

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINES
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2470
ANSWERED ON 21.12.2022
DEPOSITS OF COPPER

2470. SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the new deposits of copper in the Country are drying up and the type of breakthrough technologies that transformed other commodities have failed to materialize for copper;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the facts in this regard;
- (c) whether the demand for critical minerals such as copper, nickel and cobalt are expected to grow over the next three decades;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Government to provide access to capital and technology on competitive terms in the Copper Mining Industries in the country?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b): As per available information, the reserves/resources of minerals are dynamic in nature. Mineral assessment/discoveries is a continuous process and a number of exploration agencies like GSI, MECL, AMDER, State DGM, State/Central Undertakings and private sector companies are engaged in exploration of mineral deposits in the country. As per National Mineral Inventory (NMI), total resources of Copper ore in the country as on 01.04.2020 is estimated about 1661 million tonnes (containing 12197 thousand tonnes of copper metal) which increased from the level about 1511 million tonnes (containing 12158 thousand tonnes of copper metal) as on 01.04.2015.

(c) & (d): Demand for critical minerals in India is expected to grow due to increased thrust of Govt. of India towards "make in India" and "Smart City" programme, Atmanirbhar Bharat, 100 GW target for Renewable Energy, PLI schemes for Consumer electronics industry, accelerated growth for electric vehicles etc. and which will drive the demand of critical minerals in the country. Critical minerals are essential to Electric Vehicles technology and its supporting infrastructure, and the increase in the electric vehicles in the market will have a substantial impact on critical minerals demand.

(e): HCL is the only copper miner in India. For the growth of copper mining in India, HCL has executing mine expansion plan to enhance copper ore production from 4 million tonne to 12 million tonne per annum by F.Y 2028-2029. To access latest technology on competitive terms in Copper mining, HCL is adopting State of the art technologies like geophysical exploration method, drone survey, paste fill technology in its underground mines etc.
