

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINES
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. †5320
ANSWERED ON 25.03.2026

GSI NEXT GENERATION PORTAL

†5320. SHRI JASWANTSINH SUMANBHAI BHABHOR:
SHRI MUKESHKUMAR CHANDRAKAANT DALAL:
SHRI DAMODAR AGRAWAL:
DR. BHOLA SINGH:
DR. HEMANT VISHNU SAVARA:
SHRI VISHNU DAYAL RAM:
SHRI ANANTA NAYAK:
SHRI MAHESH KASHYAP:
SHRI KHAGEN MURMU:
SHRI DHARAMBIR SINGH:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has successfully launched the GSI Next-Generation (NG) Portal to provide Industry and research institutions cloud-enabled, AI-based data analysis for mineral exploration and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the manner in which the National Geoscience Data Repository (NGDR) portal has increased investment and improved the Ease of Doing Business benefiting even industrial States like Gujarat;
- (c) the success milestones of the Tranche-II Exploration Licence (EL) auctions and the number of private firms that have been onboarded for deep-seated mineral search;
- (d) whether the National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust (NMEDT) has successfully completed its target of 327 exploration projects as of early 2026 and if so, the details thereof;
- (e) the steps taken to strengthen private sector participation in mineral exploration in the country;
- (f) whether the Government has taken steps to strengthen mineral exploration and data accessibility in Odisha particularly in Keonjhar Lok Sabha constituency and if so, the details thereof;
- (g) whether any mineral exploration or geological surveys are proposed in Haryana including Bhiwani-Mahendergarh region and if so, the details thereof; and
- (h) the details of steps taken by the Government to promote rare earth mineral exploration in the Country?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR COAL AND MINES
(SHRI SATISH CHANDRA DUBEY)

(a): Yes. The Next-Generation (NG) Portal of Geological Survey of India (GSI) has been launched on 12.02.2026.

(b): The National Geoscience Data Repository (NGDR) portal hosts over 18,400 exploration and baseline reports along with 47 map services as well as spatial data layers generated by various stakeholder agencies. The NGDR portal has improved the Ease of Doing Business, benefiting even industrial States like Gujarat, by providing a centralized digital platform for seamless and free access to geoscience & mineral exploration reports and datasets on a single geospatial platform to both public and private stakeholders, thereby enhancing data accessibility and transparency. The portal is widely utilized by the Notified Exploration Agencies including private exploration agencies, for informed decision-making in developing new exploration project proposals for submission to National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust (NMEDT) for funding. Further, the NGDR portal is also used by bidders of Composite Licence (CL) and Exploration Licence (EL) to analyse and ascertain the prospects of the CL/EL blocks before submission of their bids.

(c): The Tranche-II for EL blocks was launched on 12.02.2026.

(d): Yes. As on date 327 projects have been completed through funding by the NMEDT. The details of these projects are as follows:

S.No.	Nature of Project	No. of Projects
1.	Baseline Survey projects	09
2.	Mineral exploration projects	302
3.	Procurement of machinery/ laboratory equipment/ instruments, etc.	13
4.	Research and innovation projects under S&T PRISM Scheme of the Ministry of Mines	02
5.	Special studies for recycling of critical minerals	01
	Total	327

(e): In order to strengthen the participation of private sector in mineral exploration in the country, private mineral exploration agencies are notified by the Central Government subsequent to the amendments in the second proviso to Section 4(1) of Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act in 2021. Till date, a total of 44 private exploration agencies have been notified. As provisioned in the MMDR Act, 1957, these Notified Private Exploration Agencies (NPEAs) are eligible to receive funding from the NMEDT.

Since 2021-22, a large number of mineral blocks have been auctioned as Composite Licence (CL) which requires the CL holder to undertake exploration before executing the mining lease. Further, in order to encourage private sector participation in exploration of 29 critical and deep-seated minerals specified in the Seventh Schedule, a new mining concession viz. EL has been introduced through MMDR Amendment Act, 2023. The EL is given through auction.

NMEDT has launched following initiatives to strengthen the private sector participating in mineral exploration in the country:

- i) 100% funding for mineral exploration projects of NPEAs.
- ii) Support for holders of EL and CL by reimbursement of exploration expenses up to 50% of the total expenditure incurred.
- iii) Exploration incentive of 25% of the approved projects cost of the G4 items for critical, strategic and deep-seated minerals to the exploration agencies if the block is successfully upgraded to G3 stage.

(f): Yes. GSI, from field season 2021-22 to 2025-26, carried out 121 mineral exploration projects in Odisha on various mineral commodities including 16 projects in Keonjhar district for manganese, gold, iron ore, bauxite, nickel etc. Since MMDR Amendment Act 2015, GSI has augmented resources of iron ore (642.72 million tonnes), manganese (2.70 million tonnes), gold (0.02 million tonnes) and bauxite (1.23 million tonnes) in Keonjhar district. Further, from 2021-2022, NMEDT has funded 43 mineral exploration projects in Odisha including 3 projects for iron ore and 2 projects for gold in Keonjhar district.

As regards steps to strengthen data accessibility, a total of 1459 reports of GSI and other stakeholders are available on the NGDR portal for the State of Odisha which include 235 exploration and baseline reports of Keonjhar district. Apart from this, other geoscientific map services like geological, geomorphological, geochemical, geophysical and other maps and datasets are also freely accessible and downloadable for Keonjhar district.

(g): The GSI took up three mineral exploration items in Haryana during field season 2025-26. The details are as follows:

Sl. No.	District	Name of Mineral Block / Area/ Belt	UNFC Stage	Commodity
1.	Mahendragarh and Charkhi dadri	Badhwana- Jhojhu kalan	G4	Copper
2.	Bhiwani	Nigana Khurd, Dhani, Riwasa	G4	Copper
3.	Charkhi Dadri	Mankawas, Kaliyana, Khedi	G4	Copper

(h): In order to promote rare earth mineral exploration in the country, GSI, from field season 2021-22 to 2023-24, took up 166 mineral exploration projects targeting Rare Earth Elements (REEs). GSI has also intensified exploration of critical and strategic minerals including REEs in the country and during field season 2024-25, it took up 78 mineral exploration projects on REEs followed by 92 projects on REEs in field season 2025-26. Further, GSI has also launched the Critical Mineral Assessment programme (CMAP) in 2024-25 to assess the potentiality of secondary enrichment for critical and strategic minerals, including REEs. Till date, 27 CMAP projects have been taken up in different parts of the country. Furthermore, since inception, the NMEDT has sanctioned 77 projects for REEs in the country which include 07 projects in 2023-24, 22 projects in 2024-25 and 41 projects in 2025-26. In addition, under the EL regime, till date, 7 EL blocks have been auctioned including 2 blocks for REEs.
