

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 120
TO BE ANSWERED ON 08.12.2025

Forest Clearance for Critical Mineral Extraction

*120 . SHRI BALABHADRA MAJHI:
SHRI NALIN SOREN:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) the provisions made by the Government to prevent misuse of the simplified clearance process for mining of critical minerals in the forest areas of the country particularly in the States of Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand including Dumka Lok Sabha Constituency, Rajasthan including Bhiwani-Mahendragarh regions and Madhya Pradesh particularly in Sidhi, Lok Sabha Constituency along with the third-party mechanisms set up to monitor compliance;
- (b) the reasons behind further simplification of forest clearances for extraction of critical minerals along with the studies conducted to assess the environmental impact on biodiversity in these areas;
- (c) whether the Government has finalized the agencies or independent institutions responsible for carrying out verification of compensatory afforestation involving critical mineral mining; and
- (d) if so, the arrangements made to ensure the ecological quality of the reclaimed/replanted areas/lands?

ANSWER

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI BHUPENDER YADAV)

(a) to (d): A Statement is laid on the table of the House.

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (D) OF LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 120 TO BE ANSWERED ON 8.12.2025 ON “FOREST
CLEARANCE FOR CRITICAL MINERAL EXTRACTION” BY SHRI
BALABHADRA MAJHI AND SHRI NALIN SOREN**

(a) & (b) Critical minerals are vital for clean-energy technologies, electronics, defence preparedness, and the nation’s economic security. Mining of such minerals in forest areas follows the clearance processes as provided under the applicable statutes to strike a balance between nation’s strategic needs with ecological safeguards. The process of forest clearance involves the same procedures as prescribed for non-critical minerals, which include requirements for Compensatory Afforestation (CA), payment of Net Present Value (NPV), and implementation of site-specific mitigation measures. Likewise, provisions of Environmental Impact Assessment Notification, 2006, as amended, mandates comprehensive appraisal by the concerned sectoral Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC)/State Level Expert Appraisal Committee (SEAC) and preparation of corresponding Environment Management Plan involving environmental impact assessments, covering biodiversity, ecosystems, and other ecological parameters while granting environment clearance. The project proponents need to ensure that adequate financial and other resources are earmarked for the effective implementation of the Environment Management Plan.

(c) & (d) The monitoring of clearances granted by the Ministry for mining, including critical minerals in forest areas, is well-defined and undertaken by State/UT agencies and departments. The monitoring of such proposals is also assigned to Regional Offices of the Ministry. As per Ministry’ notification dated 29.08.2025, compliance monitoring of conditions stipulated in the approvals or clearances granted by the Ministry may also be verified through registered environment auditors.

Further, for compensatory afforestation, monitoring of plantations is carried out as per the procedures laid down in the Compensatory Afforestation Fund (CAF) Act, 2016 and its Rules by the National and State CAMPA Authorities ensuring transparency, accountability, and effective oversight.
