

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COAL
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.444
TO BE ANSWERED ON 03.02.2021**

Clearance for starting coal mines

444. SHRI BASANTA KUMAR PANDA

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

- (a) the details of the steps proposed to be taken by the Government towards simplification of all the necessary clearance processes required to start the coal mines in the country; and
- (b) the details of the steps taken by the Government to improve the coal mining process during the last five years?

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

(a) Union Government has launched Single Window Clearance Portal on 11.01.2021. It is an unified platform that facilitates grant of clearances and approvals required for starting a coal mine in India.

Presently, about 19 major approval or clearances are required to be obtained before starting a coal mine in the country such as approval of Mining Plan and Mine Closure Plan, Grant of Mining Lease, Environment and Forest Clearances, Wild Life Clearance, Clearances related to Safety, Environment, Rehabilitation of project affected families, welfare of workers etc. These approvals or clearances are granted either by central or state governments. Project proponents were required to approach different administrative Ministries and Government Departments separately to apply for the requisite clearances leading to delay in operationalization of coal mines.

Now, the complete process shall be facilitated through Single Window Clearance Portal, which will map not only the relevant application formats, but also process flow for grant of approval or clearances. The Mining Plan module of the portal was launched on 11.01.2021 and the modules related to other clearances will be added in phases.

(b) After cancellation of 204 coal blocks by Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in 2015, reallocation of coal blocks were carried out under Coal Mines(Special Provisions) Act, 2015 through a first ever e-auction for the coal mines. The process of Auction was transparent as the auction of coal mines are being conducted through e-auction mode on electronic platform created by MSTC Limited (a Government of India enterprise).

Further, The Mineral Laws (Amendment) Act (March 2020) has been passed which amends the previous Mines & Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 and the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015 with an aim to further improve the participation of private entities into the coal sector. Now, the companies need not possess any prior coal mining experience in India in order to participate in the auction of coal and lignite blocks.

Unlike previously, there will be a composite license providing for both prospecting and mining activities. Also, the restriction on the use of coal mined by such companies has been removed. Companies will be allowed to carry on coal mining operations for their own consumption, sale or for any other purposes, as may be specified by the Central Government. Further, the prior approval of the Central Government will not be required in granting reconnaissance permit, prospecting license, or mining lease for coal and lignite, in certain cases.
