

treat the non-conventional iron resources, like Siderite and Laterite, which had significant quantity available in West Bengal. It was emerged from the exchange of information, there was a vast quantity of Siderite resources as Ironstone Shale in Bardhaman district in the tune of 508 million tonnes as Measured Resources (331) with average iron content 40-45% and 3032 million tonnes of Indicated Resource (332). It was commercially exploited by the Bengal Iron & Steel Works for the first Blast Furnace Operation in 1874 before the discovery of large BIF deposits in Singhbhum district of Jharkhand. Further, Laterite Iron ores occurring as cappings over Precambrian are reported to contain iron in significant level (28-59%).

It was also emerged from the discussion that the State of West Bengal possesses non-conventional iron ore but the metallurgical process in commercial scale is yet to develop for meaningful utilization of the said resources. So, a R&D is required to develop the metallurgical process as a follow up of mapping of the area, sampling and analysis to locate the areas of target. It was advised by the members that, while undertaking prospecting for low grade iron ore at Belpahari in W. Midnapur district, the State Govt. should approach the IBM to take up a pilot project to fix the parameters of elements like silica and phosphorous along with the threshold value of iron (45% Fe₂O₃). They also opined that manganese or aluminium, in association with the iron ore, may add value to the development of the resources.

(Action: DMM)

The Director, DMMWB informed the House that a collaborative exploration programme on Iron-Manganese Ore in the areas under P.S. Belpahari, Dist. Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal has been taken up jointly with WBMDTC Ltd. Preliminary mapping, sampling and analysis of selected samples are being carried out in F.S. 2014-15 to have an overview of the potentiality of the area and for locating the zones of interest and of economic significance more specifically for deeper probing. He added that 50% of the target has already been achieved.

42.04.04 :

GSI opined that the State Govt. might launch a programme for China Clay at Pachami in Md. Bazar PS in Birbhum district where GSI had found a 40 m thick clay bed over coal.

(Action: WBMDTCL/ DMM)