

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO: 1440
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10.03.2016

MINING OF MONAZITE BY PRIVATE PLAYERS

1440. SHRI PALVAI GOVARDHAN REDDY:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Atomic Energy (Working of Mines, Minerals and Handling of Prescribed Substances) Rules prevent private players from mining Monazite;
- (b) whether Monazite and Thorium in any form considered as "Prescribed Substance" under the Atomic Energy Act, 1962, and prohibits acquisition, production, possession, use or export of this "Prescribed Substance";
- (c) if so, whether there is rampant illegal mining and export of beach sand containing Monazite from beaches of Tamil Nadu; and
- (d) if so, what action it has taken in this regard?

ANSWER

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

- (a)&(b) Yes, Sir. Since Monazite Contains Thorium, both Monazite and Thorium are coming within the purview the Prescribed substances under the Atomic Energy Act 1962 as amended from time to time. Since the other beach sand minerals and monazite (which contains thorium) occur together, companies handling beach sand minerals have to get a license under the Atomic Energy (Radiation Protection) Rules 2004 from the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB). As per the licensing conditions, the licensee, after separating the beach sand minerals has to dispose of the tailings, which contain monazite, within its Company premises or as backfill, depending on the monazite content.
- (c) No, Sir. However, there were some media reports on the subject, which were not based on any fact.
- (d) Does not arise in view of (c) above
