

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF COAL  
LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 544  
ANSWERED ON – 16.09.2020**

**Sand and Stowing Work**

**544. Shri Mahesh Sahoo:**

Will the Minister of Coal be pleased to state:-

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the delay in sand stowing work in the closed underground Mahanadi Coal Limited mines in Handidhua and Deulbera in Talcher, Odisha and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has set a deadline to complete the work of sand stowing of the mines which poses huge threat to life and property in the heavily populated town of Talcher as there has been several cases of earth caving in the past and if so, the details
- (c) planning whether the Government has set a time frame for filling up of opencast mining pits after coal extraction is completed as these too poses danger to lives and if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

**THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS, COAL AND MINES  
(SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI)**

- (a) Yes. Government is aware of the delay in sand stowing work and accordingly MCL Management has been asked for stabilization of the identified underground Workings of Deulbera & Handidhua Collieries, Talcher, Odisha. The pace of work is lagging behind schedule due to hindrances, opposition and non-cooperation from the local tenants/villagers and not having surface rights and access over such identified areas. The said areas are not accessible from underground also as the voids have already been filled with water.
- (b) As per the proposed action program, the sand stowing will be completed by Dec-2022 subject to clearance of hindrances and availability of land from individual land owners for the sand stowing job and co-operation of state and local authorities.
- (c) Yes. All open cast mines are planned and operated as per the approved mining plan including mine closure plan, wherein time frame for filling pits of open cast mines are specified and usually such operation starts within about 5 years of mine commissioning and continue throughout the life of the mine.

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