

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF MINES

RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 07.03.2011

ANSWERED ON

REVIEW OF IRON ORE MINES ACQUIRED BY GIANT COMPANIES .

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SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA

Will the Minister of COALMINES be pleased to state :-

(a) whether Government has noted diverse news reports that giant companies have managed to acquire control of huge tracts of iron ore land by using some provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act of 1957;

(b) whether it is a fact that giant companies have also got clearances from Government ignoring legitimate claims of small people and tribals;

(c) whether Government routinely accepts recommendations in favour of such corporations of various State Governments;

(d) what steps Government would take to review the growing hold of all iron ore resources by a few corporations; and

(e) the steps proposed to review approvals given in controversial iron ore mines?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR MINES

(SHRI DINSHA PATEL)

(a):The Central Government comes across news reports regarding companies being engaged in mining operations for various minerals including Iron ore in mining leases granted under the MMDR Act, 1957.

(b) & (c):The Central Government is responsible for grant of prior approval under Section 5 (1) of the MMDR Act for grant of Reconnaissance Permit, Prospecting Licence and Mining Lease in respect of Atomic and Metallic Minerals specified in Parts 'B' and 'C' of the First Schedule to the Act. The State Governments recommend proposals for prior approval of the Central Government in respect of these minerals after taking into consideration their respective State policies as well as other relevant aspects including the claims of the local and tribal population. All such proposals are processed by the Ministry of Mines in the light of the MMDR Act and Rules and guidelines framed thereunder, and prior approval is conveyed in cases where the provisions of the Act, Rules and guidelines are met. Subsequent to the prior approval of the Central Government, mining leases are executed by the State Governments with the mining agencies after they obtain all statutory clearances viz. forest and environment clearances and approval of mining plan by the Indian Bureau of Mines.

(d):The National Mineral Policy envisions a level playing field for all participants including small and giant private companies as well as public sector undertakings (PSUs). However, Section 17A of the MMDR Act provides for reservation of areas in favour of PSUs for purposes of conservation of minerals, and all such cases are processed by the Ministry accordingly.

(e):No specific instance of this nature has come to the notice of the Government. However, Section 30 of the MMDR Act empowers the Central Government on its own motion or on application made by an aggrieved party to revise any order passed by the State Government or any other authority with respect to any mineral other than minor mineral.