

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**  
**MINISTRY OF COAL**  
**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2906**  
**ANSWERED ON 20.12.2023**

**Stowing of Coal Mines**

**2906. SHRI MAHESH SAHOO:**

Will the Minister of **Coal** be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the rules with regard to sand stowing of coal mines;
- (b) whether the Government carries out surveys on regular basis to determine if sand stowing is being done on time as it is related to the safety of people in a large area;
- (c) whether there is any specific time frame for filling up of abandoned mines, if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the total area of abandoned coal mines in Odisha yet to be filled by sand stowing?

**ANSWER**

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

(a): The details of rules with regard to sand stowing as per Coal Mine Regulation (CMR) – 2017 are as under:

“Regulation 112(1) of CMR 2017 - No extraction or reduction of pillars shall be commenced, conducted or carried out except with the previous permission in writing of the Regional Inspector and in accordance with such conditions as he may specify therein.

Regulation No.112 (9) of CMR 2017- Where the voids formed as a result of extraction are stowed with sand or other materials, the owner, agent or manager shall, on or before the 10<sup>th</sup> day of every month submit to the Regional Inspector a statement giving the quantity of coal raised and the quantity of sand or other material stowed in every district during the preceding month.

Regulation No.124 (12) of CMR 2017- Where sand or other material is stowed or a pack is formed for the purpose of support, it shall be packed or made as tight against the roof as practicable over its whole area.”

(b): Yes, Sir. The status of stowing is being monitored by the competent mine officials and the Report on Stowing Operations is sent to the concerned Regional Inspector of DGMS every month as per reg 112(9) of CMR - 2017.

(c): Stowing or back-filling in mines is carried out wherever it is necessary as per the requirements.

As per “Guidelines for Preparation, Formulation, Submission, Processing, Scrutiny, Approval and Revision of Mining Plan for coal and Lignite Blocks” by MoC issued on 29.05.2020 in the time scheduling for abandonment operation, it is mentioned that post closure period shall be taken as 3 (three) years for underground mines and Opencast mines having stripping ratio lesser than 6 m<sup>3</sup> per tonne and 5 (five) years for Opencast mines having stripping ratio more than 6 m<sup>3</sup> per tonne.

(d): MCL, a subsidiary of CIL, under Ministry of Coal operating in state of Odisha has two discontinued below-ground mines; namely Handidhua Colliery and Deulbera Colliery. Sand filling in identified areas (identified by DGMS) of Handidhua and Deulbera Colliery is regularly going on. In rest of the mines, stowing is not planned. Status of sand stowing of these mines are as under:

1. Handidhua Colliery: 1,41,878 m<sup>3</sup> (24.25%) of sand stowing yet to be filled; 4,43,122 m<sup>3</sup> (75.75%) of sand filling completed till 30<sup>th</sup> November,2023 against requirement of 5,85,000 m<sup>3</sup>.
2. Deulbera Colliery: 1,96,530 m<sup>3</sup> (59.48%) of sand stowing yet to be filled; 1,33,870 m<sup>3</sup> (40.52%) of sand filling completed till 30<sup>th</sup> November,2023 against requirement of 3,30,400 m<sup>3</sup>.