

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINES
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO- 1832
ANSWERED ON 21.09.2020
KHETRI COPPER COMPLEX

†1832 SHRI HANUMAN BENIWAL:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Copper Complex situated in Khetri of Jhunjhunu district of Rajasthan is not operational;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to resume operations of this copper complex at the Government level to make the country self reliant in the copper sector by providing new technology;
- (d) if so, the time by which it is likely to be done; 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 is 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 low which requires 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 compared 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.
