

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINES
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2667
ANSWERED ON 16.03.2026

**LIVELIHOOD CRISIS OF TRADITIONAL STONE CARVERS (SANG TARAASH)
OF SANDERKOOT, BANDIPORA**

2667. SHRI CHOWDRY MOHAMMAD RAMZAN:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware of the severe livelihood crisis faced by traditional stone carvers (sang taraash) of Sanderkoot in Bandipora, Jammu and Kashmir, following the mining ban imposed in 2019 which has halted access to essential devere stone and endangered a centuries-old cultural craft;
- (b) the number of families affected, whether rehabilitation, financial assistance or skill-development measures have been provided; and
- (c) whether Government proposes to introduce a sustainable and regulated mining policy or other remedial steps to safeguard artisans' livelihoods and preserve this traditional heritage?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c): As per section 3(e) of the Mines and Minerals (Development & Regulation) Act, 1957 [MMDR Act], building stones are defined as minor mineral. Section 15 of the MMDR Act empower State Governments to make rules for regulating the grant of quarry leases, mining leases or other mineral concessions in respect of minor minerals and for purposes connected therewith. In respect of Jammu & Kashmir (J&K), the J&K Minor Mineral Concession, Storage, Transportation of Minerals and Prevention of Illegal Mining Rules, 2016, provide for grant of mineral concessions for minor minerals including quarries.
