

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COAL

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1807
ANSWERED ON 09.03.2026

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE OF COAL MINES

1807 SMT. RAJANI ASHOKRAO PATIL:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

- (a) number of coal mines operating without full environmental clearances;
- (b) violations reported relating to land water and forest norms;
- (c) penalties imposed and remedial measures undertaken; and
- (d) reasons for environmental safeguards appearing diluted despite repeated assurances of sustainable mining ?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR COAL AND MINES
(SHRI SATISH CHANDRA DUBEY)

(a) Coal mining projects are covered under the EIA Notification, 2006 issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change under the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. As per the extant regulatory framework, prior Environmental Clearance (EC) is mandatory before commencement of any new coal mining project, as well as for expansion or modernization beyond the prescribed threshold limits.

In view of the above statutory provisions, coal mines are not permitted to operate without obtaining requisite Environmental Clearance.

(b) &(c) Environmental non-compliances relating to land and water are dealt with under Sections 5, 15 and 19 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 read with Rule 4 of the Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986. The action is guided by the Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) issued vide Office Memorandum dated 25.11.2022 for post-environmental clearance monitoring and compliance, which prescribes a structured mechanism including seeking clarification, issuance of Show Cause Notice and concluding action. Further, State Pollution Control Boards are empowered to take remedial and penal action in cases of violation of Consent to Establish and Consent to Operate conditions in accordance with the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 and the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974.

The State Government implements the provisions of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 in accordance with the statutory provisions provided in the Adhiniyam and

Rules and Guidelines issued under the Adhiniyam. In case any violation over forest area is reported, matter is to be dealt as per the provisions of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and Rules made thereunder.

(d) Environmental safeguards governing coal mining activities have not been diluted. Coal mining projects operate within a comprehensive regulatory framework under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) and the concerned State regulatory authorities. Prior to the commencement of any new or expansion coal mining project, Environmental Clearance (EC) is mandatorily obtained in accordance with the EIA Notification, 2006. This process requires the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) to identify potential environmental impacts and prescribe mitigation measures. ECs are granted with general as well as project-specific conditions aimed at minimizing adverse environmental impacts.

In addition, MoEF&CC has notified environmental standards for coal mines, and compliance is monitored by the State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/Pollution Control Committees (PCCs), which regulate industrial activities through the grant of Consent to Establish (CTE) and Consent to Operate (CTO) under the provisions of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.

Further, coal companies have been adopting several initiatives to strengthen sustainable mining practices. These include alignment with the Sustainable Development Framework for the coal sector, implementation of Progressive Mine Closure Plans with concurrent reclamation, enhancement of green cover beyond statutory requirements, water stewardship measures such as mine water reuse and groundwater recharge, and integration of renewable energy within mining infrastructure.
