

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF MINES  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 130**  
ANSWERED ON 04.12.2023

**STEPS TO EASE MINING OPERATIONS OF SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED MINERS**

130. SHRI JAGGESH:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Government has received representation from Industry associations, particularly small mining lease holders and MSMEs for further rationalization of penalties for a range of offences to scale up mineral production in the country;
- (b) whether Government has started consultations on amendments to the Mineral Conservation and Development (Amendment) Rules, 2021 and the Minerals (Other than Atomic and Hydro Carbons Energy Minerals) Concession (Fourth Amendment) Rules, 2021 for rationalization of penalties;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) other steps taken by Government to provide ease of mining operations for small and medium sized minors to scale up the mineral production?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF MINES, COAL AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS  
(SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI)

(a): Yes, Sir. Ministry of Mines has received representations from certain Industry associations for further rationalization of penalties for small miners for contravention of rules.

(b) & (c): Yes, Sir. Ministry of Mines has invited comments / suggestions on 26.10.2023 from the general public, State Governments, mining industry stakeholders, industry associations, and other persons and entities concerned, for amendment of the Mineral Conservation and Development Rules, 2017 [MCDR 2017] and the Minerals (Other than Atomic and Hydro Carbons Energy Minerals) Concession Rules, 2016 [MCR 2016] for rationalizing penalties for small miners having leased area of upto 25 hectares and having per annum approved production capacity of upto 2 lakh tonnes.

(d): In order to improve the ease of doing business, the Ministry of Mines has decriminalized 49 rules under MCR 2016 and 24 rules under MCDR 2017 on 02.11.2021 and 03.11.2021 respectively. Prior to these amendments, contravention of any of the provisions of MCDR 2017 and MCR 2016 was punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years or with fine which may extend to five lakh rupees, or with both. Further, 27 rules under Atomic Mineral Concession Rules, 2016 have also been decriminalized on 22.09.2023.

In order to provide ease of mining operations for small and medium sized miners, the Ministry of Mines has implemented several reforms such as removing the requirement of submission of daily returns by the lease holders, allowing lease holders having leased area of less than 50 Hectares to submit satellite images instead of drone survey of the leased area and allowing employment of part-time mining engineer and a part-time geologist for category A mines having lease area below 25 Hectares and for category B mines.

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