

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3274
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21.08.2025

Illegal sand mining and preventive measures

3274. SHRI ANIL KUMAR YADAV MANDADI

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has identified sites across the country where illegal sand mining has taken place or is currently taking place;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; (c) whether Government has formulated any comprehensive guidelines to prevent illegal sand mining;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) to (e): Sand is a minor mineral under Section 3(e) of the Mines and Minerals (Development & Regulation) (MMDR) Act, 1957. Section 15 of the MMDR Act, 1957, empowers the State Governments to make rules for regulating the grant of minor mineral concessions.

The definition of illegal mining is provided in Mineral Concession rules 2016 notified under MMDR Act, 1957 by Ministry of Mines. Section 23C MMDR Act, 1957 empowers the State Governments to frame rules to prevent illegal mining, transportation and storage of minerals and for purposes connected therewith.

The MMDR Act, 1957 was amended through the MMDR Amendment Act, 2015, which came into effect from 12th January, 2015, wherein Section 30B and 30C read with section 21 and 23C, inter-alia, provides stringent punitive provisions for combating illegal mining. Illegal mining has been made punishable with imprisonment for a term, which may extend to five years and with fine, which may extend to five lakh rupees per hectare of the area. Provisions have been made for setting up of Special Courts for the purpose of providing speedy trial of offences relating to illegal mining.

The Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has issued the Enforcement & Monitoring Guidelines for sand mining in January, 2020, supplemental to Sustainable Sand Management Guidelines, 2016, to regulate the Sand Mining in the Country from its identification to its final end-use by the consumers and the general public and to control the instance of illegal mining through IT-enabled services and latest technologies for

surveillance of the sand mining at each step. This document serves as a guideline for collection of critical information for enforcement of the regulatory provision(s) and it also highlights the essential infrastructural requirements necessary for effective monitoring for Sustainable Sand Mining and to control illegal mining.

MoEF&CC has also taken several steps to ensure adherence to the environmental safeguards due to mining of minerals. These include, inter-alia, mandating the requirement of prior environmental clearance under the provisions of Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006, as amended from time to time.
