

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF MINES  
**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2797**  
ANSWERED ON 03.08.2022

**NATIONAL MINERAL EXPLORATION TRUST**

2797. SHRI P.V. MIDHUN REDDY:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is contemplating to make the National Mineral Exploration Trust (NMET) as an autonomous body;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) the details of the progress that has been made so far in this regard;
- (d) whether the Government has taken any other steps to boost mineral exploration in the country; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

**ANSWER**

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

(a) & (b): The MMDR Act, 1957 was amended in March 2021 and now the amended Act mandates NMET as a nonprofit autonomous body. The autonomy of functioning will give the NMET the necessary flexibility to achieve its desired objectives.

(c): Ministry of Mines has received approval from Department of Expenditure (DoE) to create 12 new posts for NMET.

(d) & (e): Ministry of Mines has taken the following steps to boost the mineral exploration in the country-

1. The MMDR Act 1957 was amended in March 2021 to make provision for funding of private exploration agencies from National Mineral Exploration Trust (NMET). So far, nine agencies have been notified under the second proviso to Section 4(1) of the MMDR Act.
2. Geological Survey of India has given thrust on Pan-India mapping projects like National Geochemical Mapping, National Geophysical Mapping, National Aero-Geophysical Mapping and Specialized Thematic Mapping programmes which are expected to contribute immensely to delineate new potential areas for further systematic mineral exploration.
3. OGP area has been updated with incorporation of more baseline and exploration data and has been increased to 6.88 lakh sq.km for 18 minerals from a previous figure of 5.71 lakh sq.km for 10 minerals.
4. Following MEMC Amendment Rules 2021, 252 Geological Memorandums have been handed over to the concerned State Governments for auctioning as composite licence.

5. NMET has streamlined the process of sanction and release of funds for fast implementation of exploration projects. A Scheme of partial reimbursement of exploration expenses for Composite Licenses (CL) holders has been formulated for exploration of certain minerals. NMET provides financial assistance for strengthening of exploration infrastructure of Central Government organizations & State DGMs/DMGs.

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