mentioned in (a) above, the capacity of the plant has been recently expanded. IREL is regularly infusing new technologies to boost production of atomic minerals including Rare Earth (RE) bearing minerals through CAPEX infusion.
- (d) As mentioned in the aforesaid paragraphs, at present, there are no challenges faced by the plant in terms of infrastructure, technology or market demand.
