

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINES
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1194
ANSWERED ON 09.02.2022

ILLEGAL MINING

†1194. SHRI BALAK NATH:
SHRI SUMEDHANAND SARASWATI:
SHRIMATI RANJEETA KOLI:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is able to detect illegal mining activities in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the steps taken to check such activities;
- (d) the manner in which the Government proposes to use space technology in this regard; and
- (e) the achievements made in this regard particularly in Sikar, Bharatpur and Alwar of Rajasthan?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c): Government has, inter-alia, taken the following measures for checking illegal mining in the country:

(i) Penalty for illegal mining was made more stringent by the Central Government through amendment of the MMDR Act. The penalties have been increased from Rs. 25 thousand per hectares to Rs. 5 Lakh per hectare and the term of imprisonment has been increased from 2 years to 5 years for contravention of Section 4(1) and 4(1A) of the Act.

(ii) Section 30B of the Act provides for constitution of Special courts and 30C of the Act provides that such Special Courts shall be deemed to be a Court of Session.

(iii) Rule 45 of the Mineral Conservation and Development Rules, (MCDR) 2017 makes it mandatory for all miners, traders, stockist, exporters and end-users of minerals to register and report on the production, trade and utilization of minerals to the State Government(s) and Indian Bureau of Mines.

Further, Section 23C of the Mines and Minerals (Development & Regulation) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act) empowers the State Governments to frame rules for preventing illegal mining, transportation and storage of minerals (both major and minor minerals) and for

purposes connected therewith. Hence, prevention and control of illegal mining comes under the legislative and administrative jurisdiction of State Governments. Pursuant thereof :

(i) 21 State Governments have framed rules under section 23C of MMDR Act, 1957 to curb illegal mining.

(ii) 22 States have set up Task Forces to control illegal mining and review the action taken by member departments for checking the illegal mining activities at State and district levels.

(d): Ministry of Mines, through Indian Bureau of Mines, has developed a Mining Surveillance System (MSS), in collaboration with Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and Bhaskaracharya Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics (BISAG), Gandhinagar to use space technology for detecting probable illegal mining activities around lease hold areas. This satellite-based monitoring system viz. Mining Surveillance System (MSS) aims to check illegal mining activity through automatic remote-sensing detection technology in order to establish a regime of responsive mineral administration. The system records activity upto 500 metre outside the lease boundary and generates trigger for action on part of the State Government to investigate encroachment and take necessary action. MSS has been made functional throughout the country.

A user-friendly mobile app for MSS has also been launched for use of general public for raising complaint of illegal mining activities. Once a complaint is received, it is forwarded to the respective State Government for taking appropriate action in the matter.

(e): As per information made available by State Government of Rajasthan, drone technology is used on requirement basis by the Department to check illegal mining/transportation in the State. Action is taken by the concerned officer at the trigger point of illegal mining within 500 meters radius of the mining leases for both major and minor minerals detected through the satellite imaging technology based on Mining Surveillance System (MSS).

As per the information received from the State Government of Rajasthan, Forest Survey of India has sent 202 and 225 Illegal Mining Polygons (IMP) detected by using the satellite/ space technology respectively in District Sikar and Alwar to the State Government. IMP(s) received with regard to District Sikar were physically inspected and illegal mining was not detected in 186 out of 202 cases. However, illegal mining was detected in 16 out of 202 cases and action was taken in this matter by the State Government by imposing a fine of Rs. 39,18,59,099 out of which 1,07,65,782 has been collected so far. Further, 142 out of 225 IMP(s) detected in District Alwar fall under the forest land in which action is taken by the State Forest Department. Rest 83 out of 225 cases were related to non-forest land in which physical inspection is done and necessary action is taken by the concerned State Department. Further, State of Rajasthan has informed that in District Bharatpur, no action has been taken with regard to illegal mining detected with the help of Space Technology.
