

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINES
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 376
ANSWERED ON 27.11.2024

RECYCLING OF IMPORTANT MINERALS

†376 SHRI DARSHAN SINGH CHOUDHARY:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) the steps taken to monitor the acquisition of important mineral resources;
- (b) the detail of schemes formulated for domestic production and recycling of important minerals; and
- (c) whether the Government proposes to launch a Critical Minerals Mission and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a): The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 [MMDR Act, 1957] was amended through MMDR Amendment Act, 2015 with effect from 12.01.2015. The Central Government has introduced the timelines in the Mineral (Auction) Rules, 2015 for execution of mining lease from the date of grant of Letter of Intent to the preferred bidders which are selected through auction. Further, timelines have been prescribed for commencement of production and dispatch from the date of execution of the mining lease. Regular review meetings are held with the State Governments to monitor and expedite the operationalization of auctioned mines.

(b): The MMDR Act was amended through the MMDR Amendment Act, 2021 with effect from 28.03.2021 with the objective of *inter-alia* increasing mineral production and time bound operationalization of mines, increasing employment and investment in the mining sector, maintaining continuity in mining operations after change of lessee and increasing the pace of exploration and auction of mineral resources.

Some of the major reforms introduced through the said amendment include the following:

(i) Removed the distinction between captive and merchant mines by allowing all captive mines to sell upto 50% of the minerals produced during the year after meeting the requirement of attached plant subject to the payment of additional amount as prescribed under sixth schedule of the MMDR Act.

(ii) Removed end-use restriction for future auctions to encourage participation of more bidders in auctions and facilitate increased pace of auctions.

(iii) All the valid rights, approvals, clearances, etc. granted to the previous lessee in respect of a mine shall continue to be valid on expiry or termination of lease and such clearances shall be transferred to the successful bidder of the mining lease selected through auction.

(iv) To ensure ease of doing business, restrictions on transfer of mineral concessions for non-auctioned mines have been removed.

Thereafter, the Central Government has amended the MMDR Act, 1957 through the MMDR Amendment Act, 2023 with effect from 17.08.2023. Through the said amendment the Central Government has been empowered to exclusively auction mining lease and composite licence for 24 critical minerals listed in the new Part-D of the First Schedule to the said Act which includes minerals such as Cobalt, Graphite, Lithium, Nickel, Tantalum, Titanium etc.

The Central Government has unveiled the National Non-ferrous Metal Scrap Recycling Framework, 2020 with the objective to use life cycle management approach for better efficiency in mineral value chain process. It envisages bringing both product and processing stewardship to enhance Non-Ferrous Metal recycling.

(c): The Hon'ble Finance Minister has announced the launch of the Critical Mineral Mission in the Union Budget 2024-25 on 23rd July, 2024. The Mission aims to strengthen India's Critical Mineral value chain encompassing all stages, starting from mineral exploration, mining to beneficiation, processing, and recovery from end-of-life products and ensure self-sufficiency in meeting the industrial demands.
