

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINES
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2520
ANSWERED 21.12.2022

COPPER COMPLEX IN KHETRI

† 2520 SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) Whether the copper complex located in Khetri district of Rajasthan is closed;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Union Government is contemplating to restart this copper complex at the Government level by providing new technology in the field of copper;
- (d) if so, the time by which this work is likely to be completed; and
- (e) if not, the reasons, therefor?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b): No, Sir. Khetri Copper Complex (KCC) situated at Khetri in Jhunjhunu District of Rajasthan is operational. At KCC, Kolihan and Khetri mines including Banwas block are operational. The entire ore so produced is processed at KCC Concentrator plant, which is also operational to produce Copper Ore concentrate. However, Khetri Smelter and Refinery plant are non-operational since 2008 and have been permanently closed due to following reasons:

- The KCC concentrate grade was also low which required blending of high grade concentrate to operate the Smelter plant which was imported by Hindustan Copper Limited.
- The cost of conversion of concentrate to refined copper was very high owing to low capacity of the plant compare to the private entities.
- The plant was requiring additional investment for its overhauling in 2008 to the tune of around Rs. 70 Crore and of Rs. 300 Crore investment for replacement of two acid plants at KCC in order to comply the pollution norms.
- Water crisis is a perennial problem at KCC.

(c): No, Sir. Though, the Government has plan to expand the mine capacity at KCC in a phase-wise manner, there is no plan for fresh investment in Smelting & Refining operation at KCC.

(d): Does not arise.

(e): The modern economic size Smelter Refinery plant should have production capacity more than 1 lakh tonne per annum refined copper production and the approx. cost of such plant involves investment in the range of Rs.6000 Crore. The future mine production capacity enhancement plan of Govt. at KCC is much less than to feed modern sized plant. The deterrent factors for such a mega investment project at KCC are:

- Locational disadvantage (away from port)
- Water crisis
- Requirement of blending with high grade concentrate to use the KCC concentrate in the Smelter
- Least potential for exploitation of by products.