

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF MINES  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 924**  
ANSWERED ON 08.12.2025

**IMPACT OF AMENDMENTS TO FOREST CONSERVATION RULES ON MINING**

924 DR. V. SIVADASAN:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of proposals for critical-mineral mining cleared under the recent amendments to forest conservation rules since their notification;
- (b) the total forest area approved for diversion for such mining during the last three years, State-wise; and
- (c) whether any environmental or biodiversity impact assessments were waived, modified, or undertaken under the revised procedure, and the steps being taken to ensure ecological and community safeguards?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF COAL AND MINES  
(SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)

(a) & (b): Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has notified the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Amendment Rules, 2025 on 31.08.2025. The said amendment allows compensatory afforestation over degraded forest land (two times the forest area proposed for diversion) for mining projects of critical and strategic minerals listed under Part-D of the First Schedule to the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957.

Out of the 34 critical mineral blocks auctioned by the Central Government, 29 mineral blocks have been auctioned for composite licence and five mineral blocks have been auctioned for mining lease. In case of composite licence, forest diversion is not required in the exploration phase. Out of the five blocks auctioned for mining lease, only two mineral blocks involve forest area. The bidders are required to obtain Forest Clearance for diversion of forest land for mining within the prescribed timelines.

(c): MoEF&CC has issued guidelines on 08.09.2025 specifying that the mining projects of critical and strategic minerals shall be exempted from Public Consultation under the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) notification for the purpose of grant of Environmental Clearance and will be appraised at the Central level irrespective of the lease area involved in the proposal. The EIA/Environment Management Plan of such mining projects

incorporate appropriate mitigation and environment management measures for the local habitations/populace- creation of social infrastructure like medical facilities, drinking water facilities, etc., skill development and employment opportunities, public grievance redressal system, etc. to enable a comprehensive appraisal of the proposal.

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