

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 2687
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.03.2020

Mining in Forest Areas

2687. SHRI ANANTKUMAR HEGDE:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has formulated any law to prevent mining in dense forest areas and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government provides rehabilitation or conservation programme for the affected flora and fauna of the forest area after mining; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO)**

- (a) to (c) While considering proposals for use of forest land for non-forestry purposes under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, the Central Government adequately stipulates general as well as project specific safeguards to minimize the impact on surrounding flora and fauna. Such safeguards include allowing non-forest use of barest minimum forest area, implementation of Wildlife Conservation Plan, Soil Conservation Plan, minimum tree felling, Compensatory Afforestation, phase wise mining operations, stabilization of overburdens, concurrent reclamation of mined out areas, maintenance of safety zone/green belt, *etc.* on case to case basis.

In case of mining projects, following guidelines and conditions stipulated in approvals granted under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, by the Central Government provide for rehabilitation or conservation of affected flora and fauna:

- (i) Mining operations in forest areas are to be carried out as per the approved Mining Plan and Progressive Mine Closure Plan which stipulates that after cessation of mining activities, forest area is rehabilitated/reclaimed technically and biologically, as per the provisions of Mining Plan, before it is handed over back to the Forest Department.
- (ii) Safety Zone in the form of a 7.5 meters wide strip all along the inner boundary of mining lease is to be maintained as green belt with dense canopy cover in the

- area. No mining is allowed in the safety zone and regeneration is allowed to come up in this area under the supervision of the State Forest Department.
- (iii) No mining is allowed in the buffer of 250 meters around the water bodies such as wetlands, rivers, lakes, etc.
 - (iv) Storage of top soil generated during the mining operations is to be stored at designated place in the mining lease for its subsequent use in reclamation of mined out areas.
 - (v) Central Government vide its guidelines dated 17.01.2020, issued in pursuance of Hon'ble Supreme Court order dated 8.01.2020 has instructed all State Governments/Union Territories Administrations to ensure re-grassing the mining area, and any other areas which may have been disturbed due to mining activities and restore the land to a condition which is fit for growth of fodder, flora, fauna, etc.
