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(Part- I : GENERAL REVIEWS)

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STATUS OF RECONNAISSANCE PERMITS, PROSPECTING
LICENCES AND MINING LEASES IN INDIA

(FINAL RELEASE)

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INTRODUCTION

Under the Mines & Minerals (Development & Regulation) Act, 1957 and the Mineral Concession Rules, 1960, the State Governments accord grant/renewal of reconnaissance permits, prospecting licences and mining leases. Also, the State Governments are required to submit a copy of every permit/licence/lease granted/renewed to the Controller General, IBM, under Rule 57 (1) of Mineral Concession Rules, 1960. Additionally, the State Governments also have to submit a consolidated Annual Return of all reconnaissance permits, prospecting licences and mining leases granted or renewed to the Controller General, IBM, in a prescribed format under Rule 57 (2) of Mineral Concession Rules, 1960 not later than 30th day of June of each year, for the previous financial year.

RECONNAISSANCE PERMITS

Reconnaissance Permit is a permit granted for the purpose of undertaking “reconnaissance operations” which means any operation undertaken for preliminary prospecting of a mineral through regional, aerial, geophysical or geochemical surveys and geological mapping, but does not include pitting, trenching, drilling (except drilling of boreholes on a grid specified from time to time by the Central Government) or sub-surface excavation.

The provision of Reconnaissance Permits (RP) was introduced in 1999 under the Mines & Minerals (Development & Regulation) Act, 1957 and in 2000 under the Mineral Concession Rules, 1960 and Mineral Conservation & Development Rules, 1988 made under the Act.

During 2012-13, the Government has approved/granted 4 Reconnaissance Permits covering a total area of 3303.50 sq km. Out of these, the maximum number of RPs are in Madhya Pradesh (2) and Karnataka & West Bengal (1 each). The details of the RPs approved/granted during 2012-13 are given in Table - 1.

PROSPECTING LICENCES

Under the Mines & Minerals (Development & Regulation) Act, 1957, "Prospecting Licence" (PL) means a licence granted for the purpose of undertaking “prospecting operations” with a view to exploring, locating or proving mineral deposits. The State Governments and Union Territories are empowered to grant/renew/revoke Prospecting Licences (PL) under provisions of Mineral Concession Rules, 1960.

As per information received from the State Governments/Union Territories, 104 prospecting licences were granted covering an area of 13366.70 ha during 2012-13 as compared to 115 prospecting licences covering 19746.58 ha area granted in 2011-12.

Table-1: Reconnaissance Permits Approved/Granted during 2012-13

State	Mineral	No.	Area (sq km)
India		4	3303.50
Karnataka	Gold & Associated minerals	1	766.00
Madhya Pradesh	(i) Diamond, Gold, Copper ore & Associated minerals	1	570.00
	(ii) Diamond	1	1037.50
West Bengal	Lead, Silver, Nickel & Iron ore	1	930.00

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The states where prospecting licences were granted during 2012-13 include Madhya Pradesh (55), Rajasthan (27), Andhra Pradesh (14), Manipur (5), Uttarakhand (2) and Gujarat (1). Areawise, Madhya Pradesh covered 6748.16 ha, Rajasthan 2905.9 ha, Manipur 2700 ha, Andhra Pradesh 997.53 ha, Uttarakhand 9.8 ha and Gujarat 5.31 ha. The statewise distribution of prospecting licences granted during 2010-11 to 2012-13 is given in Table- 2.

Mineralwise, in 2012-13, prospecting licences granted were for limestone (14), manganese ore (10), laterite (6), red ochre & rock phosphate (4 each), china clay (3), garnet (abrasive), iron ore, limestone (cement grade), semi-precious stone, talc/soapstone/steatite & siliceous earth (2 each)

and calcite, diamond, mica & silica sand (1 each). Forty-seven PLs were granted in respect of group of minerals. Limestone accounted for an area of 7492.72 ha out of the total area of 13366.70 ha covered by the Prospecting Licences granted during 2012-13 which was followed by diamond (902.49 ha), rock phosphate (805.19 ha), china clay (554.47 ha), limestone (cement grade) (446.90 ha), garnet (441.04 ha), siliceous earth (352.37 ha), red ochre (271.61 ha), iron ore (107.48 ha), manganese ore (95.11 ha), laterite (90.76 ha), semi precious stone (25.18 ha), silica sand (22.5 ha), mica (20.36 ha), soapstone (9.8 ha) and calcite (5.31 ha). Group of minerals covered an area of 1723.41 hectares. The mineralwise distribution of prospecting licences granted during 2010-11 to 2012-13 is given in Table - 3.

**Table – 2 : Prospecting Licences Granted, 2010-11 to 2012-13
(By States)**

State	2010-11		2011-12		2012-2013	
	No.	Area (ha)	No.	Area (ha)	No.	Area (ha)
India	131	35682.13	115	19746.58	104	13366.70
Andhra Pradesh	9	3364.05	7	2040.16	14	997.53
Chhattisgarh	5	71.47	4	1540.65	-	-
Gujarat	2	24.70	-	-	1	5.31
Jharkhand	10	2587.35	2	44.50	-	-
Karnataka	-	-	-	-	-	-
Madhya Pradesh	66	25637.41	67	4810.26	55	6748.16
Maharashtra	14	3282.20	2	1031.55	-	-
Manipur	-	-	4	6000.00	5	2700.00
Rajasthan	11	650.76	13	4190.27	27	2905.90
Tamil Nadu	1	2.02	-	-	-	-
Uttarakhand	13	62.17	16	89.19	2	9.80

**Table – 3 : Prospecting Licences Granted, 2010-11 to 2012-13
(By Minerals)**

Mineral	2010-11		2011-12		2012-13	
	No.	Area (ha)	No.	Area (ha)	No.	Area (ha)
India	131	35682.13	115	19746.58	104	13366.70
Barytes	1	4.09	2	8.26	-	-
China clay	-	-	1	166.04	3	554.47
Calcite	-	-	-	-	1	5.31
Chromite	-	-	4	6000.00	-	-
Cherty dolomite	2	8.90	1	148.00	-	-
Diamond	-	-	1	902.49	1	902.49
Dolomite	3	13.91	7	107.90	-	-
Fireclay	-	-	1	4.80	-	-
Garnet (abrasive)	-	-	-	-	2	441.04
Galena	-	-	1	4.05	-	-
Graphite	-	-	1	12.91	-	-
Iron ore	14	3802.53	10	2746.63	2	107.48
Laterite	4	76.94	4	162.28	6	90.76
Limestone	27	17778.40	14	6222.10	14	7492.72
Limestone (cement grade)	-	-	-	-	2	446.90
Magnesite	2	8.64	-	-	-	-
Manganese ore	18	3306.40	20	755.00	10	95.11
Mica	1	4.05	-	-	1	20.36
Quartz	-	-	1	26.57	-	-
Quartzite	1	4.52	-	-	-	-
Red ochre	2	13.90	3	85.87	4	271.61
Red oxide	-	-	1	5.00	-	-
Rock phosphate	-	-	1	26.41	4	805.19
Talc/soapstone/steatite	10	49.44	16	89.19	2	9.80
Semi precious stone	-	-	-	-	2	25.18
Silica sand	6	225.00	1	3.19	1	22.50
Siliceous earth	-	-	-	-	2	352.37
White clay	1	4.70	-	-	-	-
Wollastonite	-	-	2	88.88	-	-
Yellow ochre	-	-	1	4.24	-	-
Group of minerals	39	10380.71	22	2176.77	47	1723.41

MINING LEASES

Section 3 (c) of the Mines & Minerals (Development & Regulation) Act 1957 defines "Mining Lease" (ML) as a lease granted for the purpose of undertaking mining operations and includes a sub-lease granted for such purpose. The Act defines "mining operations" as any operation undertaken for the purpose of winning any mineral.

The status of mining leases as on 31.3.2013 indicates that 11,104 mining leases were in force in the country in 23 states covering an area of 4,98,249.33 ha for 64 metallic and non-metallic minerals excluding lignite, coal, petroleum, natural gas, atomic minerals and minor minerals.

During 2012-13, the statewise break up of leases as reflected in Table-4 indicates that Rajasthan was leading with 3,185 leases followed by Andhra Pradesh (2,001), Madhya Pradesh (1,117), Gujarat (1,104), Tamil Nadu (924), Karnataka (594), Odisha (490), Goa (337), Chhattisgarh (308), Jharkhand (294), and Maharashtra (261). These eleven states together accounted for about 96% of the total mining leases in force.

Of the total mining lease area covered by different States, Rajasthan accounted for 21% followed by Odisha (15%), Andhra Pradesh (14%), Karnataka (10%), Jharkhand & Madhya Pradesh

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(7% each) Gujarat (6%), Goa & Chhattisgarh (5% each), Maharashtra (3%) and Haryana & Tamil Nadu (2% each). These twelve states accounted for about 97% of the total mining lease area granted and the remaining 3% was accounted for by the rest of the eleven states.

Scheduled minerals are those listed in the First Schedule of the MM (DR) Act, 1957. There are 10 minerals under Scheduled Minerals for which mining leases were in existence as on 31.3.2013. The number of existing mining leases are 1,554, i.e., 14% of the total mining leases accounting for an area of 1,82,783.96 hectare. Out of the scheduled minerals, the total number of mining leases for iron ore is 774 followed by bauxite (337), manganese ore (323), chromite (35), asbestos (33), copper ore (16), lead & zinc ores (14), gold (13), ruby (6), diamond (2) and sapphire (1).

During 2012-13, mining leases in force were in both Private and Public sectors including Central and State Government Undertakings. Out of the total 11,104 mining leases in force in the country, 10,621 (96%) mining leases with an area of 3,50,991.21 ha (70%) are in the Private Sector and the remaining 483 (4%) leases are in the Public Sector over an area of 1,47,258.12 hectare. Most of the scheduled

minerals, namely, copper ore, lead & zinc ores, gold, iron ore, manganese ore, chromite, asbestos and non-scheduled minerals like limestone, dolomite, pyrite, fluorite, apatite, barytes, kyanite & magnesite, etc. are being exploited by both Public and Private Sectors.

In the metallic minerals, ferrous group of minerals include iron ore, manganese ore, chromite, while the non-ferrous group of minerals comprises bauxite, copper-lead-zinc, molybdenum, nickel, tin and the noble metals which include gold, silver and platinum group of metals. There were no mining leases for molybdenum, nickel, silver and platinum group of metals in the country. In 2012-13, existing mining leases for 8 metallic minerals were 1,527 (14%) covering an area of 1,80,459.30 ha (36%). On the other hand, the existing leases for non-metallic minerals/industrial minerals were 9,577 (86%) covering an area of 3,17,790.03 ha (64%).

The statewide summary of mining leases during 2010-11 to 2012-13 is detailed in Table-4. The mineralwise summary of existing mining leases as on 31.3.2013 is furnished in Table-5. Sectorwise distribution of mining leases as on 31.3.2013 is furnished in Table-6.

**Table-4 : Existing Mining Leases, 2010-11 to 2012-13
(By States)**

State	2010-2011		2011-12		2012-13	
	No.	Area (ha)	No.	Area (ha)	No.	Area (ha)
India	11003	547814.31	11456	530282.70	11104	498249.33
Andhra Pradesh	1999	68047.13	2031	69607.07	2001	68009.35
Assam	8	929.50	8	929.50	7	889.50
Bihar	11	2074.72	10	1427.22	9	1382.66
Chhattisgarh	316	23551.77	320	23502.06	308	22723.20
Goa	336	24393.26	336	24394.55	337	24522.12
Gujarat	1152	30035.65	1162	29430.04	1104	29607.04
Himachal Pradesh	54	3440.41	54	3623.80	45	2546.68
Haryana	118	12255.12	118	12255.13	110	10974.99
Jammu & Kashmir	57	2671.84	59	2680.89	57	2450.92
Jharkhand	332	37071.32	332	36987.64	294	35028.70
Karnataka	754	59204.59	762	58582.73	594	48841.60
Kerala	82	2878.62	87	3274.35	87	3071.82
Manipur	2	610.17	2	610.17	2	610.17
Meghalaya	21	1297.63	18	606.19	18	606.19
Madhya Pradesh	1100	30930.93	1105	32985.83	1117	34455.74
Maharashtra	251	16093.72	255	15962.33	261	16061.86
Odisha	532	77743.91	496	74990.98	490	74694.74
Rajasthan	2696	107102.01	3085	116009.93	3185	106139.13
Sikkim	3	96.32	3	96.32	3	96.32
Tamil Nadu	945	37780.11	972	12558.61	924	9890.98
Uttar Pradesh	95	7608.54	98	7651.28	23	3964.70
Uttarakhand	89	1276.76	94	1411.56	86	1280.51
West Bengal	50	720.28	49	704.52	42	400.41

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**Table-5 : Existing Mining Leases as on
31.3.2013
(By Minerals)**

Mineral	No. of Leases	Lease area (ha)
India	11104	498249.33
Agate	3	59.62
Amethyst	4	10.63
Apatite	2	20.17
Asbestos	33	1566.25
Ball clay	75	2744.59
Barytes	164	2541.54
Bauxite	337	30329.10
Borax	1	159.00
Calcite	90	1573.49
Chalk	156	639.79
China clay	516	15612.20
Chromite	35	9432.58
Clay (Others)	99	1186.11
Copper ore	16	9862.96
Corundum	11	66.62
Diamond	2	275.96
Diaspore	12	94.38
Dolomite	542	7536.87
Dunite	1	14.28
Epidote	2	10.00
Felsite	6	102.29
Felspar	947	7271.79
Fireclay	248	5071.75
Flint stone	2	11.87
Fluorite	16	1670.71
Garnet	100	1664.37
Garnet (Gem)	3	51.03
Gold	13	7186.41
Graphite	110	3762.07
Gypsum	106	19102.32

(Contd.)

Table - 5 (Concl.)

Mineral	No. of Leases	Lease area (ha)
Iolite	11	104.35
Iron ore	774	93790.37
Jasper	5	211.70
Kyanite	32	3151.89
Laterite	193	2428.61
Lead & Zinc ore	14	7791.41
Lime kankar	7	43.63
Limeshell	26	3985.54
Limestone	2013	155452.96
Magnesite	32	1923.81
Manganese ore	323	21745.52
Marl	2	9.15
Mica	264	5613.52
Moulding sand	40	904.18
Ochre	168	3290.09
Perlite	1	144.88
Phosphorite	15	2831.78
Pyrophyllite	94	1299.25
Pyroxenite	11	95.39
Quartz	2193	16506.59
Quartzite	83	1456.78
Ruby	6	130.00
Sand (Others)	48	10026.07
Sapphire	1	673.40
Shale	45	566.22
Silica sand	475	14494.11
Sillimanite	6	2823.26
Slate	18	683.31
Talc/steatite/soapstone	476	15355.65
Tin	15	320.95
Vermiculite	15	259.64
White clay	25	210.92
White shale	14	71.63
Wollastonite	7	222.02

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**Table – 6 : Existing Mining Leases as on 31.3.2013
(By Sectors)**

Sector	No. of leases	Percent	Area (ha)	Percent
India	11104	100	498249.33	100
Public	483	4.35	147258.12	29.56
Central Government Undertakings	191	1.72	78829.41	15.82
State Government Undertakings	292	2.63	68428.71	13.74
Private	10621	95.65	350991.21	70.44