

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.317
TO BE ANSWERED ON 03.02.2021

DEPOSITS OF LITHIUM

317.SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether initial geological explorations by the Government has confirmed sizeable deposits of Lithium, a strategic energy producing mineral, in certain reserves in the State of Karnataka;
- (b) whether presently India is dependent entirely on import of this mineral used in auto storage and other power packs; and
- (c) if so, the details of the estimated reserves of this mineral and the steps being taken to develop and commercially exploit the Lithium deposits?

ANSWER

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

(a)to(c)Preliminary surveys on surface and limited subsurface by Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD), a constituent unit of Department of Atomic Energy have shown presence of Lithium resources of 1,600 tonnes (inferred category) in the pegmatites of Marlagalla – Allapatna area, Mandya district, Karnataka.

Lithium is a key element for new technologies and finds its use in ceramics, glass, telecommunication and aerospace industries. The well-known uses of Lithium are in Lithium ion batteries, lubricating grease, high energy additive to rocket propellants, optical modulators for mobile phones and as convertor to tritium used as a raw material for thermonuclear reactions i.e. fusion. The thermonuclear application makes Lithium as "Prescribed substance" under the Atomic Energy Act, 1962 which permits AMD for exploration of Lithium in various geological domains of the country. Due to the continuously increasing demand of Lithium ion batteries, the requirement of Lithium has increased over last few years.

The significance and quantity of lithium resources in Marlagalla-Allapatna area, Mandya district, Karnataka may be established only after the completion of exploration in the entire area. Subsequently, plan for commercial exploitation of the lithium deposits can commence after the technical, social and economic feasibility studies in the area.
