

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2285

ANSWERED ON:08.08.2005

USE OF FOREST LAND BY COAL MINES

Barad Shri Jashubhai Dhanabhai;Chowdhury Shri Bikash

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government proposes to formulate a policy on iron ore mining;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the area of forest land granted to Coal Mines/other undertakings;
- (d) whether the Government has ever reviewed Environmental impacts these activities have caused; and
- (e) if so, the details of environmental damages and the reaction of Union Government thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

- (a) & (b) In so far as Ministry of Environment and Forests is concerned there is no proposal to formulate a policy on iron-ore mining.
- (c) A total of 93,845.25 ha of forest land has been diverted, so far, for various mining projects in different States since 1980. Out of this, 36,674.91 ha of forest land has been diverted for coal mines.
- (d) & (e) The mining activity causes loss of topsoil, soil erosion, adverse impacts on flora and micro habitat, air pollution and sometimes impact on underground water table. To mitigate the adverse effects of mining, while granting the forestry clearance for mining projects, the user agency is directed to take up Compensatory Afforestation and creation of safety zone plantation around mining area. In addition, the user agency is required to carry out stabilisation of over burden dumps through afforestation, as also reclamation of mined out areas by backfilling and plantation of suitable species. The user agency is also required to carry out Environment Impact Assessment and implementation of Environment Management Plan.