

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 272
TO BE ANSWERED ON 02.02.2026

Exemption to Mining or Expansion Projects

272. SHRI ROBERT BRUCE C:
SHRI MURASOLI S:

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

- (a) whether the Government has issued any Office Memorandum exempting certain categories of mining or expansion projects from the mandatory process of public consultation and environmental public hearing under the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) framework;
- (b) if so, the details of such exemptions, the rationale behind them and the categories of projects covered;
- (c) whether the Government has received objections or representations from environmental experts and civil society organisations expressing concern that such exemptions dilute environmental safeguards and deny affected communities an opportunity to raise their concerns;
- (d) if so, the response of the Union Government thereto; and
- (e) whether the Government proposes to review or withdraw such exemptions in the interest of environmental protection, transparency and public participation?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) to (e) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has issued an Office Memorandum (OM) dated 08.09.2025 on “Fast tracking of projects involving Mining of Critical/Strategic and Atomic Minerals,” exempting the related projects from public consultation requirement under Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006. The OM was issued in terms of the existing provision at clause 7(III)(i)(f) of the EIA Notification, which exempts projects relating to national defence, security or other strategic considerations from public consultation keeping in view the importance of critical/strategic and atomic minerals for meeting India’s energy transition, defence preparedness, space research, and nuclear power programme.

The Government has not received any representations or objections from environmental experts or civil society organisations regarding the exemptions in question. The Government remains committed to ensuring environmental protection, transparency, and public participation within the existing regulatory framework.
