

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINES
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2573
ANSWERED ON 07.08.2024

COLLAPSE OF QUARRIES IN KANNUR, KERALA

2573. SHRI K SUDHAKARAN:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the collapse of two quarries in Vattipram near Koothuparambu in Kannur that resulted in a mudslide which caused significant destruction to properties and loss of life;
- (b) whether the Government is planning to conduct any inquiry into the indiscriminate quarrying in the hills of this region;
- (c) if so, the details of the actions taken by the Ministry to contain the issue that has even taken many lives over the years and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether the Union Government has issued any directions to the State Government on the regulation of such quarries, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the names and total number of private parties that have been given permit for mining in Kerala?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF COAL AND MINES
(SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)

(a) to (c) As per Section 15 of MMDR Act, 1957, the State Governments are empowered to make rules, by a notification in Official Gazette, for regulating the grant of quarry leases, mining leases or other mineral concessions in respect of minor minerals and for purposes connected therewith. Accordingly, Government of Kerala has framed the Kerala Minor Mineral Concession Rules, 1967.

As per the information received from Government of Kerala, on 21.07.2024, a collapse of overburden soil occurred in an abandoned quarry located at Vattiparam in Mangattidam Village, Kannur District. Quarrying operations in the area ceased twenty years ago. Currently, the abandoned quarry is inundated with water, reaching depth of over 25 meters. When the soil collapsed into the water, a surge of mud and loose rock fragments erupted, completely destroying the roof of one house and damaging the roof of another. There have been no casualties reported from the incident and the affected residents have been relocated to a relief camp. The water accumulated in the abandoned quarry has been pumped outside using a motor pump. This matter has

been discussed in a meeting of the District Disaster Management Authority, and the District Administration of Kannur has taken steps to provide relief to the affected individuals.

(d) The provisions for occupational safety & health for persons employed in the mines have been made in the Mines Act 1952 and rules & regulations framed thereunder. DGMS under Ministry of Labour & Employment, issues circulars from time to time based on the accidents and the technological advancements in the mining method and the machinery. Directorate General of Mines Safety (DGMS), regularly inspects the mines registered with Shram-Suvidha Portal. Based on inspections, actions like pointing out contraventions, temporary stoppages of a mine or part thereof; serving the improvement notice and Prohibitory Orders to rectify the contraventions of statute observed during the course of inspections, are taken. State Authorities are also suitably addressed in case of serious violations.

On 05.08.2024, in response to a request from the District Disaster Management Authority, officials from the State Disaster Management Authority, the DGMS, and the Mining and Geology Department of Government of Kerala conducted an inspection of the affected area.

(e) At present, there are 527 permitted quarries in the State of Kerala.
