

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 2044
TO BE ANSWERED ON 12.02.2021

Sand Mining in Reserve Forest Areas

2044. SHRI UTTAM KUMAR REDDY NALAMADA:

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

- (a) the number and details of sand quarries being permitted in reserve forest areas in Telangana;
- (b) whether any Environmental Impact Assessment has been conducted in this regard and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the total area of forest land allocated for sand mining in Telangana;
- (d) whether any regulations and restrictions have been imposed by the Government for setting up of such projects in reserve forest areas and if so, the details thereof;
- (e) the details of the potential effects of such mining activities on the ecosystems of these forests; and
- (f) whether the Government has taken any steps to stop illegal sand mining in reserve forest areas in Telangana and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

- (a) to (c) No Sir. No such permission has been granted under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for sand quarries in Reserved Forest areas in Telangana.
- (d) As per the provisions under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 no State Government or other authorities is allowed to permit mining in forest areas without prior approval of Central Government. At the time of according prior approval adequate precaution is taken by stipulating appropriate compensatory and mitigation measures, so as to minimise any adverse effect of mining on forest eco-systems.

Sand mining projects also require prior environmental clearance as per the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006, in addition to the provisions of Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 and the Mineral Concession Rules framed by the concerned State Governments.

Besides above, the Central Government has issued Guidelines namely Sustainable Sand Management Guidelines (SSMG) 2016 and Enforcement & Monitoring Guidelines for Sand Mining in January, 2020 for effective enforcement of regulatory provision and their monitoring in respect of sand and

gravel mining from its commencement to final end-use by the consumers.

- (e) & (f) Every non-forestry use of forest land including mining has certain likely impact on environment. There are statutory regulations and restrictions under the provisions of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 which take care of mitigation of such potential impact.

The Central Government issues broad guidelines and advisories for smooth implementations of various environment and forest laws. The enforcement of various legal provisions including enforcement of guidelines for sustainable sand mining with a view to contain the menace of illegal sand mining lies in the domain of the State Governments and Union territories Administrations.

Appropriate steps are taken by the State Forest Departments (including by the Telangana Forest Department) for protection of the forests and wildlife, controlling illegal encroachments, timber smuggling, wildlife poaching, illegal mining activity through continuous patrolling, engaging man power for base camps, tiger trackers, fire watchers etc. and also erecting check posts at strategic points. The enforcement & monitoring guidelines of sand mining are being followed to stop illegal sand mining.
