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## Government notice illegal mining in Orissa - Mr BK Handique

Tuesday, 24 Nov, 2009

According to Shri BK Handique Minister of Mines and Minister of Development of North Eastern Region that some instances of illegal mining of iron ore and manganese ore in Keonjhar district of Orissa have come to the notice of the Government. The Indian Bureau of Mines inquiries has found evidence of illegal mining of 1957 tonnes of iron ore and 56453 tonnes of manganese ore, of a value of approximately INR 23.39 crores.

The State Government of Orissa has informed that

1. A Vigilance investigation is underway
2. Administrative enquiry is underway
3. The State Government has arrested 8 persons on August 12th 2009 who were subsequently released on bail.
4. State Level Task Force has been reconstituted under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary.
5. All the District Collectors have been directed to hold District Level Task Force meetings regularly, verify the lease hold areas and take appropriate action.
6. The state Level Enforcement Squad constituted earlier has now been strengthened and enforcement activities intensified.
7. The Department has introduced newly designed Transit Passes printed in Government Printing Press.

In a written reply in the Rajya Sabha he said, the State Government has also reported on November 16th 2009 that it has taken the following additional action in this matter:

1. 128 mining leases for various minerals including iron ore, manganese, chromite, limestone, dolomite and quartzite, where application for renewal of lease had been pending have been verified and mining operations suspended.
2. 482 licences granted by the State for trading and storage of minerals have been suspended and cancelled.
3. State level Enforcement squad is conducting intensive inspection of non grant areas to check for illegal mining.
4. The Mines Department in the State has begun verification of the mining lease boundaries for which remote sensing technology is also proposed to be used.
5. Four Committees have been constituted at State level for setting up integrated check gates, Revenue Intelligence, Study rationalization of weigh-bridges and Study to deploy IT application in mineral administration.
6. Filling up vacant post in the Mines Department of the State Government to enhance enforcement.

The Government has not come across any instance of clandestine transportation of iron ore, chromites and manganese into China and Bangladesh. However, the export of these minerals is guided by the Exim policy laid down by the Government.

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