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Ministry of Mines

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SECTION-1

Mineral Legislation and Policy on Minerals/Ores

1. Mineral Legislation

A. Amendments/Notifications

1. Ministry of Mines, Notification, S.O. 1493(E).—In pursuance of Sub-Rule (4) of Rule 10 of the Official Language (Use for official purposes of the Union) Rules, 1976 (as amended, 1987) the Central Government hereby notifies the following office of Geological Survey of India, an attached office of the Ministry of Mines, more than 80% Staff whereof have acquired working knowledge of Hindi:

Geological Survey of India, Remote Sensing & Aerial Surveys, Bengaluru

Source: The Gazette of India, Extraordinary, No. 1424 Part II, Section 3-Sub section (ii), dated 20.03.2024

2. Ministry of Mines, Notification, G.S.R. 106(E).—In exercise of the powers conferred by section 11B of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (67 of 1957), the Central Government hereby makes the following rules further to amend the Atomic Minerals Concession Rules, 2016, namely:—

1. Short title and commencement.—(1) These rules may be called the Atomic Minerals Concession (Amendment) Rules, 2024.

(2) They shall come into force on the date of their publication in the Official Gazette.

2. In the Atomic Minerals Concession Rules, 2016, in Schedule A, in the Table, items 1, 2, 4, 7, 8 and 11 and the entries relating thereto shall be omitted.

Source: The Gazette of India, Extraordinary, No. 97 Part II, Section 3-Sub section (i), dated 14.02.2024

3. Ministry of Mines, Notification, G.S.R. 118(E).— In exercise of the powers conferred by section 13 of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (67 of 1957), the Central Government hereby makes the following rules further to amend the Minerals (Other than Atomic and Hydro Carbons Energy Minerals) Concession Rules, 2016, namely:—

1. Short title and commencement.— (1) These rules may be called the Minerals (Other than Atomic and HydroCarbons Energy Minerals) Concession (Second Amendment) Rules, 2024.

(2) They shall come into force on the date of their publication in the Official Gazette.

2. In the Minerals (Other than Atomic and Hydro Carbons Energy Minerals) Concession Rules, 2016, in rule 45, —

(i) for sub-rule (3), the following sub-rule shall be substituted, namely:—

“(3) The Indian Bureau of Mines shall publish average sale price of Tungsten Trioxide (WO₃) in Indian Rupees on the basis of prices published by the United States Geological Survey or other reputed publications for Tungsten concentrate for the latest available calendar year by multiplying such price of Tungsten concentrate with the following, namely:—

- (i) average reference rate of Reserve Bank of India for the said calendar year, and
- (ii) the conversion factor of 1.54.”;

(iii) after sub-rule (6), the following sub-rules shall be inserted, namely:—

“(7) The Indian Bureau of Mines shall publish average sale price of Cadmium, Gallium, Indium, Rhenium, Selenium, Tellurium and Titanium in Indian Rupees on the basis of prices published by the United States Geological Survey or other reputed publications for the Cadmium metal, Gallium metal, Indium metal, Rhenium metal pellets, Selenium powder, Tellurium metal and Titanium sponge metal, as the case may be, for the latest available calendar year by multiplying such price with average reference rate of Reserve Bank of India for the said calendar year.

(8) The Indian Bureau of Mines shall publish average sale price of Beryllium in Indian Rupees on the basis of prices published by the United States Geological Survey or other reputed publications for the Beryllium-copper master alloy for the latest available calendar year by multiplying such price with the following, namely:—

- (i) average reference rate of Reserve Bank of India for the said calendar year, and
- (ii) the conversion factor of 25.

(9) The Indian Bureau of Mines shall publish average sale price of Tantalum in Indian Rupees on the basis of prices published by the United States Geological Survey or other reputed publications for Tantalite for the latest available calendar year by multiplying such price with the following, namely:—

- (i) average reference rate of Reserve Bank of India for the said calendar year, and
- (ii) the conversion factor of 1.22.

(10) The Indian Bureau of Mines shall publish average sale price of Vanadium Pentoxide in Indian Rupees on the basis of prices published by the United States Geological Survey or other reputed publications for the Vanadium Pentoxide for the latest available calendar year by multiplying such price of Vanadium Pentoxide with average reference rate of Reserve Bank of India for the said calendar year.”.

Source: The Gazette of India, Extraordinary, No. 107, Part II, Section 3-Sub section (i), dated 20.02.2024

4. Ministry of Mines, Notification, S.O. 1359(E).— In exercise of the powers conferred by the second proviso to sub-section (1) of section 4 of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (67 of 1957), the Central Government hereby notifies the M/s. MECON Limited, a Central Public Sector Enterprise under the control of the Ministry of Steel, for the purposes of the said proviso subject to the condition that the said Public Sector Enterprise shall make available the data generated by it, in respect of the prospecting operations undertaken by it, to the concerned State Government.

2. This notification shall come into force on the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

Source: The Gazette of India, Extraordinary, No. 1293, Part II, Section 3-Sub section (ii), dated 14.03.2024

5. Ministry of Mines, Notification, G.S.R. 152(E).—In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (3) of section 9 of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (67 of 1957), the Central Government hereby makes the following further amendments in the Second Schedule to the said Act, namely:—

2. In the Second Schedule to the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957,—

(i) after item 4 and the entries relating thereto, the following item and entries shall be inserted, namely:—

“4A.	Beryllium	Two per cent. of the average sale price of Beryllium metal chargeable on the Beryllium metal contained in the ore produced.”;
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(ii) in item 5, for the words, “Ilmenite, Rutile and Zircon”, the words “Ilmenite and Rutile occurring in Beach Sand Minerals found in teri or beach sands” shall be substituted.

(iii) for item 6 and the entries relating thereto, the following item and entries shall be substituted, namely:—

“6.	Cadmium: Primary By-product	Four per cent. of the average sale price of Cadmium metal chargeable on the Cadmium metal contained in the ore produced. Two per cent. of the average sale price of Cadmium metal chargeable on the by-product Cadmium metal contained in the ore produced.”;
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(iv) after item 10 and the entries relating thereto, the following item and entries shall be inserted, namely:—

“10A.	Cobalt: Primary By-product	Four per cent. of the average sale price of Cobalt metal chargeable on the Cobalt metal contained in the ore produced. Two per cent. of the average sale price of Cobalt metal chargeable on the by-product Cobalt metal contained in the ore produced.”;
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(v) after item 19 and the entries relating thereto, the following item and entries shall be inserted, namely:—

“19A.	Gallium: Primary By-product	Four per cent. of the average sale price of Gallium metal chargeable on the Gallium metal contained in the ore produced. Two per cent. of the average sale price of Gallium metal chargeable on the by-product Gallium metal contained in the ore produced.”;
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(vi) after item 23 and the entries relating thereto, the following item and entries shall be inserted, namely:—

“38B.	Rhenium	Two per cent. of the average sale price of Rhenium metal chargeable on the Rhenium metal contained in the ore produced.”;
“23A.	Indium	Two per cent. of the average sale price of Indium metal chargeable on the Indium metal contained in the ore produced.”;

(vii) after item 38A and the entries relating thereto, the following item and entries shall be inserted, namely:—

(viii) after item 41 and the entries relating thereto, the following item and entries shall be inserted, namely:—

“41A.	Selenium: Primary	Four per cent. of the average sale price of Selenium metal chargeable on the Selenium metal contained in the ore produced.
	By-product	Two per cent. of the average sale price of Selenium metal chargeable on the by-product Selenium metal contained in the ore produced.”;

(ix) after item 47 and the entries relating thereto, the following item and entries shall be inserted, namely:—

“47A.	Tantalum (produced from ores other than Columbite-tantalite): Primary	Four per cent. of the average sale price of Tantalum metal chargeable on the Tantalum metal contained in the ore produced.
	By-product	Two per cent. of the average sale price of Tantalum metal chargeable on the by-product Tantalum metal contained in the ore produced.
47B.	Tellurium:	Two per cent. of the average sale price of Tellurium metal chargeable on the Tellurium metal contained in the ore produced.”;

(x) after item 48 and the entries relating thereto, the following items and entries shall be inserted, namely:—

“48A.	Titanium (produced from ores other than Brown Ilmenite (Leucoxene), Ilmenite and Rutile occurring in Beach Sand Minerals found in teri or beach sands): (i) Primary (ii) By-product	Four per cent. of the average sale price of Titanium metal chargeable on the Titanium metal contained in the ore produced. Two per cent. of the average sale price of Titanium metal chargeable on the by-product Titanium metal contained in the ore produced.”;
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(xi) for item 49 and the entries relating thereto, the following item and entries shall be substituted, namely:—

“49.	Tungsten:	Three per cent. of the average sale price of Tungsten Trioxide (WO ₃) on contained WO ₃ per tonne of ore on pro rata basis”;
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(xii) for item 51 and the entries relating thereto, the following item and entries shall be substituted, namely:—

“51.	Vanadium: Primary By-product	Four per cent. of the average sale price of Vanadium Pentoxide on contained V ₂ O ₅ per tonne of ore on pro rata basis. Two per cent. of the average sale price of Vanadium Pentoxide on contained V ₂ O ₅ per tonne of ore on pro rata basis.”;
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(xiii) after item 54 and the entries relating thereto, the following items and entries shall be inserted, namely:—

“54A.	Zircon:	Two per cent. of average sale price on <i>ad valorem</i> basis.”.
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Source: The Gazette of India, Extraordinary, No. 140, Part II, Section 3-Sub section (i), dated 01.03.2024

6. **Ministry of Mines, Notification, G.S.R. 51(E).**— In exercise of the powers conferred by section 18 of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (67 of 1957), the Central Government hereby makes the following rules further to amend the Mineral Conservation and Development Rules, 2017, namely:—

1. Short title and commencement.— (1) These rules may be called the **Mineral Conservation and Development (Amendment) Rules, 2024.**

(2) They shall come into force on the date of their publication in the Official Gazette.

2. In the Mineral Conservation and Development Rules, 2017 (hereinafter referred to as the said rules), in rule 4,—

(i) for sub-rule (1), the following sub-rule shall be substituted, namely:—

“(1) Every holder of a reconnaissance permit or prospecting licence or the preferred bidder selected for grant of composite licence or exploration licence, shall submit to the Controller General or the authorised officer a scheme of reconnaissance or prospecting or both, as the case may be, within a period of ninety days from the date of execution of the permit or licence or issuance of letter of intent, indicating the manner in which he proposes to carry out the reconnaissance or prospecting operations or both in the area covered under the permit or licence.”;

(ii) in sub-rule (2), in the opening para, after the words “reconnaissance or prospecting”, the words “or both” shall be inserted.

3. In the said rules, in rule 5,—

(i) in sub-rule (1), —

(a) after the words “reconnaissance or prospecting”, the words “or both” shall be inserted;

(b) after the words “composite licence”, the words “or exploration licence” shall be inserted;

(ii) in sub-rule (2), after the words “composite licence”, the words “or exploration licence” shall be inserted;

(iii) after sub-rule (2), the following sub-rule shall be inserted, namely:—

“(3) In case of exploration licence, a modified scheme of reconnaissance or prospecting or both shall be submitted to the Controller General or the authorised officer after three years from the date of execution of the licence, indicating the manner in which the licensee proposes to continue the reconnaissance and prospecting operations in the area retained under the licence under sub-section (11) of section 10BA.”.

4. In the said rules, in rules 6 and 7, after the words “composite licence”, the words “or exploration licence” shall respectively be inserted.

5. In the said rules, in rule 8,—

(i) in sub-rule (1), after the words “composite licence”, the words “or exploration licence” shall be inserted;

(ii) in sub-rule (2),—

(a) after the words “composite licence”, the words “or exploration licence” shall be inserted;

(b) after the words “prospecting operations”, occurring at both the places, the words “reconnaissance or prospecting operations” shall be substituted.

6. In the said rules, in rule 9,—

(i) in the marginal heading, after the words “composite licence”, the words “or exploration licence” shall be inserted;

(ii) for sub-rule (1), the following sub-rules shall be substituted, namely:—

“(1) Every holder of a reconnaissance permit or prospecting licence or composite licence or exploration licence shall submit to the Regional Controller or the authorised officer in this behalf, as the case may be, and to the State Government, a half-yearly report along with Form B of the Schedule-I as under, namely:—

(i) report of the operations undertaken from 1st January to 30th June or part period thereof to reach by 15th August of each year; and

(ii) report of operations undertaken from 1st July to 31st December or part period thereof to reach by 15th February of each year.

(1A) The exploration licensee shall, within three months of the completion of the operations for which licence has been granted, or from the date of expiry of the exploration licence, whichever is earlier, submit geological report to the State Government and to the Controller General or the authorised officer of the Indian Bureau of Mines, as the case may be, explaining the result of the reconnaissance and prospecting operations in the form of a geological report prepared under rule 5 of the Minerals (Evidence of Mineral Contents) Rules, 2015; identifying the area suitable for grant of a mining lease.”;

(iii) for sub-rule (3), the following sub-rule shall be substituted, namely:—

“(3) Every agency authorised under the second proviso to sub-section (1) of section 4 shall submit to the State Government and the authorised officer a half-yearly report along with Form B of the Schedule-I as per the stipulated period provided in sub-rule (1).”.

7. In the said rules, after rule 9, the following rule shall be inserted, namely:—

“9A. Restriction on disclosure of information, scheme and reports.— The holder of exploration licence shall not in any manner disclose the information, scheme and reports prepared under these rules or any other geological information related to reconnaissance or prospecting operations to any person other than the Government or authority specified in these rules or any other rules made under the Act, without prior approval of the Central Government.”.

8. In the said rules, in rule 11, in sub-rule (4), the following proviso shall be inserted, namely:—

“Provided that if the mining or mineral processing operations in a mine is discontinued for a period exceeding two hundred and seventy days before the expiry of a period of five years for which the mining plan was approved on the last occasion; and the holder of the mining lease has submitted prescribed notice to the authorised officer and the State Government under rule 28, the holder shall not be required to submit mining plan for review during the period of such temporary discontinuation, but shall submit the mining plan for review and obtain approval of the competent authority on the same before reopening of the mine.”.

9. In the said rules, in rules 12, 46, 47, 48, 50, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 59 and 64, after the words “composite licence”, wherever they occur, the words “or exploration licence” shall be inserted.

10. In the said rules, in rule 35, in sub-rule (2), after the first proviso, the following shall be inserted, namely:—

“Provided that if the mining or mineral processing operations in a mine is discontinued for a period exceeding one hundred and eighty days during the previous financial year; and the holder of the mining lease has submitted prescribed notice to the authorized officer and the State Government under rule 28, the holder shall not be required to submit the report and images for the said previous financial year.”.

11. In the said rules, in rules 36, 37, 41, 42 and 44, after the words “composite licence”, wherever they occur, the words “, exploration licence” shall be inserted.

12. In the said rules, in rule 40, after the words “prospecting licence”, the words “, composite licence, exploration licence” shall be inserted.

13. In the said rules, in rule 56, in sub-rule (1), for the words “prospecting”, the words “reconnaissance or prospecting” shall be substituted.

14. In the said rules, in Schedule I,—

(i) in Form-A, Form-B, Form-H, Form-I, Form-J, Form-K and Form-N, after the words “composite licence”, wherever they occur, the words “or exploration licence” shall be inserted;

(ii) in Form-A, Form-B, Form-H and Form-I, for the words, “Mineral Conservation Development Rules, 2016”, the words and figures, “Mineral Conservation Development Rules, 2017” shall be substituted;

(iii) in Form-B, under the heading “IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILLING THE FORM”, for the first instruction, the following instruction shall be substituted, namely:—

“• This Form, duly filled in must reach the concerned authorities within the period specified in rules 9(1), 9(2) or 9(4), as the case may be.”;

(iv) in Form-H, in entry 11, in clause (ii), after the words and symbol “Prospecting Licence/” the words and symbol “Composite licence/exploration licence” shall be inserted.

15. In the said rules, for Schedule II and Schedule III, the following shall be substituted, namely:—

“SCHEDULE-II

[see rule 45(7A)]

AMOUNT TO BE PAID IN CASE OF VIOLATION UNDER RULE 45

Item	Amount (in ₹)	Explanation
(1)	(2)	(3)
Non-submission or incomplete/wrong/false information in monthly returns in Form F1, F2, F3; by the due date	In case of leases having leased area up to 25 hectare and having per annum approved production capacity up to 2 lakh tonnes, ₹5,000/- per day after due date of submission of return as specified in the Rule till rectification of violation. For all other cases, ₹10,000/- per day after due date of submission of return as specified in the Rule till rectification of violation.	In case of referred back returns by Indian Bureau of Mines for incorporating necessary corrections, to be undertaken by the lease holder, and if corrected within the allotted time limit and accepted thereafter by the Indian Bureau of Mines, no amount will be payable for the intervening period for such corrections. Failure to rectify in such cases will attract the payment as specified.;
Non-submission or incomplete/wrong/ false information in annual returns in Form G1, G2,	In case of leases having leased area up to 25 hectare and having per annum approved production capacity up to 2 lakh tonnes, Rs. 5,000/- per day after due date of submission of return as	

G3; by the due date	specified in the Rule till rectification of violation. For all other cases, ₹10,000/- per day after due date of submission of return as specified in the Rule till rectification of violation.
Non-submission or incomplete/wrong/false information in monthly returns in Form L; by the due date	₹5,000/- per day after due date of submission of return as prescribed in the Rule till rectification of violation.
Non-submission or incomplete/wrong/false information in annual returns in Form M; by the due date	₹5,000/- per day after due date of submission of return as prescribed in the Rule till rectification of violation.

SCHEDULE-III
[see rule 62(2)]

Rules whose contravention shall be punishable with fine

Rule No.	Marginal heading of the Rule	Amount of Fine for leases having leased area up to 25 hectare and having per annum approved production capacity up to 2 lakh tonnes (in ₹)	Amount of Fine for the cases other than those covered in column (3)(in ₹)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Sub-rule (4) of rule 11	Mining operations under mining lease	1,000/- per day, subject to maximum 5,00,000/-	2,000/- per day, subject to maximum 5,00,000/-
12	Prospecting and mining operations	1,00,000/-	5,00,000/-
18	Beneficiation studies to be carried out	1,00,000/-	5,00,000/-
19	Machinery and plant	1,00,000/-	5,00,000/-
20	Notice for opening of mine	1,00,000/-	5,00,000/-
23	Submission of progressive mine closure plan	1,00,000/-	5,00,000/-
28	Notice of temporary discontinuance of work in mines and obligations of	1,00,000/-	5,00,000/-

	lease holders		
29	Intimation of reopening of a mine	1,00,000/-	5,00,000/-
46	Notice of certain appointments	1,000/- per day, subject to maximum 1,00,000/-	2,000/- per day, subject to maximum 1,00,000/-
51	Notice of amalgamation of mining lease	1,000/- per day after due date as prescribed in the Rule, subject to maximum 1,00,000/-	2,000/- per day after due date as prescribed in the Rule, subject to maximum 1,00,000/-
55	Employment of geologists and mining engineers	1,00,000/-	5,00,000/-”.

Source: The Gazette of India, Extraordinary, No. 45, Part II, Section 3-Sub-section (i), dated 21.01.2024

7. Ministry of Mines, Notification, G.S.R. 737(E).—In exercise of the powers conferred by section 13 of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (67 of 1957), the Central Government hereby makes the following rules further to amend the Minerals (Other than Atomic and Hydro Carbons Energy Mineral) Concession Rules, 2016, namely:—

1. Short title and commencement.— (1) These rules may be called the Minerals (Other than Atomic and HydroCarbons Energy Mineral) Concession (Amendment) Rules, 2023.

(2) They shall come into force on the date of their publication in the Official Gazette.

2. In the Minerals (Other than Atomic and Hydro Carbons Energy Mineral) Concession Rules, 2016,—

(i) in rule 44, after clause (i), the following clause shall be inserted, namely:—

“(ia) In respect of Lithium, the equivalent lithium metal prices calculated on the basis of the weekly prices of lithium hydroxide monohydrate or other appropriate compound of lithium published by London Metal Exchange in a month shall be multiplied by the reference rate for the day of publication of the Reserve Bank of India or any agency authorised by the Reserve Bank of India, for the currency in which the price is obtained.”;

(ii) in rule 45, after sub-rule (4), the following sub-rule shall be inserted, namely:—

“(5)(a) The Indian Bureau of Mines shall publish average sale price of Rare Earth Oxide in Indian Rupees on the basis of prices published by United States Geological Survey (USGS) or other reputed publications by multiplying the price of Rare Earth Oxide by average reference rate of Reserve Bank of India for the month for the currency in which the price is obtained and in case the price of Rare Earth Oxide is not available on monthly basis, the average sale price shall be published on the basis of price of Rare Earth Oxide for the last available calendar year.

(b) The State Government shall arrive at average sale price of the ore containing Rare Earth Elements in the following manner, namely:—

Average sale price of the ore containing Rare Earth Elements	=	Sum of (percentage of individual rare earth oxide contained in the ore <i>multiplied by</i> average sale price of that rare earth oxide published by Indian Bureau of Mines).
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(6) The Indian Bureau of Mines shall publish average sale price of Niobium in Indian Rupees on the basis of prices published by United States Geological Survey (USGS) or other reputed publications for Ferro-Niobium for the last available calendar year by multiplying such price with the following, namely:—

- (i) average reference rate of Reserve Bank of India for the said calendar year, and
- (ii) the conversion factor of 1.59.”.

Source: The Gazette of India, Extraordinary, No. 584, Part II, Section 3-Sub section (i), dated 12.10.2023

8. Ministry of Mines, Notification, G.S.R. 736(E).—In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (3) of section 9 of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (67 of 1957), the Central Government hereby makes the following further amendments in the Second Schedule to the said Act, namely:—

2. In the Second Schedule to the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957,—

(i) after item 28 and the entries relating thereto, the following item and entries shall be inserted, namely:—

“28A.	Lithium:	Three per cent. of London Metal Exchange price chargeable on the Lithium metal in the ore produced.”;
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(ii) in item 33, for the word “Monazite”, the words “Monazite occurring in beach sand minerals” shall be substituted;

(iii) after item 34 and the entries relating thereto, the following item and entries shall be inserted, namely:—

“34A.	Niobium: Primary (produced from ores other than Columbite-tantalite) By-product (produced from ores other than Columbite-tantalite)	Three per cent. of average sale price of Niobium metal chargeable on the Niobium metal contained in the ore produced. Three per cent. of average sale price of Niobium metal chargeable on the by-product Niobium metal contained in the ore produced.”;
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(iv) after item 38 and the entries relating thereto, the following item and entries shall be inserted, namely:—

“38A.	Rare Earth Elements (produced from ores other than Monazite occurring in beach sand minerals):	One per cent. of average sale price of Rare Earth Oxide (REO) chargeable on the Rare Earth Oxide contained in the ore produced.”.
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Source: The Gazette of India, Extraordinary, No. 583, Part II, Section 3-Sub section (i), dated 12.10.2023

9. Ministry of Mines, Notification, S.O. 4796(E).—In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-sections (1) and (2) of section 16 read with section 17 and sub-section (3) of section 25 of the Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 2016 (11 of 2016), the Central Government is of the opinion that it is necessary so to do in the public interest and after consulting the Bureau of Indian Standards, hereby makes the following Order to amend the Copper (Quality Control) Order, 2023, namely: -

1. Short title and commencement – (1) This Order may be called the Copper (Quality Control) Amendment Order, 2023.

(2) It shall come into force on the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

2. In the Copper (Quality Control) Order, 2023, in paragraph 1, for sub-paragraph (2), the following sub-paragraph shall be substituted, namely: -

“(2) This Order shall come into force with effect from 01.06.2024.”

Source: The Gazette of India, Extra ordinary, No. 4598, Part II, Section 3-Sub section (ii), dated 03.11.2023

10. Ministry of Mines, Notification, S.O. 5091(E).— n exercise of the powers conferred by sub-sections (1) and (2) of section 16 read with section 17 and sub-section (3) of section 25 of the Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 2016 (11 of 2016), the Central Government is of the opinion that it is necessary so to do in the public interest and after consulting the Bureau of Indian Standards, hereby makes the following Order to amend the Nickel (Quality Control) Order, 2023, namely: -

1. Short title and commencement – (1) This Order may be called the Nickel (Quality Control) Amendment Order, 2023.

(2) It shall come into force on the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

2. In the Nickel (Quality Control) Order, 2023, in paragraph 1, for sub-paragraph (2), the following sub-paragraph shall be substituted, namely: -

“(2) This Order shall come into force with effect from 01.06.2024.”

Source: The Gazette of India, Extraordinary, No. 4874, Part II, Section 3-Sub-section (ii), dated 30.11.2023

11. Ministry of Mines, Notification, S.O. 5090(E).—In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-sections (1) and (2) of section 16 read with section 17 and sub-section (3) of section 25 of the Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 2016 (11 of 2016), the Central Government is of the opinion that it is necessary so to do in the public interest and after consulting the Bureau of Indian Standards, hereby makes the following Order to amend the Aluminium and Aluminium Alloys (Quality Control) Order, 2023, namely: -

1. Short title and commencement – (1) This Order may be called the Aluminium and Aluminium

Alloys (Quality Control) Amendment Order, 2023.

(2) It shall come into force on the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

2. In the Aluminium and Aluminium Alloys (Quality Control) Order, 2023, in paragraph 1, for sub-paragraph (2), the following sub-paragraph shall be substituted, namely: -

“(2) This Order shall come into force with effect from 01.06.2024.”

Source: The Gazette of India, Extra ordinary, No. 4873, Part II, Section 3-Sub section (ii), dated 30.11.2023,

12. Ministry of Mines, Notification G.S.R. 48(E).— In exercise of the powers conferred under the second proviso to sub-section (1) of section 4 of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (67 of 1957) and consequent upon accreditation provided by the National Accreditation Board for Education and Training of the Quality Council of India (QCI-NABET), the Central Government hereby notifies the following agencies as specified in the guidelines for notification of accredited private exploration agencies issued by the Government of India in the Ministry of Mines vide order no. M.VI-16/15/2021-Mines VI, dated the 12th August, 2021 (hereafter referred to as the said guidelines):

Serial Number	Exploration Agency	Category of Exploration Agency
1	M/s GEMS Project Pvt Ltd.	A
2	M/s Ramgad Minerals and Mining Limited	A
3	M/s Kundan Concentrates Private Limited	A
4	M/s PRB Infraprojects Private Limited	A

2. The agencies shall carry out prospecting operations in compliance with the conditions specified in the said guidelines.

3. This notification shall come into force on the date of its publication in the Official Gazette and shall remain valid for a period of three years from the date of notification or till expiry or termination of the accreditation granted, whichever is earlier.

Source: The Gazette of India, Extra ordinary, No. 42, Part II, Section 3-Sub section (i), dated 19.01.2024,

13. Ministry of Mines, Notification S.O. 5411(E).— In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (1) of section 8 of the Offshore Areas Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act, 2002 (17 of 2003), the Central Government hereby reserves the area to the extent of 10277.10 hectares (102.77 Sq. Km) with the coordinates of the boundary points specified in the Table below in Arabian Sea off the coast of Daman for the purposes of the Central Government for grant of composite licence by the administering authority to the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (an autonomous body under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways) under sub-section (3) of section 8 of the said Act for exploration and production of sand for reclamation for the proposed development of greenfield port at Vadhavan in the District Palghar, Maharashtra.

Boundary Point Name	Degree, Minute, Second	
	Latitude	Longitude
(1)	(2)	
A	20°20'0.6"N	72°15'0.72"E
B	20°23'0.6"N	72°15'0.72"E
C	20°23'0.6"N	72°16'0.84"E
D	20°24'0.36"N	72°16'0.84"E
E	20°24'0.36"N	72°17'0.96"E
F	20°26'0.6"N	72°17'0.96"E
G	20°26'0.6"N	72°18'0.72"E
H	20°27'0.36"N	72°18'0.72"E
I	20°27'0.36"N	72°19'0.84"E
J	20°28'0.12"N	72°19'0.84"E
K	20°28'0.12"N	72°22'0.84"E
L	20°25'0.48"N	72°22'0.84"E
M	20°25'0.48"N	72°21'0.72"E
N	20°24'0.36"N	72°21'0.72"E
O	20°24'0.36"N	72°20'0.96"E
P	20°22'0.48"N	72°20'0.96"E
Q	20°22'0.48"N	72°19'0.84"E
R	20°21'0.36"N	72°19'0.84"E
S	20°21'0.36"N	72°18'0.72"E
T	20°20'0.6"N	72°18'0.72"E

Source: The Gazette of India, Extra ordinary, No. 5181, Part II, Section 3-Sub section (ii), dated 21.12.2023,

Court Decisions

1. M/s Infratech Limited, Petitioner v. State of Karnataka and others Respondents, AIR 2024, Karnataka High Court 2867.

Subject: Petitioner who holds a quarry lease is knocking at the doors of Writ Court for assailing the penalty demand notice dated 26.04.2022 issued by the 4th respondent -Deputy NC: 2023:KHC:39907-DB Director of Mines & Geology Department, a copy whereof is at Annexure-N whereby he has been directed to remit a sum of Rs.23,47,13,703.00 within thirty days. This levy is made for the alleged loss to the exchequer inter alia for rendering the subject quarry lease dysfunctional. There is allegation of violation of the Karnataka Minor Mineral Concession Rules, 1994 inasmuch as the transportation of the mineral has happened sans transit permits. The break- up of the levy items has been furnished in the Audit Report for the financial year in question.

Facts: Learned counsel appearing for the petitioner seeks to falter the impugned levy of penalty pointing out petitioner's reply submitted against the levy and demand notice dated 26.04.2022 wherein he had raised an objection as to the absence of Drone Survey in the fitness of things. He also points out the Work Order dated 24.11.2022, a copy whereof is at Annexure-R whereby the 3rd respondent -Director of Mines & Geology Department had instructed for undertaking the Drone Survey of the NC: 2023:KHC:39907-DB area in question. The counsel submits that till this exercise is undertaken and the impact of its outcome on the alleged liability of the petitioner is adjudged, the impugned demand notice cannot be sustained. Learned Additional Government Advocate appearing for the respondent - authorities vehemently opposes the petition making submission in justification of the impugned demand notice and the factors on which it has been constructed. Having heard the learned counsel for the parties and having perused the petition papers, we are inclined to grant indulgence in the matter inasmuch as pursuant to objection of the petitioner to the demand raised, the Director of Mines & Geology, vide Work Order dated 24.11.2022, had instructed the officials to undertake a Drone Survey of the area concerned. No material is produced by the Authorities to demonstrate that such an exercise was undertaken and its outcome has not altered the determination of levy of penalty and the consequent NC: 2023:KHC:39907-DB demand notice. Thus, there is an error apparent on the face of record warranting our interference.

Decision: In the above circumstances, this petition is disposed off with the following directions:

i) In case the Drone Survey is not conducted pursuant to Work Order dated 24.11.2022, the same be accomplished by the concerned authority within a period of four weeks. Petitioner shall assist and cooperate in the said exercise by providing copies of requisite documents or by supplying necessary material on instruction by the authorities concerned.

(ii) If the Drone Survey is already accomplished, a fresh demand notice accompanied by a copy of the Survey Report be supplied to the petitioner within one week and the petitioner may file his reply/response to the same within two weeks next following.

(iii) The jurisdictional authority shall duly consider petitioner's reply, if any, and determine de novo the levy and penalty in accordance with law.

(iv) Till this exercise is completed, the demand notice challenged in the petition shall be kept in abeyance. It is needless to state that this demand notice may undergo variation depending upon the Drone Survey Report and petitioner's response to the same. Costs made easy.

Source: <https://indiankanoon.org/doc/32554840/?type=print>

2. Shri Manjunath Yellappa Timmapur S/o Yellappa Thimmapur, Petitioner v. State of Karnataka and others, Opp. Parties, Respondents AIR 2024, Karnataka High Court 6136.

Subject: This writ petition is filed under article 226 and 227 of the constitution of India, praying to a) call for entire records pertaining to the demand notice dated 29.04.2022 issued by the senior geologist, Department of Mines and Geology, Haveri bearing No. Gabuee/Heebuha/Notice/2022-23-282 demanding a sum of Rs.1,18,63,056/- produced as annexure a) to pursue the same and grant the following relief to the petitioner and I) be please to set aside and quash the impugned demand notice dated 29.04.2022 issued by the senior geologist, Department of Mines and Geology, Haveri bearing No. Gabuee/Heebuha/Notice/2022-23-282. The petitioner, a mining lease operator is invoking the writ jurisdiction of this Court for assailing the Demand Notice dated 29.04.2022 issued by the 5th respondent - Senior Geologist at Annexure-A and the Revisional Order dated 15.12.2022 issued by the 4th respondent - Additional Director-cum-Revisional Authority at Annex-B. The net effect of what is impugned is to compel the petitioner to pay a sum of Rs.1,18,63,056/- by way of royalty and penalty.

Facts: 1. Learned counsel for the petitioner argues that the impugned demand and the levy are incompetent; the answering respondents have ignored the payments made by the petitioner by way of royalty since January 2019; there is absolutely no material to assume that the petitioner has transported an additional quantity of sand i.e. 9788 Metric Tonnes unauthorisedly. The impugned orders are made contrary to the principles of natural justice. Even, the penalty is far in excess of what is NC: 2023:KHC:38020-DB permissible under the Karnataka Minor Mineral Concession Rules, 1994. According to him, these lapses do constitute errors apparent on the face of the record and therefore, the impugned orders are liable to be set at naught.

2. Learned Principal Government Advocate appearing for the respondents vehemently opposed the writ petition making submission in justification of the impugned levy & demand; he contends that due opportunity was given to the petitioner and the impugned proceedings have been drawn with his participation. At no point of time, petitioner has made payment of royalty in respect of the quantity of mineral in question. The Authorities having considered all aspects of the matter have rightly levied the royalty and penalty, which would go to the State Exchequer. If there is any mistake in the quantification of the penalty or royalty amount, it is open to the petitioner to seek remedy under Rule 55 of the 1994 Rules. So contending, he seeks dismissal of the writ petition.

3. Having heard the learned counsel for the parties and having perused the petition papers, we decline indulgence in the matter broadly agreeing with the submission of learned Principal Government Advocate. Firstly, the Authorities after conducting due inspection and vigilance in discharge of their official duties have quantified excess mineral transported by the petitioner and i.e. 9788 Metric Tonnes. Despite vociferous arguments, petitioner is not in a position to demonstrate any error in the process of this

quantification and we cannot undertake a deeper examination of the same in the judicial review under Articles 226 & 227 of the Constitution of India.

4. The vehement submission of the learned counsel for the petitioner that his client has already made payments has not been vouched by placing requisite material on record, despite granting opportunity twice for this purpose. Certain copies of statutory forms now placed on record with a memo are not reflected in the original file at the hands of the learned Principal Government Advocate. NC: 2023:KHC:38020-DB After all, payments of the kind are always made by bank cheques and the particulars thereof have not been furnished by the petitioner. The repeated assertion that a person has made the payment would not come to his aid in the absence of evidentiary records.

5. The last submission of learned counsel for the petitioner that the levy of penalty is far in excess of what is permitted under the provisions of 1994 Rules does not merit deeper examination at our hands. Learned Principal Government Advocate is more than justified in drawing our attention to the provisions of Rule 55 which is structured in line with Section 152 of CPC, 1908; this provision provides remedy at the departmental level and the petitioner can have recourse to the same. In that connection, all contentions are kept open.

6. The submission of the learned counsel for the petitioner that his client had no reasonable opportunity of participation in the proceedings is liable to be rejected inasmuch as several notices were sent to him and he failed NC: 2023:KHC:38020-DB to show cause against the proposal for the levy. Even the Revisional Authority having looked into all aspects of the matter has affirmed the demand. Such statutory orders cannot be deeply examined by us as if we are a Court of appeal. It hardly needs to be stated that the focal point writ jurisdiction is the decision making process and not its end product, namely the decision itself vide SUSHIL KUMAR vs. STATE OF HARYANA, (2022) 3 SCC 203.

Decision: In the above circumstances and with the above observations, this petition being devoid of merits is liable to be and accordingly, dismissed, costs having been made easy.

Source: <https://indiankanoon.org/doc/10758063/>

SECTION -2

TREND IN MINING, PROSPECTING AND COMPOSITE LICENSE

2.1 TREND IN MINING

A. Mining Leases Granted

During the period under review, the information pertaining to the grant of 06 mining leases covering an area of 1330.838 hectares were received. Of these, iron ore accounted for 03 mining leases followed by limestone (CG), limestone and manganese with 01 mining lease each.

Reviewing areawise limestone (CG) accounted for 997.08 hectares followed by limestone 131.568 hectares, iron ore 120.240 hectares and manganese 81.950 hectares.

Reviewing state wise, number of mining leases and area granted in the state of Andhra Pradesh were 03 with 1210.598 hectares, followed by Karnataka 03 with 120.240 hectares.

The mineral-wise number of mining leases granted together with lease area and details of mining leases granted are given in Tables 1 A & 1 B, respectively.

**Table – 1 A: Details of Mining Leases Granted
(By Minerals)**

Mineral	No. of Mining Leases Granted	Area in hectares
Iron Ore	3	120.240
Limestone (CG)	1	997.08
Limestone	1	131.568
Manganese	1	81.950
Total	06	1330.838

Table – 1 B: Details of Mining Leases Granted

Mineral	State/ District	Village	Area in ha.	Date of Grant	Period in years	Name & Address
Iron Ore	Karnataka / Ballari	Dharmapura	60.66	02.04.2024	50	MSPL Ltd, Baldota Bhavan, 117, Maharshi Karve Road, Mumbai- 400 020
Iron Ore	Karnataka / Ballari	Ramanadurga	30.09	02.04.2024	50	MSPL Ltd, Baldota Bhavan, 117, Maharshi Karve Road,

						Mumbai- 400 020
Iron Ore	Karnataka/ Ballari	Ubbalagundi	29.49	05.10.2023	50	Minera Steel & Power Pvt. Ltd., Prestige Minera No. 6, Main Guard Cross Road, Shivaji Nagar, Bengaluru- 560001.
Limestone (CG)	Andhra Pradesh/ YSR Kadapa	Dhannawada, Chinnaventurla, Vaddirala, Bestavemula, Gollapalli and G. Uppalapadu	997.08	15.11.2023	50	Associated Cement companies Ltd. ACC Thane Complex, LBS Marg, Thane- 400 604
Limestone	Andhra Pradesh/ Kurnool	Erragudi, Hussainapurama and Yanakandla	131.568	01.11.2023	50	Sree Jayajothi cements pvt Ltd., Kurnool District, Andhra Pradesh
Manganese	Andhra Pradesh/ Vizianagaram	Sy.Nos. 78,91 of Kondapalem Hamelt of Sriramapuram and Sy.Nos.145,146, 147,152,153,& 154 of Koduru, Sy.Nos. 3,4,12 to 31 of Duvvam	81.95	11.10.2023	50	Mahalaxmi Minerals, Garbham village, Merakamudidam mandal, Vizainagaram District

B. Mining Leases Executed

**Table – 2 A : Details of Mining Leases Executed
(By Minerals)**

Mineral	No. of Mining Leases Executed	Area in ha
Iron Ore	4	164.66

Table – 2 B : Details of Mining Leases Executed

Mineral	State/ District	Village	Area in ha	Date of Execution/ Registration	Period in Years	Name & Address
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Iron Ore	Karnataka/ Ballari	Ubbalagundi	29.49	05.10.2023	50	Minera Steel & Power Pvt. Ltd., Prestige Minera No. 6, Main Guard Cross Road, Shivaji Nagar, Bengaluru- 560001.
Iron Ore	Karnataka/ Ballari	Ramanadurga	30.09	02.04.2024	50	MSPL Ltd, Baldota Bhavan, 117, Maharshi Karve Road, Mumbai- 400 020
Iron Ore	Karnataka/ Ballari	Dharmapura	60.66	02.04.2024	50	MSPL Ltd, Baldota Bhavan, 117, Maharshi Karve Road, Mumbai- 400 020
Iron Ore	Karnataka/ Ballari	Janikunta	44.42	28.02.2024	50	Hothur Ispat Pvt Ltd., Hothur Estates, NH-63, Veniveerapur, Hospet Road, Bellary- 583115

C. Mining Lease Period Extended

Table – 3 : Details of Mining Leases Extended

Mineral	State/ District	Village	Area in ha	Date of Extension	Date up to which lease period extended	Name & Address
Limestone and Dolomite	Karnataka/ Bagalkote	Naganapur	3.126	11.10.2023	22.05.2053	Shri Gurunath B Hugar, Village:- Naganapur Taluk:- Mudhol Bagalkote- 587313
Limestone	Gujarat/ Junagadh	Vadodara, Vavdi, etc.	30.71.62	03.11.2023	31.03.2030	Dhrangadhra Chemical Works Ltd., Soda Ash Divison, (Registered Office), Dhrangadhra, Dist. Surendranagar, Gujarat- 363310

Limestone	Karnataka/ Belgavi	Kamkere	4.46	17.10.2023	04.07.2053	Sri. Basappa Dundappa kenchareddy, Halki village, Ningapur Post, Mudhol Taluk, Bagalkote- 587313
Limestone	Andhra Pradesh/ Guntur	Ramapuram	191.290	10.11.2023	23.09.2051	Andhra Cements Limited*, D. No. 6-3- 903/B/1, Somajiguda, Hyderabad, Telangana
Limestone	Karnataka / Kalburgi	Ravoor k. chittapura, K Nagao	796.43	11.03.2024	17.11.2058	Nuvoco Vistas Corporation Limited, East Wing, 4 th Floor, Off. Bandra Kurla Complex, LBS Road, Mumbai- 400070
Limestone and Dolomite	Karnataka / Bagalkote	Muddapur	4.86	24.01.2024	28.03.2060	Sri Channabasappa A. Patil, Muddapura village, Mudhol Taluk, Bhagalkote- 587313
Limestone	Karnataka / Bagalkote	Lokapur	1.194	20.12.2023	02.07.2052	Sri Shivanand L. Udapudi, Lokapur village, Mudhol Taluk, Bagalkote- 587122
Magnesite	Karnataka/ Mysuru	Taluru	11.88	03.01.2024	22.04.2055	Sri N Rajashekar, No. 38, Sri Nanjundeshwara Nilaya, Udayaravi Road, KHB Colony, Mysuru- 570023

Manganese Ore	Andhra Pradesh / Vizianagram	Garividi	21.587	15.09.2023	19.08.2024	RBSSD&FN Das, Sriramnagar Post, Garividi Village and Mandal, Vizianagram
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*It also includes permission for change of management from M/s Andhra Cements (Old Management) to M/s Andhra Cements Limited (New Management).

D. Mining Leases Transferred

Table – 4A: Details of Mining Leases Transferred

Mineral	State / District	Village	Area	Name and Address		Date of Transfer of Lease
				Transferor	Transferee	
Bauxite	Maharashtra / Ratnagiri	Mandivali	139.05 Ha	Smt. Hanifa haroon fazlani, Ratnagiri	Harekrishna Metallics Private Limited	19.10.2023
Iron Ore	Andhra Pradesh/ Kurnool	Gutupalli	19.94 Ha	Sri T. Parvatha Reddy	Gutupalli Mining company	17.09.2011
Limestone	Karnataka/ Belagavi	Kamkeri	4.53 Ha	Sri Basappa Dundappa Kenchareddy	Sri Thippanna Dundappa Kenchareddy	16.10.2023
Limestone	Karnataka/ Belagavi	Kamkeri	10-07 acres	Shri Ramanna Sidappa Pujar	Choudhary Minerals	07.03.2024

Table – 4B: Details of Change the Name of Owner of Mining Leases

Mineral	State / District	Village	Area in ha	Name of Owner		Date of change of Name
				Old Owner	Current Owner	
Limestone and /or Marl	Gujarat/ Gir Somnath (Erstwhile Junagadh)	Sutrapada	93.14.07	Gujarat Sidhee Cement Ltd.	Saurashtra Cement Limited.	09.10.2023
Limestone	Andhra Pradesh/ Guntur	Sankarapuram, Kesanupalli, Gogulapadu	673.73	Gujarat Ambuja Cements Ltd	Ambuja Cements Ltd.	08.11.2023

Limestone	Andhra Pradesh/ Guntur	Nadikudi, Alugumallipadu, Gogulapadu	277.87	Gujarat Ambuja Cements Ltd	Ambuja Cements Ltd	08.11.2023
Limestone	Gujarat/ Gir Somnath (Erstwhile Junagadh)	Sutrapada	253.85.42	Gujarat Sidhee Cement, Porbandar, Gujarat	Saurashtra Cement Limited, Porbandar, Gujarat	09.10.2023
Limestone	Gujarat/ Gir Somnath (Erstwhile Junagadh)	Lodhva, Padruka	136.18.44	Gujarat Sidhee Cement.	Saurashtra Cement Limited.	09.10.2023
		Lodhva	388.13.93			

E. Temporary Discontinuance of Mine

Table – 5 : Temporary Discontinuance of Mine

Mineral	State/ District	Name of Mine	Village	Date of Discontinuan ce of Mine	Area in ha	Name & Address
Limestone	Madhya Pradesh/ Satna	Ramasthan Limestone Mine	Ramasthan	01.08.2023	32.374	Shri Shrawan Kumar Pathak Chanakyapuri, Satna Madhya Pradesh

F. Mines Re-Opened

Table – 6: Details of Mines Re-opened

Mineral	State/ District	Name of Mine	Village	Date of Re-Opening	Area in Ha	Name & Address
Limestone	Madhya Pradesh/ Satna	Ranasthan Limestone Mine	Ramasthan	12.12.2023	32.374	Shri Shrawan Kumar Pathak Chanakyapuri, Satna Madhya Pradesh.

2.2 TREND IN PROSPECTING

A. Prospecting Licenses Granted

**Table – 7: Prospecting Licenses Granted*
(By Minerals)**

Mineral	State / District	Village	Area in ha	Date on which Licences Granted	Period in Years	Name & Address
Limestone	Meghalaya / East Khasi Hills	Ka Bkhap, Elaka Wahlong Sirdarship	4.33	19.09.2023	-	Shri Symper Nongtraw, Mawbang village, Wahlong Sirdarship, East khasi Hills Dist, Meghalaya
Limestone	Meghalaya / East Khasi Hills	Lumshyiap	10.00	13.12.2023	-	Smti. Streamlet Merry Syiem, H. No-110, Lumshyiap Pdengshnong, East Khasi Hills District Meghalaya
Limestone	Meghalaya / West Khasi Hills	Khonjoy-A	20.00	14.09.2023	-	Shri Kyrshanborlang Syiemlieh, Mawlai Nongpdeng, Shillong, East Khasi Hills, Meghalaya
Limestone	Meghalaya / West Jaintia Hill	Amkhlow, Amlari	9.97	21.03.2024	-	Shri Shemphang Lakashieng, Amzalong village, West Jaintia Hills, Meghalaya.

* The State Govt. authorized the Party to Grant PL.

B. Composite Licenses Granted

**Table – 8: Composite Licenses Granted
(By Minerals)**

Mineral	State / District	Village	Area in ha	Date on which Licences Granted	Period in Years	Name & Address
Gold	Karnataka / Chitradurga	Bellagatta	2501.58	10.10.2023	-	PM Granite Exports Pvt Ltd., 129, 7 th Main Jayanagar, Bengaluru.
Manganese	Andhra Pradesh/ Vizianagaram	Budharayavala	638.00	25.08.2023	-	MOR Metals and Minerals, Vinayagar, South Garden, Harber Park Road, Vishakhapatnam.

C. Composite Licenses Executed

**Table – 9 : Composite Licences Executed
(By Minerals)**

Mineral	State/ District	Village	Area in ha	Date of Execution/ Registration	Period in Years	Name & Address
Gold	Karnataka / Chitradurga	Bellagatta	2501.58	10.10.2023	-	PM Granite Exports Pvt Ltd, 129, 7 th Main Jayanagar, Bengaluru.

SECTION - 3

HIGHLIGHTS

A. DOMESTIC

Limited lithium resources a hurdle in EV adoption.

There is a need to shift away from lithium-ion to other chemistries such as sodium-ion, in a bid to increase the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) in the country.

“Eighty per cent of lithium reserves are tied up by one country, and 88 per cent of lithium processing is located in one country. Supply chain issues have now come to the forefront. What needs to be done is to shift away from lithium to other chemistries such as sodium ion. Alternative chemistries are absolutely essential for security of supply chain,”

The future is electric. Nobody can stop this. The price of storage will come down, and once that comes down, diesel and petrol SUVs will be history. We will have electric, which suits our journey as one of the largest economies of the world.

(Source: Business Line, October, 17, 2023)

Government sets lithium mining royalty at 3% of LME prices.

India set royalty rates for the mining of three critical minerals, including lithium, that are key to its clean energy ambitions. The royalty rates for lithium extraction by mining companies will be fixed at @ 3% of London Metal Exchange (LME) price chargeable on the Lithium metal in ore produced.

India has been exploring ways to secure supplies of lithium, a critical raw material used to make electric vehicle batteries, and found its first lithium deposits in the federally controlled region of Jammu & Kashmir.

The government also set the royalty for niobium mining at @ 3% of the average sale price of Niobium metal chargeable on the Niobium metal contained in the ore produced and for rare earth elements (REEs) at 1% of average sale price of Rare Earth Oxide (REO) chargeable on

the Rare Earth Oxide contained in the ore produced . Niobium is also used in making electric vehicle battery cells.

The approval will pave the way for the auction of mining blocks for the three minerals for the first time in the country. Critical minerals have become essential for economic development and national security in the country. Critical minerals such as Lithium and REEs have gained significance in view of India's commitment towards energy transition and achieving net-zero emission by 2070.

(Source: The Hindu, October, 12, 2023)

Metal recycling industry calls for policy adjustments to boost circular economy.

Goods and Service Tax, import duty and absence of other initiatives for a circular economy are hindering metal recycling. With more headwinds expected from scrap-exporting countries in near future, the country needs to remove ambiguity to showcase India's commitment to a circular economy, aiming at reducing emissions.

(Source: Business Standard, January 24, 2024)

Digitalisation trends in the mining industry.

Digitalization in the mining industry is well underway. Emerging technologies like Cloud, AI, Robotics and Big Data are enabling mining organizations to optimize production and exploration processes, improve supply chain and logistics and increase sustainability. Most companies have been automating certain parts of their processes for years now, so they already have some of the prerequisites to utilize digitalization. Most mines are in the pre-implementation phase of their journey. In fact, nearly one-third is still in the initial exploration and fact-finding stage – and only 10% have completed at least one digital implementation.

(Source: Cygnetise, March, 2024)

Indian mining equipment market looks positive, given the scope in underground, surface mining.

The India Underground Mining Equipment includes specialized machinery for extracting minerals like coal, iron ore, and gold from beneath the earth's surface. This market is growing due to rapid industrialization, urbanization, technological advancements, and government

initiatives, driving demand for efficient, safe, and eco-friendly mining solutions. The India Underground Mining Equipment Market holds several core values that are pivotal to its growth and sustainability:

(Source: Minerals & Metals Review, October, 2023)

Women Forge New Paths in the Metals & Mining Industry.

As the world gears up to celebrate International Women’s Day 2024, Vedanta Aluminium, India’s largest aluminium producer, is poised to have women comprise nearly a third of its workforce by the end of FY25. It underscores Vedanta Aluminium’s commitment to fostering greater gender diversity while also marking a significant step in bridging the gender gap in the traditionally male-dominated metals and mining industry. These moves have helped Vedanta Aluminum build a cadre of pioneering women who are setting new benchmarks in India’s manufacturing sector. On the occasion of International Women’s Day 2024, the company has rolled out the ‘Women Of Mettle’ series of short films as part of its ‘#TheFutureOfMetal’ campaign, which aims to encourage more women to explore fulfilling careers in the metals and mining industry.

(Source: Business Micro, March 06, 2024)

SANKALP PROJECT

Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (“SANKALP”) is a programme of the Ministry of Skill Development with loan assistance from the World Bank. It aims to improve short term skill training qualitatively and quantitatively through strengthening institutions, bring in better market connectivity and inclusion of marginalized sections of the society. SANKALP was launched on 19th January 2018 and has a tenure till March 2023.

The outcomes in the project are measured through the Results Framework, and Disbursement Linked Indicators (DLIs) agreed between MSDE and World Bank.

"SANKALP has three key result areas namely (i) Institutional Strengthening at Central, State and District level; (ii) Quality Assurance of skill development programmes; and (iii) Inclusion of marginalized population in skill development programmes.

(Source: Skill Mining News Update, October, 2023)

What's next for green steel technologies?

Steelmaking's transition to more sustainable processes will be crucial to driving down global emissions. However, current commercially viable technologies may require significant technological advancements if steelmaking is to play its part in meeting net-zero targets.

(Source: Mineral & Metals Reviews, March, 2024)

Rajasthan launches major drive against illegal mining with drone survey.

The Government in Rajasthan has launched a major drive against illegal mining activities by conducting surveys through drones, wherever needed, to put a curb on the sources of such activities. The highest number of 75 illegal mining cases have been detected in Bhilwara district, where the revenue authorities have been alerted. The State has the highest number of mining leases in the country, while the government has been taking measures to curb unlicensed and illegal mining by using remote sensing data and geographic information system.

(Source: The Hindu, January 28, 2024)

Zinc futures: Initiate short positions.

Zinc futures on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) surpassed the resistance at ₹225 and hit a high of ₹233 on September 29. However, the breakout did not sustain as the contract fell in the following session. Thus, the barrier at ₹225 is still true and a strong one. Until this hurdle holds, the bears will have an upper hand.

(Source: The Hindu, October 18, 2023)

B. ABROAD

As lithium prices plunge, Chinese refining firms cut production.

With prices of lithium carbonate, a key commodity used in making batteries of electric vehicles (EVs), declining by 67 per cent year-on-year, some of the Chinese refining companies have begun to cut production or suspend operations. As the battery material prices drop, the losses of Chinese producers have increased. Due to this, some of the firms have stopped from resorting to sharp cut in prices and have resorted to either production cut or suspend operations, Shanghai Metal Market (SMM) news said.

Currently, lithium carbonate prices are ruling at 165,000 Chinese yuan (\$23,123.39) a tonne, a two-and-a-half year low due to low demand. The production cut will likely slow down the fall in lithium carbonate prices.

“In 2023, prices have fallen significantly as the market swings from deficit to being in balance. The high prices in 2021 and 2022 incentivized more investment in lithium production, resulting in global supply catching up to demand.

High prices in 2021 and 2022 drove companies to destock and reduce the cost of carrying inventory — putting further downward pressure on prices.

“Of all the metals, we expect lithium to have the strongest impact on the cost of battery energy storage systems and as prices for lithium fall in the medium-term they will reduce risk to consumers”.

(Source: Business Lines, October 07, 2023)

India acquires five lithium blocks in Argentina.

India has announced the acquisition of five lithium blocks in Argentina. The Mines Ministry, through Khanij Bidesh India Ltd (KABIL), signed an agreement with Argentina’s State owned CAMYEN. The State-owned KABIL will start exploration and development of five lithium brine blocks, namely Cortadera-I, Cortadera-VII, Cortadera-VIII, Cateo-2022-01810132, and Cortadera-VI, covering an area of about 15,703 hectares. With this agreement, KABIL has obtained Exploration and Exclusivity Rights for five blocks. The agreement will allow the State-owned entity to evaluate, prospect, and explore. Upon subsequent discovery of lithium minerals, exploitation rights for commercial production have also been granted. This is the first-ever

lithium exploration and mining project undertaken by a government company in India. This will not only boost the country's quest for sourcing lithium but also bring in technical and operational experience for brine-type lithium exploration, exploitation, and extraction.

(Source: Business Lines, January 17, 2024)

China top steel seller to India for April - Sept period FY24, displaces Korea, Japan.

China has for the first time emerged as the largest seller of steel to India, toppling key markets like Korea and Japan for H1FY24, with nearly 918,000 tonnes coming in, data from India's steel ministry accessed by business line shows. Moreover, Vietnam, a key export market for Indian mills, is now amongst the top-seller or importer to Indian trade.

China displaced Korea (917,000 tonnes) and Japan (427,000 tonnes) from the top two slots, while Vietnam (191,000 tonnes) displaced Taiwan (78,000 tonnes), for the first half of the fiscal. The change came about as Chinese imports zoomed by 55 per cent YoY, while Vietnamese offerings shot up by a whopping 485 per cent. Korea saw a dip in imports by 16 per cent respectively.

(Source: Business Lines October 31, 2023)

Steel mills hold back exports to S-E Asia, West Asia; EU sees green shoots.

India's steel mills have again held back on exports for three months now given stiff competition from China that continues to be 10-20 per cent lower-than-expected market rates. Mills here placed the last export offers at \$660 per tonne against which the competing Chinese offers were sub-\$600(around \$50-59-/tonne). Till December 15, Indian mills have reportedly withdrawn all export offers specially for markets in and around South East Asia, Middle East and elsewhere including Turkey.

In case of most export offer being made by China, quotes are "lower than their production cost too", some exporters have pointed out.

(Source: Business Line December 14, 2023)

India, US agree to strengthen cooperation in pharma, semiconductors, critical minerals.

India and the US have agreed to strengthen cooperation in sectors like pharmaceuticals, semiconductors, critical minerals and emerging technologies. The two countries also discussed

collaborative opportunities in green and clean technologies; and strengthening partnership in critical technologies. As both sides are focused on closer engagement based on trust, following key areas emerged from the discussions - supply chain cooperation across pharma, semiconductors, critical minerals and energy; collaborative opportunities in green tech and scaling up manufacturing for clean tech; and strengthening partnership in critical and emerging technologies.

(Source: The Telegraph Online, December 01, 2023)

India tapping into Australia for more lithium mines.

India's Mines Ministry has reached out to Australia seeking access to "more" lithium reserves and mines while expressing interest to carry out "due diligence, prospecting and exploration" activities. India is doing "due diligence" for two lithium mines and three cobalt mines in Australia already. According to an official, the Australian authorities had identified at least five mines of lithium and cobalt for Indian entities, led by state-owned Khanij Bidesh India Ltd. (KABIL), the joint venture between state-run NALCO, Hindustan Copper and Mineral Exploration Corporation. These mines are a mix of explored assets and some where reserves have been determined, which has led to "due diligence" being carried out. Australia produces almost half of the world's lithium, is the second-largest producer of cobalt and the fourth-largest producer of rare earth elements.

Lithium, a white alkali material, is a key requirement in energy storage solutions and is used across batteries in electric vehicles, and mobile phones, among others. It forms the cornerstone of India's transition to green energy options and of bringing down carbon footprint.

India and some other countries, including the EU, has been trying to push for parity in the global supply of critical mineral including lithium. Most of the sector is dominated by China (primarily in mining and processing segments).

(Source: Business Line, December 02, 2023)
