

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3553
TO BE ANSWERED ON 22.03.2023

Beach Sand Minerals

3553. SHRI ADALA PRABHAKARA REDDY:
SHRI MARGANI BHARAT:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware about the potential of the beach sand minerals in generating renewable energy and the ways it will help in development of the nation;
- (b) If so, the steps taken by the Government to promote the mining of beach sand minerals;
- (c) whether the Government is considering the proposal of Andhra Pradesh Government for reserving beach sand mineral areas in favour of Andhra Pradesh Mineral Development Corporation; and
- (d) If so, the details and current status thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (DR. JITENDRA SINGH):

- (a) Yes Sir. Government is aware of the potential of beach sand minerals in generating renewable energy and the ways it will help in development of the nation. In Beach Sand Minerals (BSM) ore, there occurs monazite, a prescribed substance as per Atomic Energy Act, 1962. Monazite contains Thorium, Uranium and Rare Earths (RE). After extraction of RE and its refining, Neodymium and Praseodymium are produced which find use in renewable energy.
- (b) IREL (India) Ltd., a CPSE under Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), has the capabilities to mine BSM ore, concentrate and upgrade the same to produce monazite, crack monazite to extract RE and further refine them to produce separated high pure RE.

A plant has been set up to process 10,000 tons of monazite which would result in production of around 5,000 tons of refined RE Oxide (REO). However, the existing mining leases cater to about 40% of the monazite feed requirement of the plant, resulting in production of about 2,000 tons of REO.

DAE has nominated IREL for three other leases. Execution of these mining leases by the State Government will supplement the feed requirement of the existing plant.

(c) & (d): Yes Sir. Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) has already nominated M/s. APMDC as a prospective lessee for grant of mining lease for 90.15 Ha in Bhimunipatnam deposit of Visakhapatnam District and 1978.471 Ha in Machilipatnam deposit of Krishna District. Now, Government of Andhra Pradesh submitted a revised proposal for nominating M/s. APMDC as prospective lessee for two proposals (670.77Ha and 239.08 Ha) in Srikurmam deposit in Srikakulam district in lieu of above mentioned Machilipatnam deposit. The same is under examination in the Department.
