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Title: The Minister of Mines and Minister of Development of North Eastern Region laid a statement regarding setting up of Commission of inquiry on illegal mining.

THE MINISTER OF MINES AND MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): Madam, recently, due to rise in demand for iron ore, mining activity has increased manifold, particularly in the States of Orissa, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Goa.

â€¢ Due to a combination of reasons in the recent years the incidence of illegal mining has grown considerably. This problem is acquiring organised dimensions, and may lead to nexus with criminal and anti-national elements, in some of the States including those affected by Left Wing Extremism....(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: Please lay it on the Table of the House.

*SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE: I lay the rest of my statement on the Table of the House.

â€¢ Many reports clearly point to the fact that mining, raising, transportation and export of iron ore and manganese ore illegally or without lawful authority in the various States are taking place on a large scale.

â€¢ The Union Government has been sensitive to this problem and has been constantly advising State Governments to improve their regulatory systems. However, incidents of illegal mining in the country are still being reported.

â€¢ With a view to curb this menace, the Union Government has decided to set up a Commission of Inquiry under Section 3 of the Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952, which would primarily:

- inquire into and determine the nature and extent of illegal mining and trade and transportation of iron ore and manganese ore,

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- identify the persons, firms, companies concerned,

- inquire into and determine the extent to which the management, regulatory and monitoring systems have failed,

- inquire into the tampering of official records, including records relating to land and boundaries, and identify, as far as possible, the persons responsible for such tampering.

The Commission would submit its finding within 18 months.

In order to discharge its mandate, the Commission may take the assistance of any Central / State investigative agency or any other authority as it may deem it necessary to do so.

I am hopeful the Commission's recommendation would help the Government to take necessary steps to prevent illegal mining.*

(Placed in Library, See No. LT 2884/45/10)
