

Govt. to constitute Mineral Foundation Trust in each district

The State Government has decided to constitute Himachal Pradesh District Mineral Foundation Trust for assisting and providing relief to affected people in mining areas. This Trust would not only provide relief to the affected people of the mining areas, but also ensure development and preservation of the mining affected area. With this crores of rupees would be available for the welfare of people and development of areas affected by mining activities in the State.

Stating this Industries Minister Shri Mukesh Agnihotri said here today that the State Cabinet in its meeting held on 22nd June, 2016 had approved Himachal Pradesh District Mineral Foundation Trust Rules which envisages establishing District Mineral Foundation Trust in each district of the State.

Shri Mukesh Agnihotri said that the Trust would be a non-profit body headed by Deputy Commissioner of each district with Conservator Forest, SE PWD, SE IPH, Chief Medical Officer, General Manager DIC, Mining Officer and four public representatives as its members. He said that the Trust would be established under the provisions of section 9 B of Mining and Mineral Amendment Act, 2015. He said that the main objective of establishing the Trust was to work for welfare of mining affected people or families and for improvement and development of the mining affected areas.

Industries Minister said that there were always certain directly and indirectly affected families or areas due to mining operations which have to be rehabilitated properly. He said that for ensuring their welfare and betterment, the Rules define the affected families, displaced families, directly affected areas and indirectly affected areas which would be the prime beneficiaries of the Trust Fund. He said that the Trust would have perennial source of income which would be charged from the lessees of major minerals and minor minerals at different rates. He said that lime stone was the main major mineral of the State and minor mineral includes sand, grit, stone etc.

Shri Agnihotri said that in case of lime stone mines, 10 per cent of the royalty paid would be charged extra and credited to the District Mineral Foundation Trust Fund from the leases granted after 12th January, 2015. In case of leases granted for limestone before 12th January, 2015, 30 per cent of the royalty paid shall be credited to the Trust Fund, he added. He said that these charges would be levied over and above the royalty to be paid to the Government.

Industries Minister said that in case of minor minerals, Rs. 10 per tonne of the minerals dispatched shall be charged over and above the royalty and credited to the Trust Fund. He said that the Trust Fund shall be spent on the purposes defined in the Rules and not less than 50 per cent shall be spent on the directly affected areas.

Shri Agnihotri said that the Trust Fund could also be spent to the extent of 20 per cent for providing direct monetary benefits to the directly affected persons in form

of cash to be distributed to the women head of the family on monthly or yearly basis.

He said that the balance funds could be used for improving basic amenities in the affected mining areas such drinking water supply schemes, undertaking environment preservation and pollution control measure, health care, education, construction of toilet blocks, care of aged and disabled people, skill development of livelihood support, irrigation scheme, rain water harvesting system or any other major works for improving the ecology and environment of the region.

Shri Agnihotri said that the annual plan of works would be approved by the Committee headed by Deputy Commissioner in each district. The same Committee would also ensure execution of works in transparent manner and would be accountable for maintaining accounts& ensuring expenditure as per the objective defined in the Rules, he added.