

Exclusive mining policy needed to spur economic activity in A.P.

Exclusive mining policy is the need of the hour to spur economic activity in Andhra Pradesh which is keen to mobilise more funds for its flagship programmes and loan waiver scheme.

Mining industry, which is currently facing many challenges owing to delay in sanctioning of mandatory permission from authorities, has sought government's support for generating employment opportunities in the State. Export duty of around 10 per cent has become another bane for the industry. Heavy mineral industries can have robust business activity in A.P. if both Central and State governments look into the grievances of the entrepreneurs, according to experts.

Mining Engineers Associ-



ation of India (MEAI) strongly feels that there is ample scope for proper utilisation of mineral resources in coastal region and establishment of new industries. The association observed that rigid laws, inordinate delay in sanctioning of permission and handing over of land to industries are the main reasons for the poor growth in the sector.

Association's national president Arijit Bagchi and other representatives have submitted a detailed memorandum to the government in this regard. They say heavy minerals such as ilmenite, zircon, rutile and garnet are widely available in the coastal belt and the minerals are used in pro-

Focus on mineral RESOURCES

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KONERU PRADEEP,
TSPL managing director



EXPERTS SAY LEGAL TANGLES HAVE HAMPERED GROWTH IN THE SECTOR

1 Mineral wealth in coastal region has not been properly explored

2 Heavy minerals such as ilmenite and garnet are widely available in coastal areas

3 They are used in production of paints, paper, ceramics, insulation, cosmetics et

4 Sand mining units waiting for incentives to expand their activities



duction of paints, paper, ceramics, abrasive, insulation, cosmetics, leather, glass, artificial gems, aircraft parts, ceramics, filtration media and artificial human joints.

According to them, major portion of mining area is under the possession of villagers and the industries are ready to pay compensation for the land. “Hassle free environment will attract more investment into heavy mineral industry. The government will have to ensure all facilities so that those steps would instil confidence among investors,” said Mr. Bagchi.

“Legal tangles should not hamper the growth of the industry. Flawless policies safeguarding the interests of all the stake holders would certainly pave the way for growth of the industry in Srikakulam district and other coastal regions,” he said. Several sand mining industries, including Trimex Sands Private Limited, are keen to expand their activities only after the an-

nouncement of incentives.

TSPL managing director Koneru Pradeep told *The Hindu* that the government's active support was necessary since prices have come down drastically for heavy minerals in the world market. “Mining activity should not be treated with suspicion. It will discourage new investments in this unexplored area,” he added.

The Department of Industries has also prepared a note explaining the opportunities for the industry in Srikakulam district which has a long coastline spreading 192 km from Pydibhimavaram to Itchapuram. DIC general manager B. Gopala Krishna Murthy said the government focused on Srikakulam for the promotion of industries in heavy minerals, just sector and solar power.

(Reporting by K. Srinivasa Rao)

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