

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No.1767
TO BE ANSWERED ON 22.12.2022

Thorium in Sidhi district

1767 Shri Ajay Pratap Singh:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) the possibility of Thorium reserves in the Sidhi district of the State of Madhya Pradesh;
- (b) whether any survey had been conducted earlier by Government in this regard, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether there is a possibility of setting up an atomic power plant by Government in Sidhi district keeping in view the possibility of thorium reserves there;
- (d) the current status of the proposed Chutka Nuclear Power Plant in the Mandla district of Madhya Pradesh; and
- (e) the steps taken by Government to resolve the various bottlenecks faced earlier?

ANSWER

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

- (a) & (b) Monazite is the most common source of thorium and commonly found in igneous rocks. However, the richest concentrations of monazite in world are invariably confined to placer (unconsolidated sediments) deposits. Economic resource of thorium in India is found as monazite occurring in association with other economic heavy minerals such as ilmenite, rutile, leucoxene, zircon, garnet and sillimanite in unconsolidated form along the coastal and inland placer sands of the country. In view of the above, the exploration for thorium has not been carried out in Sidhi district of Madhya Pradesh as it does not fall in the prospective geological domain for thorium.

(c) Setting up of an atomic power plant in any site in India is assessed based on various factors as detailed in regulatory safety code, published by Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) in 2014. A nuclear power plant site selection committee meticulously conducts a detailed evaluation of the proposed site as per the above code and recommends the suitability of the site. No such study has been conducted for Sidhi district.

(d) & (e) At Chutka, Madhya Pradesh site, land has been transferred to Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL), in the revenue record and possession letter has been issued. Environmental clearance has been obtained for the project. Construction of R&R colony has been completed. NPCIL is engaged with the State authorities to get access to the site for taking up further activities.
