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Ministry of Mines

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SECTION-1

Mineral Legislation and Policy on Export and Import of Minerals/Ores

1. MINERAL LEGISLATION

A. Amendments/ Notifications

1. Ministry of Mines, G.S.R. 864(E) — In pursuance of 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 following entities for the purposes of the second proviso to Sub-section (1) of Section 4 of the said Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, namely: -

- (i) Tamil Nadu Minerals Limited (State Government Undertaking);
 - (ii) Tamil Nadu Magnesite Limited (State Government Undertaking);
 - (iii) Tamil Nadu Cements Corporation Limited (State Government Undertaking); and
 - (iv) NLC India Limited (Central Government Undertaking under the administrative control of the Ministry of Coal).
2. This notification shall be subject to the condition that the data generated by the prospecting operations be made over to the concerned State Government.
3. This notification shall come into force on the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

Source: *The Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II-Section 3(i), dated 20.11.2019.*

2. Ministry of Law and Justice (Legislative Department), Notification No. 9 —

The following Act of Parliament received the assent of the President on the 13th March, 2020, and is hereby published for general information—

THE MINERAL LAWS (AMENDMENT) ACT, 2020 NO. 2 OF 2020

[13th March, 2020.]

An Act further to amend the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 and to amend the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015. Be it enacted by Parliament in the Seventy-first Year of the Republic of India as follows:—

CHAPTER I

Preliminary

1. (1) This Act may be called the Mineral Laws (Amendment) Act, 2020.
- (2) It shall be deemed to have come into force on the 10th day of January, 2020.
- (3) Without prejudice to the effect of the amendments made by this Act, it shall remain in force for a period of sixty days from the date of assent by the President and shall be deemed to have been repealed after the expiry of the said period.

CHAPTER II

Amendments to the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957

2. In the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (hereafter in this Chapter referred to as the principal Act), after Section 4A, the following Section shall be inserted, namely—

"4B. Notwithstanding anything contained in Section 4A, the Central Government may, in the interest of maintaining sustained production of minerals in the country, prescribe such conditions as may be necessary for commencement and continuation of production by the holders of mining leases who have acquired rights, approvals, clearances and the like under Section 8B."

3. In Section 5 of the principal Act, in Sub-section (1), after the proviso, the following proviso shall be inserted, namely—

"Provided further that the previous approval of the Central Government shall not be required for grant of reconnaissance permit, prospecting licence or mining lease in respect of the minerals specified in Part A of the First Schedule, where,—

- (i) an allocation order has been issued by the Central Government under Section 11A;
or
- (ii) a notification of reservation of area has been issued by the Central Government or the State Government under Sub-section (1A) or Sub-section (2) of Section 17A;
or
- (iii) a vesting order or an allotment order has been issued by the Central Government under the provisions of the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015."

4. In Section 8A of the principal Act, in Sub-section (4), the following proviso shall be inserted, namely—

"Provided that nothing contained in this section shall prevent the State Governments from taking an advance action for auction of the mining lease before the expiry of the lease period."

5. After Section 8A of the principal Act, the following section shall be inserted, namely—

"8B. (1) The provisions of this section shall apply to minerals, other than the minerals specified in Part A and Part B of the First Schedule.

(2) Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act or any other law for the time being in force, the successful bidder of mining leases expiring under the provisions of Sub-sections (5) and (6) of Section 8A and selected through auction as per the procedure provided under this Act and the rules made thereunder, shall be deemed to have acquired all valid rights, approvals, clearances, licences and the like vested with the previous lessee for a period of two years:

Provided that subject to such conditions as may be prescribed, such new lessee shall apply and obtain all necessary rights, approvals, clearances, licences and the like within a period of two years from the date of grant of new lease.

(3) Notwithstanding anything contained in any other law for the time being in force, it shall be lawful for the new lessee to continue mining operations on the land, in which mining operations were being carried out by the previous lessee, for a period of two years from the date of commencement of the new lease."

6. In Section 10C of the principal Act, in Sub-section (2), the following shall be inserted, namely—

"Provided that the holder of non-exclusive reconnaissance permit who carries out the prescribed level of exploration in respect of deep seated minerals or such minerals as may be notified by the Central Government, may submit an application to the State Government for the grant of any prospecting licence-cum-mining lease as per the procedure laid down under Section 11 or a mining lease as per the procedure laid down under Section 10B and with a view to increase the reconnaissance and prospecting operations of such minerals, the Central Government shall prescribe such procedure, including the bidding parameters for selection of such holders.

Explanation—For the purposes of this sub-section, the expression "deep seated minerals" means such minerals which occur at a depth of more than three hundred meters from the surface of land with poor surface manifestations."

7. In Section 11A of the principal Act,—

(i) in the marginal heading, after the words "or mining lease", the words "or prospecting licence-cum-mining lease in respect of coal or lignite" shall be inserted;

(ii) in Sub-section (1)—

(a) in the opening portion, for the words "in respect of any area containing coal or lignite", the words "or prospecting licence-cum-mining lease in respect of coal or lignite" shall be substituted;

(b) for the long line, the following long line shall be substituted, namely—

"to carry on coal or lignite reconnaissance or prospecting or mining operations, for own consumption, sale or for any other purpose as may be determined by the Central Government";

(c) the following proviso shall be inserted, namely—

"Provided that the auction by competitive bidding under this section shall not be applicable to coal or lignite—

(a) where such area is considered for allotment to a Government company or corporation or a joint venture company formed by such company or corporation or between the Central Government or the State Government, as the case may be, for own consumption, sale or for any other purpose as may be determined by the Central Government;

(b) where such area is considered for allotment to a company or corporation that has been awarded a power project on the basis of competitive bid for tariff (including Ultra Mega Power Projects).";

(iii) in Sub-section (3),—

(a) after the words "mining lease", the words "or prospecting licence-cum-mining lease" shall be inserted;

(b) for the words "competitive bidding or otherwise", the words "competitive bidding or through allotment" shall be substituted.

8. In Section 13 of the principal Act, in Sub-section (2),—

(i) after Clause (a), the following clauses shall be inserted, namely—

"(aa) the conditions as may be necessary for commencement and continuation of production by the holders of mining leases, under Section 4B;

(ab) the conditions to be fulfilled by the new lessee for obtaining all necessary rights, approvals, clearances, licences and the like under the proviso to Sub-section (2) of Section 8B;

(ac) the level of exploration in respect of deep seated minerals or such minerals and the procedure, including the bidding parameters for selection of the holders under the proviso to Sub-section (2) of Section 10C";

(ii) for Clause (d), the following clauses shall be substituted, namely—

"(d) the terms, conditions and process of auction by competitive bidding and allotment in respect of coal or lignite;

(da) the regulation of grant of reconnaissance permit, prospecting licence, mining lease or prospecting licence-cum-mining lease in respect of coal or lignite;

(db) the details of mines and their location, the minimum size of such mines and such other conditions which may be necessary for the purpose of coal or lignite reconnaissance, prospecting or mining operations;

(dc) utilisation of coal or lignite including mining for sale by a company;".

9. In Section 17A of the principal Act, in Sub-section (2A), in the proviso, the words and letter "Part A and" shall be omitted.

CHAPTER III

Amendments to the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015

10. In Section 4 of the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015 (hereafter in this Chapter referred to as the principal Act),—

(i) in Sub-section (2),—

(a) in the opening portion, for the words "in respect of any area containing coal", the words "or prospecting licence-cum-mining lease in respect of coal" shall be substituted;

(b) for the long line, the following long line shall be substituted, namely—

"to carry on coal reconnaissance or prospecting or mining operations, for own consumption, sale or for any other purpose as may be determined by the Central Government, and the State Government shall grant such reconnaissance permit,

prospecting licence, mining lease or prospecting licence-cum-mining lease in respect of Schedule I coal mine to such company as selected through auction by competitive bidding under this section.";

(ii) Sub-section (3) shall be omitted.

11. In Section 5 of the principal Act, in Sub-section (1),—

(i) for the words, brackets and figures "Sub-sections (1) and (3)", the words, brackets and figures "Sub-sections (1) and (2)" shall be substituted;

(ii) for the words "or mining lease in respect of any area containing coal", the words " , mining lease or prospecting licence-cum-mining lease in respect of such Schedule I coal mine" shall be substituted;

(iii) in the first proviso, for the words "in accordance with the permit, prospecting licence or mining lease, as the case may be", the words "as may be determined by the Central Government" shall be substituted.

12. In Section 8 of the principal Act,—

(i) in Sub-section (4), in Clause (b), for the words "a mining lease", the words "prospecting licence, mining lease or prospecting licence-cum-mining lease, as the case may be" shall be substituted;

(ii) in Sub-section (8), for the words "a prospecting licence or a mining lease", the words "prospecting licence, mining lease or prospecting licence-cum-mining lease" shall be substituted;

(iii) in Sub-section (9), for the words "a prospecting licence or a mining lease", the words "prospecting licence, mining lease or prospecting licence-cum-mining lease" shall be substituted;

(iv) after Sub-section (12), the following sub-sections shall be inserted, namely:—

"(13) The vesting order or allotment order may be terminated by the nominated authority in such manner as may be prescribed.

(14) Upon termination of vesting order or allotment order, the nominated authority may auction the coal mine under Section 4 or allot the coal mine under Section 5 as may be determined by the Central Government.

(15) The successful bidder or allottee of the coal mine whose vesting order or allotment order has been terminated shall be deemed to be the prior allottee for the purposes of immediate next auction or allotment of the said coal mine."

13. In Section 9 of the principal Act,—

(i) in the opening portion, for the portion beginning with the words "The proceeds arising out of land" and ending with the words "as may be prescribed", the following shall be substituted, namely:—

"The compensation for land and mine infrastructure in relation to a Schedule I coal mine as valued in accordance with Section 16 shall be deposited by the successful bidder or allottee with the nominated authority and shall be disbursed maintaining, *inter alia*, the following priority of payments and in accordance with the relevant laws and such rules as may be prescribed.";

(ii) in Clause (b), for the words "compensation payable", the words "amount payable" shall be substituted."

14. In Section 18 of the principal Act, in Sub-section (1), for the words and figure "allotment of Schedule I coal mines is not complete", the words and figures "allotment of Schedule II coal mines is not complete, or vesting order or allotment order issued under this Act has been terminated in case of a coal mine under production," shall be substituted.
15. In Section 20 of the principal Act,—
 - (i) in Sub-section (1), for the words "A successful bidder or allottee or coal linkage holder shall", the words "A successful bidder or allottee shall" shall be substituted;
 - (ii) for Sub-section (2), the following sub-section shall be substituted, namely—
 "(2) A successful bidder or allottee may also use the coal mine from a particular Schedule I coal mine, in any of its plants or plant of its subsidiary or holding company engaged in same specified end-uses in such manner as may be prescribed."
16. In Section 31 of the principal Act, in Sub-section (2),—
 - (i) in Clause (b), for the words "prospecting licence or mining lease", the words "prospecting licence, mining lease or prospecting licence-cum-mining lease" shall be substituted;
 - (ii) after Clause (1), the following clause shall be inserted, namely—
 "(1a) the manner of termination of vesting order or allotment order under Sub-section (13) of Section 8;"
17. (1) The Mineral Laws (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 is hereby repealed.
 (2) Notwithstanding such repeal, anything done or any action taken under the principal Act, as amended by the said Ordinance, shall be deemed to have been done or taken under the corresponding provisions of the principal Act as amended by this Act.

Source: The Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II – Section 1, dated 13.03.2020.

3. Ministry of Mines, G.S.R. 190(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 to amend the Mineral (Auction) Rules, 2015, namely —

1. (1) These rules may be called the Mineral (Auction) Amendment Rules, 2020.
 (2) They shall come into force on the date of their publication in the Official Gazette.
2. In the Mineral (Auction) Rules, 2015, in Rule 10 –
 - (a) in Sub-rule (3), in Clause (d), for the words “plan; and”, the following shall be substituted, namely – “plan:
 Provided that, in case of auction of mining leases under Sub-sections (5) and (6) of Section 8A of the Act, the vesting order issued under Rule 9A of the Minerals (Other than Atomic and Hydrocarbons Energy Minerals) Concession Rules, 2016 shall be applicable; and”;
 - (b) after Sub-rule (6), the following sub-rules shall be inserted, namely –

- “(6A) Notwithstanding anything contained in these rules, the mining lease shall be executed by the State Government within a period of fifteen days from –
- (i) the date of issue of Letter of Intent to the new lessee to whom the vesting order has been issued under Rule 9A of Minerals (Other than Atomic and Hydrocarbons Energy Minerals) Concession Rules, 2016; or
 - (ii) commencement of the Mineral Auction (Amendment) Rules, 2020; or
 - (iii) the expiry of the lease period of the previous lessee; whichever is later.
- (6B) The holder of the Letter of Intent shall comply with all the requirements to execute the mining lease within the period referred to in Sub-rule (6A), failing which, the Letter of Intent shall be revoked and the bid security or the performance security, as the case may be, and any instalment of upfront payment paid shall be forfeited, and the preferred bidder or successful bidder may be debarred by the State Government from participating in the future auction of mineral blocks conducted under the provisions of these rules, for three years from the date of such debarment:
- Provided that on receipt of an application from the holder of the Letter of Intent, the State Government, may extend the period for execution of the lease deed by a further period not exceeding fifteen days, on satisfaction that such delay is entirely for the reasons beyond the control of the holder of Letter of Intent.”

Source: The Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II – Section 3(i), dated 20.03.2020.

4. **Ministry of Mines, G.S.R. 191(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 to amend the Minerals (Other than Atomic and Hydrocarbons Energy Minerals) Concession Rules, 2016, namely –
1. (1) These rules may be called the Minerals (Other than Atomic and Hydrocarbons Energy Minerals) Concession (Amendment) Rules, 2020.
(2) They shall come into force on the date of their publication in the Official Gazette.
 2. In the Minerals (Other than Atomic and Hydrocarbons Energy Minerals) Concession Rules, 2016 (hereinafter referred to as the said rules), after Rule 9, the following rule shall be inserted, namely –
‘9A. Conditions for issuance of vesting order and for obtaining rights, approvals, clearances, licences and like under Section 8B of the Act. –
(1) The State Government shall nominate a Secretary level officer of that State as the nodal officer, in respect of leases expiring under the provisions of Sub-sections (5) and (6) of Section 8A of the Act, within one week from the date of the notification of the Minerals (Other than Atomic and Hydrocarbons Energy Minerals) Concession (Amendment) Rules, 2020.

(2) The nodal officer nominated under Sub-rule (1) shall be authorised to collect all the valid rights, approvals, clearances, licences and the like vesting with the previous lessee and shall issue vesting order in favour of the new lessee along with the Letter of Intent.

(3) The vesting order issued under Sub-rule (2) shall have the same terms and conditions of every rights, approvals, clearances, licences and the like, which vested with the previous lessee:

Provided that any statutory payments or documents to be submitted for obtaining such rights, approvals, clearances, licences and the like for the period for which vesting right is issued, shall be made or done when the new lessee applies for issuance of the fresh rights, approvals, clearances, licences and the like under this rule:

Provided further that mandatory payments towards certain statutory clearances shall be paid by the new lessee as specified by concerned authorities or the nodal officer.

(4) The vesting order issued under this rule shall be valid for a period of two years from the date of execution of new lease deed or till the date of getting all fresh approvals, clearances, licences, permits, and the like, whichever is earlier.

(5) It shall be lawful for the new lessee to commence and continue mining operations on the land in which mining operations were being carried out by the previous lessee, after the execution of the lease deed for a period of two years as provided in Section 8B of the Act:

Provided that in respect of any land not owned by the State Government, the new lessee shall have the right to operate the mine, notwithstanding any claim or dispute by the owner of such land or the previous lessee, as the case may be and such claim or dispute shall be decided by the State Government, as per the extant laws.

(6) The new lessee shall immediately, but not later than one hundred twenty days from the date of execution of mining lease, apply afresh for all necessary rights, approvals, clearances, licences and the like under the applicable statutes, rules or regulations, as the case may be, for obtaining the necessary clearances to enable further continuance of the mining operations beyond two years, in accordance with the proviso to Sub-section (2) of Section 8B of the Act:

Provided that the new lessee shall continue mining operation as per the approved mining plan of the previous lessee till the new mining plan is prepared and submitted for approval.

(7) On submission of new mining plan, the new lessee shall switch over to the new mining plan and while undertaking mining operations as per the new mining plan, the new lessee shall conform to the approved quantity and the conceptual limit of mining plan held by previous lessee till the new lessee obtains afresh the requisite clearances, approvals, rights and the like.

(8) The new lessee shall inform the nodal officer about the submission of application in accordance with Sub-rule (6), along with copies of such application and the new lessee may be facilitated to obtain approvals required for mining operations through the single window system established by the State Government:

Provided that the final responsibility of obtaining the necessary approvals required for continuing the mining operations shall rest with the new lessee.

Explanation – for the purposes of this sub-rule: “single window system” means a system established by the State Government for facilitating the grant of necessary clearances required for commencing the mining operations by the successful bidder selected through auction process.

(9) No authority shall reject grant of any rights, approvals, clearances, licences and the like to the new lessee on account of past violations or outstanding dues of the previous lessee, which may be agitated before appropriate forums separately without prejudice to any rightful legal claims of the parties.’

3. After Rule 12 of the said Rules, the following Rule shall be inserted, namely –

“12A-Additional conditions for commencement and continuation of production as per Section 4B of the Act – (1) Notwithstanding anything contained in these rules, during the first two years from the date of execution of new lease, the holder of mining lease, to whom the order of vesting of rights, approvals, clearances, licences and the like have been issued under Section 8B of the Act, shall maintain such level of production so as to ensure minimum dispatch of eighty percent of the average of the annual production of two immediately preceding years on pro-rata basis, failing which appropriate actions in accordance with the Mine Development and Production Agreement shall be initiated.

(2) The new lessee shall ensure that the annual production beyond two years from date of execution of new lease is equal to or more than the annual production by the previous lessee and shall subsequently workout and implement an annual production plan to ensure that the mineral resources are fully exploited during the period of the lease, failing which appropriate actions in accordance with the Mine Development and Production Agreement shall be initiated.”

4. In the said Rules, for Rule 18, the following rule shall be substituted, namely –

18. Auction of expiring mining lease – (1) The State Government shall, as per the procedure specified in the Act and the rules made thereunder, conduct auction of an expiring mining lease well in advance of its expiry so as to prevent disruption in production of minerals.

(2) The State Government shall endeavour to complete the auction process at least six months before the impending expiry of a mining lease so that there is a smooth transition from one lessee to the other; and the lease in such cases shall be executed after the expiry of the lease period of the existing lessee.

Source: The Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II – Section 3(i), dated 20.03.2020.

5. **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, S.O. 1224(E)** —WHEREAS, *vide* the Mineral Laws (Amendment) Act, 2020 (2 of 2020), the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (67 of 1957) (hereinafter referred to as MMDR Act) has been amended with effect from the 10th day of January, 2020 and, *inter alia*, new Section 8B relating to the provisions for transfer of statutory clearances has been inserted;

AND WHEREAS, Sub-section (2) of Section 8B of the MMDR Act provides that notwithstanding anything contained in this Act or any other law for the time being in force,

the successful bidder of mining leases expiring under the provisions of Sub-sections (5) and (6) of Section 8A and selected through auction as per the procedure provided under this Act and the rules made thereunder, shall be deemed to have acquired all valid rights, approvals, clearances, licences and the like vested with the previous lessee for a period of two years;

AND WHEREAS, Sub-section (3) of Section 8B of the MMDR Act provides that notwithstanding anything contained in any other law for the time being in force, it shall be lawful for the new lessee to continue mining operations on the land, in which mining operations were being carried out by the previous lessee, for a period of two years from the date of commencement of the new lease;

AND WHEREAS, in pursuance of the aforesaid amendment to the MMDR Act, the Central Government deems it necessary to align the relevant provisions of the notification of the Government of India in the erstwhile Ministry of Environment and Forests number S.O. 1533 (E), dated the 14th September, 2006 (hereinafter referred to as the EIA Notification, 2006);

AND WHEREAS, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change is in the receipt of representations for waiver of requirement of prior environmental clearance for borrowing of ordinary earth for roads; and manual extraction of lime shells (dead shell), shrines, etc., within intertidal zone by the traditional community;

Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by Sub-section (1) and Clause (v) of Sub-section (2) of Section 3 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 (29 of 1986), read with Sub-rule (4) of Rule 5 of the Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986, the Central Government, after having dispensed with the requirement of notice under Clause (a) of Sub-rule (3) of the Rule 5 of the said rules, in public interest, and in supersession of the notification number S.O. 4307(E), dated the 29th November, 2019, hereby makes the following further amendments in the EIA Notification, 2006, namely –

In the said notification

(i) in Paragraph 11, after Sub-paragraph (2), the following sub-paragraph shall be inserted, namely –

“(3) The successful bidder of the mining leases, expiring under the provisions of Sub-sections (5) and (6) of Section 8A of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (67 of 1957) and selected through auction as per the procedure provided under that Act and the rules made thereunder, shall be deemed to have acquired valid prior environmental clearance vested with the previous lessee for a period of two years, from the date of commencement of new lease and it shall be lawful for the new lessee to continue mining operations as per the same terms and conditions of environmental clearance granted to the previous lessee on the said lease area for a period of two years from the date of commencement of new lease or till the new lessee obtains a fresh environmental clearance with the terms and conditions mentioned therein, whichever is earlier:

Provided that the successful bidder shall apply and obtain prior environmental clearance from the regulatory authority within a period of two years from the date of grant of new lease.”;

(ii) in the Schedule, against the Item 1(a), in the Column (5), after Clause (2) of the Note, the following clause shall be inserted, namely –

“(3) The evacuation or removal and transportation of already mined out material lying within the mining leases expiring under the provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (67 of 1957), by the previous lessee, after the

expiry of the said lease, shall not form the part of the mining capacity so permitted to the successful bidder, selected through auction as per the procedure provided under that Act and the rules made thereunder.”;

(iii) for Appendix-IX, the following Appendix shall be substituted, namely –

“APPENDIX-IX
EXEMPTION OF CERTAIN CASES FROM REQUIREMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE

The following cases shall not require Prior Environmental Clearance, namely –

1. Extraction of ordinary clay or sand by manual mining, by the Kumhars (Potter) to prepare earthen pots, lamp, toys, etc. as per their customs.
2. Extraction of ordinary clay or sand by manual mining, by earthen tile makers who prepare earthen tiles.
3. Removal of sand deposits on agricultural field after flood by farmers.
4. Customary extraction of sand and ordinary earth from sources situated in Gram Panchayat for personal use or community work in village.
5. Community works, like, de-silting of village ponds or tanks, construction of village roads, ponds or bunds undertaken in Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment and Guarantee Schemes, other Government sponsored schemes and community efforts.
6. Extraction or sourcing or borrowing of ordinary earth for the linear projects, such as, roads, pipelines, etc.
7. Dredging and de-silting of dams, reservoirs, weirs, barrages, river and canals for the purpose of their maintenance, upkeep and disaster management.
8. Traditional occupational work of sand by Vanjara and Oads in Gujarat vide notification number GU/90(16)/MCR-2189(68)/5-CHH, dated the 14th February, 1990 of the Government of Gujarat.
9. Manual extraction of lime shells (dead shell), shrines, etc., within intertidal zone by the traditional community.
10. Digging of wells for irrigation or drinking water purpose.
11. Digging of foundation for buildings, not requiring prior environmental clearance, as the case may be.
12. Excavation of ordinary earth or clay for plugging of any breach caused in canal, nallah, drain, water body, etc., to deal with any disaster or flood - like situation upon orders of the District Collector or District Magistrate or any other Competent Authority.
13. Activities declared by the State Government under legislations or rules as non-mining activity.”

Source: *The Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II – Section 3(ii), dated 28.03.2020.*

6. Ministry of Commerce & Industry (Department of Commerce) (DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF FOREIGN TRADE), S.O. 1231 (E) —

Subject: Amendment in import policy of Iron & Steel and incorporation of policy condition in Chapter 72, 73 and 86 of ITC (HS), 2017, Schedule – I (Import Policy).

S.O. 1231(E) —In exercise of powers conferred by Section 3 of FT (D&R) Act, 1992, read with paragraphs 1.02 and 2.01 of the Foreign Trade Policy, 2015-2020, as amended from time to time, the Central Government hereby amends Para (c) of the Policy conditions incorporated *vide* Notification No.17/2015-2020 dated 5th September, 2019 published in the Gazette of India (Extraordinary) *vide* S.O. 3214(E) dated 5th September, 2019, as under:

c. The Steel Import Monitoring System (SIMS) shall require importers to submit advance information in an online system for import of items in the Annex and obtain an automatic Registration Number by paying registration fee of Rs 1 per thousand subject to minimum of Rs 500/- and maximum of Rs 1 lakh on CIF value. The importer can apply for registration not earlier than 60th day and not later than 15th day before the expected date of arrival of import consignment. The automatic Registration Number thus granted shall remain valid for a period of 75 days.

Note: The automatic registration number generated till 31.03.2020 shall remain valid for a period of 60 days beyond the 75 day period notified vide DGFT Notification No. 17 dated 05.09.2019, in view of delays in shipments due to COVID-19 breakout. In effect, the automatic registration number generated till 31.03.2020 shall remain valid for a period of 135 days.

Effect of the Notification : One-time relaxation is provided through extension of validity to 135 days of the automatic registration number generated under SIMS till 31.03.2020.

Source: The Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II – Section 3(ii), dated 28.03.2020.

B. Court Decision

1. R. Praveen Chandra, Petitioner v. Union of India and others, Respondents, Karnataka 199, Vol. 105, Part 1272, December, 2019.

Subject :Challenging the order dated 27.07.2017 passed by the first respondent (the Central Government) under Section 4A(1) of the MMDR Act, 1957, for accorded approval for pre- mature termination of the mining lease granted in favour of the petitioner by the second respondent (the Government of Karnataka).

Facts: The challenge in this petition under Article 226 of the Constitution of India is to an order dated 27th July, 2017 made by the first respondent under Sub-section (1) of Section 4A of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 ('the Act, 1957' for short), by which the first respondent accorded approval for premature termination of the mining lease granted in favour of the petitioner by the second respondent. It appears that the second respondent – Government of Karnataka – requested the first respondent for grant of permission for premature termination of the mining lease granted to the petitioner. By the impugned order, an approval has been granted by the first respondent for premature termination of the mining lease granted to the petitioner. The learned Senior Counsel for the petitioner contended that, no order making a premature termination of a prospecting licence or mining lease shall be made except after giving the holder of the licence or lease, a reasonable opportunity of being heard.

The learned Counsel for the first respondent submitted that grant of an opportunity of being heard by the first respondent was an empty formality. Inviting our attention to Paragraph-2 of the impugned order, it is submitted that before recommending the premature termination of lease, the second respondent—Government of Karnataka – had given an opportunity of being heard to the petitioner and the impugned order is based on the conclusions drawn by the Government of Karnataka. He relied upon a decision of the Apex Court in the case of M.C. Mehta v. Union of India (AIR 1999 SC 2583). He urged that the impugned order is passed in breach of principles of natural justice. He also relied upon a decision of the Apex Court in the case of State Bank of Patiala v. S K Sharma (AIR 1996 SC 1669) and submitted that though Sub-section(3) of Section 4A of the Act, 1957 uses the word 'shall', the use of the word 'shall' is not decisive.

Decision : The High Court has referred to the Sub-section (1) of Section 4A of the Act, 1957 and stated that once a request is made by the Central Government to the State Government to make a premature termination of mining lease, there is no option for the State Government but to make an order of premature termination of mining lease. In fact, the language used in Sub-section (1) of Section 4A of the Act, 1957 makes it clear that on such a request being made by the Central Government, there is a mandate to the State Government to pass an order of premature termination of mining lease. The High Court has further stated that the statutory mandate is that, the Central Government must consult the State Government. The application of mind by the Central Government was required before issuing an order under Sub-section (1) of Section 4A of the Act, 1957 requesting the State Government to premature termination of mining lease. Even assuming that the recommendation of the State Government was made after hearing the petitioner, the said recommendation was not binding on the Central Government. It was a duty of the Central Government to give an opportunity of being heard to the petitioner. Even in the absence of Sub-section (3) of Section 4A of the Act, 1957, such an opportunity was required to be granted as the rights of the petitioner are directly affected by the decision taken by the Central Government to inform the State Government to make a premature termination of the mining lease. And therefore, the High Court has rejected the submission that the compliance with the principles of natural justice was not mandatory in this case and that giving an opportunity of being heard to the petitioner was an empty formality. The High Court has also stated that the impugned order cannot be sustained and the same will have to be set aside.

Accordingly, the High Court has passed the following order:

- i) The impugned order dated 27th July 2017 is hereby quashed and set aside;
- ii) However, this order will not prevent the first respondent from passing a fresh order in accordance with law after giving an opportunity of being heard to the petitioner;
- iii) The Court made no adjudication on merits of the grounds, if any, of premature termination;
- iv) The petition is allowed in part in the above terms.

Petition partly allowed.

2. **M/s Dehri On Sone Labourers Co-operative Society Ltd, District Rohtas, Petitioner v. Union of India and others, Respondents, AIR 2020 Patna 9, Vol. 107, Part 1273, January, 2020.**

Subject : Challenging the rejection of the renewal application.

Facts : The Petitioner's company is a Society known as M/s Dehri-On-Sone Labourers Cooperative Society Ltd registered under Societies Registration Act. The petitioner applied for grant of licence of sand through the Mines Department of the State Government under the provisions of Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 and its Rules, 1960. The lease of sand (major

mineral) for the period w.e.f. 14.3.1994 to 13.3.2014, has been granted to the petitioner by the Mines Department of the State of Bihar. The lease agreement of the petitioner was executed on 14.3.1994 for the period noted above by the State Government. The said lease of sand was taken for the purpose of using it in making glass Ceramic and potteries in the industry of the Society and other industries in the State or other State which manufacture all those things.

Learned Counsel for the petitioner submitted that before expiry of period of said lease, the petitioner applied with requisite fee and papers on 12.3.2013 well within the period prescribed for renewal of licence which was going to expire one year after, i.e., in the year 2014. The application for renewal of major mineral (silica sand/sand) was pending before Department of Mines and Minerals of the State of Bihar.

In the meantime, Gazette Notification S.O.423(E) dated 10th February, 2015 has been issued by the Central Government by which the Silica Sand has been brought under the category of minor minerals. After sometime, another Gazette Notification has been issued by the Ministry of Law and Justice of Central Government on 27.03.2015 in which Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2015 has been published and has been made effective w.e.f. 12.01.2015. In terms of provisions of Section 8A(3) all mining leases granted before commencement of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2015 shall be described to have been granted for a period of fifty years. During pendency of the writ application, the I.A. No. 8619 of 2017 has been filed by the petitioner, seeking indulgence of this Hon'ble Court, to quash the order issued vide letter No. 2686 dated 14.9.2017 by the Special Secretary, Mines and Minerals Department of the State of Bihar, whereby the renewal of the petitioner's lease of silica sand was refused and the lease was cancelled.

The Learned Counsel for the petitioner has submitted in the aforesaid Interlocutory Application that when an application for renewal of licence has been filed well within time and the same was accepted with fee, in the background of this fact, the lease will be deemed to have been continuing the day on which the Gazette Notification of the Central Government came into force. Further, interlocutory Application No. 7188 of 2017 has been filed by the petitioner for quashing Notice inviting Bids for Reverse e-Auction in respect of Silica Sand of Mauza Pali, Dehri, Bastipur, having area 850 Acres under District Rohtas on 24.2.2018.

The Respondent No. 3 has filed Counter – Affidavit, stated therein that petitioner has applied for renewal of said lease / licence on 12.3.2013. The Assistant Director, Rohtas, vide letter No. 426 dated 17.5.2016 has forwarded the renewal application before the Commissioner, Mines, with note that the application of the petitioner was incomplete as certain documents were wanting. Petitioner was informed vide letter No. 132/M dated 31.3.2014 and 309/M dated 16.7.2014 to furnish the required documents but the petitioner did not respond to such notices/letters of the Respondents. Reminder letters were again sent on 19.9.2015 and 7.10.2015 by which the required documents were sought for by the Respondents, in order to take any decision on renewal application. Thereafter, on the renewal application of the petitioner society, hearing was made by the Commissioner, Mines, Bihar, in which Advocate of the petitioner society was present.

The Learned counsel for State has argued that the Commissioner (Mines), Bihar, passed reasoned order dated 29.6.2017 and rejected the renewal application. The petitioner was duly informed by letter dated 14.9.2017 about the rejection of renewal application of the petitioner with reasons assigned therein. The petitioner was directed to stop the mining activity and to hand over the area immediately. The respondent department has further directed the Collector, Rohtas, to initiate fresh process of settlement of 850 Acres of silica sand area situated at Mauza-Pali, Dehri, Bastipur, Distt. Rohtas under the existing provisions of Bihar Minor Mineral Concession Rules, 1972, since silica sand is now a minor mineral after Gazette Notification dated 10.2.2015. The Collector, Rohtas, was directed vide letter No. 2692 dated 14.9.2017 to demarcate sand ghats and

submit report. The petitioner made renewal application on 12.3.2013 but after several notices/letters of the respondents to submit all the required document has failed to respond the lease period of the petitioner has finally expired on 13.3.2014 due to incomplete documents. After proper hearing of the petitioner, the renewal application was rejected on various grounds vide order dated 29.6.2017 passed by the Commissioner, Mines, Bihar. In the meantime, the Central Government vide notification dated 10.2.2015 has de-notified the silica sand from the major mineral category and notified it as Minor Mineral along with 31 other Minerals. The silica sand is no more major mineral after such notification of the Central Government. Hence, Section 8A (3) of MMDR Act, 1957 as amended in 2015 is not applicable. The silica sand will now be governed by the provisions of Bihar Minor Mineral Concession Rules, 1972. During pendency of this writ application, the petitioner has filed Interlocutory Application No. 3 of 2019 seeking indulgence of the Hon'ble Court to quash the order dated 20.2.2017 by which the renewal application of lease filed by the petitioner in the year 2013 has been cancelled.

Decision: The High Court has referred to Section 8A of the MMDR Act, 1957 and found out that the silica sand has been brought as minor mineral by Notification of Central Government dated 10.2.2015. Since Central Government declared 'Silica Sand' as "Minor Mineral", it is to be regulated under the provisions of State Rules i.e. Bihar Minor Mineral Concession Rules 1972, as amended from time to time. After change of category from major mineral to minor mineral, the laws relating to major mineral shall not be applicable in the present case.

The High Court has further found out that as per the provisions of Section 8A(5)&(6) of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2015, there is no

provision that period of lease shall be renewed automatically for 50 years. In this case, it appears that documents as required by the authority were not produced by the petitioner. The

petitioner also did not produce Environmental Clearance Certificate. The Mines Commissioner has mentioned in the order that petitioner has merely filed renewal application but he was not serious for renewal.

Accordingly, the High Court has not found any illegality in the impugned order passed by the Mines Commissioner dated 29.6.2017 by which the renewal application filed by the petitioner has been rejected. The High Court has dismissed the writ petition .

Petition dismissed.

SECTION -2
Trend in Mining, Prospecting and Reconnaissance

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 about 1515.19 hectares was received. Of these, Limestone accounted for 03 mining leases followed by Limestone (cement grade), Iron ore and Manganese ore (01 each) mining lease.

Reviewing areawise, mining leases granted for limestone covered over an area of 800.831 ha, followed by Limestone (cement grade) 624.00 ha, Iron ore 86.059 ha and Manganese ore covered over an area of 4.30 ha.

Reviewing Statewise, number of mining leases and area granted in Madhya Pradesh 04 with 805.131 ha, Rajasthan 01 with 624.00 ha and Karnataka 01 with 86.059 ha.

The mineralwise number of mining leases granted together with lease area and details of mining lease 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 ha
Manganese ore	01	4.300
Iron ore	01	86.059
Limestone	03	800.831
Limestone (cement grade)	01	624.000
Total	06	1515.19

Table – 1 B: Details of Mining Leases Granted

Mineral	State/ District	Village	Area in ha	Date of Grant	Period in years	Name & Address
Manganese ore	Madhya Pradesh Balaghat	Ramrama	4.30	23.01.2020	50 (11.01.2017 to 10.01.2067)	A. P. Trivedi Sons, Main Road, District:- Balaghat, Madhya Pradesh
Iron ore	Karnataka Ballari	Karadikola	86.059	03.02.2020	-	MSPL Ltd, Baldota Bhavan, 117, Maharshi Karve Road, Mumbai- 400 020
Limestone (Cement grade)	Rajasthan Jhunjhunu	Parasrampura	624.00	13.06.2019	50 wef 08.05.2019	Shree Cement Ltd, Bangad Nagar, Beawar District:- Ajmer, Rajasthan
Limestone	Madhya Pradesh Neemach	Suvakhera	221.043	07.02.2020	50	Veer Durgadas Minerals Pvt. Ltd, Rathor House, Padmini Nagar, Chanderiya, Chittorgarh, Rajasthan- 312 001

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Table 1B (Concl.)

Limestone	Madhya Pradesh Neemach	Chainpura	12.00	07.02.2020	50	Rathor Cement Pvt. Ltd, Rathor House, Padminin Nagar, Chanderiya, Chittorgarh, Rajasthan- 312 001
Limestone	Madhya Pradesh Satna	Hinouta	567.788	10.02.2020	50	Ultra Tech Cement Ltd, B-Wing, Ahura Centre, Second Floor, Mahakali Caves Road, Andheri, Mumbai- 400 093

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	1	86.059

Table – 2 B : Details of Mining Leases Executed

Mineral	State/District	Village	Area in ha	Date of Execution/Registration	Period in Years	Name & Address
Iron Ore	Karnataka Ballari	Karadikolla	86.059	03.02.2020	50	MSPL Ltd, Baldota Bhavan, 117, Maharshi Karve Road, Mumbai- 400 020

C. Mining Lease Period Extended

During the period under review, the information pertaining to the extension of mining lease period for 22 Mining Leases covering an area of about 2,829.418 hectares was received. Of these, Limestone accounted for 12 mining leases followed by Bauxite 07 leases, Iron ore 02 leases and Diamond only one lease.

Reviewing areawise, Bauxite accounted for 1,735.54 ha, followed by Limestone 820.807 ha, Diamond 162.631 ha and Iron Ore 110.44 ha.

Reviewing Statewise, number of mining leases for which period extended in Gujarat State were 12 with an area about 1,851.51 ha, 6 leases in Maharashtra over an area of 382.00 ha, 1 lease in Andhra Pradesh over an area of 322.837 ha, 1 lease in Madhya Pradesh over an area of 162.631 ha and 2 leases in Karnataka State over an area of 110.44 ha.

The mineralwise number of mining lease period extended together with lease area and details of mining leases extended are given in Tables 3A & 3B.

**Table – 3A: Details of Mining Leases Period Extended
(By Minerals)**

Mineral	No of Mining Leases Extended	Area in ha
Bauxite	7	1735.54
Diamond	1	162.631
Iron Ore	2	110.44
Limestone	12	820.807
Total	22	2829.418

Table – 3 B : Details of Mining Leases Period Extended

SN	Mineral	State/ District	Village	Area in ha	Date of Extension	Date up to which lease period extended	Name & Address
1	Bauxite	Gujarat Devbhumi Dwarka	Ranpur	28.85	20.09.2019	31.03.2030	Tata Chemicals Ltd, Mithapur, Ta. & Dist, Devbhumi Dwarka Gujarat
2	Bauxite	Gujarat Kachchh	Mota Nandra, Nana Nandra	360.36	NA	27.03.2056	Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation Ltd, Khanij Bhavan, 132 Feet Ring Road, Ahmedabad- 380 052
3	Bauxite	Gujarat Kachchh	Daban, Nani vamoti	642.05	10.01.2020	27.03.2056	Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation Ltd, Khanij Bhavan, Vastrapur, Ahmedabad- 380 052
4	Bauxite	Gujarat Devbhumi Dwarka	Mewasa	186.96	06.01.2020	30.11.2039	Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation Ltd, Khanij Bhavan, Vastrapur, Ahmedabad- 380 052
5	Bauxite	Gujarat Kachchh	Mothala	280.76	NA	06.03.2057	Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation Ltd, Khanij Bhavan, 132 Feet Ring Road, Ahmedabad- 380 052
6	Bauxite	Gujarat Kachchh	Mota Nandra	169.59	10.01.2020	27.03.2056	Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation Ltd, Khanij Bhavan, 132 Feet Ring Road, Ahmedabad- 380 052

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7	Bauxite	Gujarat Kachchh	Naredi	66.97	13.01.2020	31.03.2030	Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation Ltd, Khanij Bhavan, Vastrapur, Ahmedabad- 380 052
8	Diamond	Madhya Pradesh Panna	Majhgaon & Hinota	162.631	20.02.2020	30.06.2040	National Mineral Development Corporation Ltd, Khanij Bhavan, 10-3-311/A, Castral Hills, Masab Tank, Hyderabad - 500 028
9	Iron ore	Karnataka Devangere	Marenahalli	29.94	18.12.2019	31.03.2020	Mahabalesha Mining Industries, B-45, Cantonment, Old Market Road, Ballari, Karnataka-583 104
10	Iron ore	Karnataka Ballari	R.M. Block Sandur	80.50	13.02.2020	31.03.2020	Sri Shanthipriya Minerals Pvt Ltd, Chowgule House, Mormugoa Harbour, Goa- 403 803
11	Limestone	Gujarat Junagadh	Shantipura	41.00	01.10.2019	22.01.2028	R. J. Trivdi & Co, Opp. Chorwad Station Road, P.O. Sherbaug, Dist. Junagadh Gujarat
12	Limestone	Gujarat Devbhumi Dwarka	Pachhtar	32.38	25.09.2019	06.11.2033	Digvijay Cement Co, Ltd, Digvijagram, Jamnagar- 361 140
13	Limestone	Gujarat Gir Somnath	Dhrabavad	2.53	02.01.2020	10.12.2051	Nirma Ltd, At Dhrabavad, Taluka- Gir Gadhada, Dist. Gir Somnath, Gujarat
14	Limestone	Gujarat Porbandar	Bhod	16.18	30.12.2019	17.04.2024	Ashok Babulal Sindhav (Legal heir of Shree Babulal Velji Sindhav) 'Hari Bhavan' First Floor, ST Road, Porbandar- 360 575 Gujarat
15	Limestone	Gujarat Porbandar	Aniyari	23.88	30.12.2019	30.11.2025	Ashok Babulal Sindhav (Legal heir of Shree Babulal Velji Sindhav) 'Hari Bhavan' First Floor, ST Road, Porbandar- 360 575 Gujarat

Contd...

Table 3B (Concl'd.)

16	Limestone	Andhra Pradesh Kurnool	Yerragudi, Meerapuram, Pathapaudu & Yanakandla	322.837	10.02.2020	02.01.2062	Sree Jayajothi Cement Private Ltd, 9 th Floor, Block-3, My Home Hub, Madhapur, Hyderabad- 500 081
17	Limestone	Maharashtra Chandrapur	Pimpri	30.33	27.02.2020	25.12.2035	Murli Industries Ltd, Nagpur
18	Limestone	Maharashtra Chandrapur	Naranda Pimpri	71.01	27.02.2020	06.04.2036	Murli Industries Ltd, Nagpur
19	Limestone	Maharashtra Chandrapur	Zutting	25.28	27.02.2020	23.12.2036	Murli Industries Ltd, Nagpur
20	Limestone	Maharashtra Chandrapur	Zutting	58.52	27.02.2020	23.06.2035	Murli Industries Ltd, Nagpur
21	Limestone	Maharashtra Chandrapur	Sangoda	154.70	02.03.2020	28.12.2057	Murli Industries Ltd, Nagpur
22	Limestone	Maharashtra Chandrapur	Zutting	42.16	27.02.2020	03.03.2032	Murli Industries Ltd, Nagpur

D. Mining Leases Executed after Grant of Extension of Mining Lease Period

Table – 4: Details of Mining Leases Executed after Grant of Extension of Mining Lease Period.

Mineral	State/ District	Village	Area in ha	Date of Execution/ Registration	Date up to which lease period extended	Name & Address
No such information is received during the period.						

E. Mining Leases Renewed/ Revived/Restored

Table – 5: Details of Mining leases Renewed/Revived/Restored

Mineral	State/District	Village	Area in ha	Date of Renewal	Period in Years (From date of Execution/ Registration)	Name & Address
Limestone *	Chhattisgarh Jangir-Champa	Tarod	311.98 (770.92 Acre)	06.11.2019	-	Cement Corporation of India Ltd, Akaltara Cement Plant, Post Office:- Akaltara, Dist. Jangir Champa, Chhattisgarh – 495 552

Contd...

Table 5 (Concl.)

Limestone *	Chhattisgarh Jangir-Champa	Tarod	89.67 (221.59 Acre)	06.11.2019	-	Cement Corporation of India Ltd, Akaltara Cement Plant, Post Office:- Akaltara, Dist:- Jangir Champa, Chhattisgarh – 495 552
Limestone #	Andhra Pradesh Guntur	Tangeda, Dachepalli Mandal, Vemavaram, Chennayapalem	613.476	12.12.2019	-	Saraswati Power and Industries Pvt. Ltd, Plot No. 268/S/98, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad-34

* Revived; # Restored

F. Mining Leases Revoked**Table – 6: Details of Mining leases Revoked**

Mineral	State/ District	Village	Area in ha	Date of Revoke	Name & Address
No such information is received during the period.					

G. Mining Leases Determined**Table – 7: Details of Mining Leases Determined
(By Minerals)**

Mineral	State / District	No. of Mining Leases Determined	Area in ha
No such information is received during the period.			

H. Mining Leases Surrendered**Table – 8: Details of Mining Leases Surrendered**

Mineral	State / District	Village	Area in ha	Date of Surrender	Name & Address
No such information is received during the period					

I. Mining Leases Terminated**Table – 9: Details of Mining Leases Terminated**

Mineral	State / District	Village	Area in ha	Date on which lease Terminated	Name & Address
Limestone	Andhra Pradesh Ananthapuramu	Konuppalapadu	649.684	31.01.2020	Trishul Cements Company, 15/311, Sanjeeva Nagar, Tadipatri- 515 411, Dist. Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh

J. Mining Leases Transferred**Table – 10A: Details of Mining Leases Transferred**

Mineral	State / District	Village	Area in ha	Name and Address		Valid up to year	Date of Transfer of Deed
				Transferor	Transferee		
No such information is received during the period							

Table – 10B: Details of Transferred Mining Leases Executed / Registered

Mineral	State / District	Village	Area in ha	Name and Address		Period (in Yrs)/ Dt of expiry.	Date of Execution/ Registration of transfer deed
				Transferor	Transferee		
No such information is received during the period.							

K. Mines Opened**Table – 11: Details of Mines Opened**

Mineral	State/District	Name of Mine	Village	Date of Opening	Area in ha	Name & Address
Iron ore	Karnataka Ballari	Rama Iron ore Mines	Ramghad	14.01.2020	33.80 (CEC Finalised area)	JSW Steel Ltd, Rama Iron ore Mines JSW Steel Ltd, Near Talur Cross, Vidyanagar post, Toranagallu, Sandur Taluka, Ballari Dist, Karnataka

L. Mines Temporarily Discontinued**Table – 12: Details of Mines Temporarily Discontinued**

Mineral	State/ District	Name of Mine	Village	Date of Discontin- uance	Reason	Area in ha	Name & Address
No such information is received during the period.							

M. Mines Reopened**Table – 13: Details of Mines Reopened**

Mineral	State / District	Name of Mine	Village	Date of Reopening	Area in ha	Name & Address
No such information is received during the period.						

N. Mines Abandoned**Table – 14: Details of Mines Abandoned**

Mineral	State / District	Name of Mine	Village	Date of Abandonment	Reason	Area in ha	Name & Address
No such information is received during the period.							

2.2 TREND IN PROSPECTING

A. Composite Licences Granted

**Table – 15 : Composite Licences Granted
(By Minerals)**

Mineral	State / District	Village	Area in ha	Date on which licences Granted	Period in Years	Name & Address
No such information is received during the period.						

B. Prospecting Licences Granted

**Table – 16 : Prospecting Licences Granted
(By Minerals)**

Mineral	State / District	Village	Area in ha	Date on which licences Granted	Period in Years	Name & Address
No such information is received during the period.						

C. Prospecting Licences Executed

Table – 17 : Details of Prospecting Licences Executed

Village	Mineral	State / District	Area in ha	Date of Execution	Period in Years	Name & Address
No such information is received during the period.						

D. Prospecting Licences Renewed

Table –18A : Mineral wise details of Prospecting Licences Renewed

Mineral	No.of Mining Leases Renewed	Area in sq. km
No such information is received during the period.		

Table –18B: Details of Prospecting Licences Renewed

Mineral	State /District	Village	Area in ha	Date of Renewal	Period in Years	Name & Address
No such information is received during the period.						

E. Prospecting Licences Revoked

Table – 19: Details of Prospecting Licences Revoked

Mineral	State/District	Village	Area in ha	Date of Revoke	Name & Address
No such information is received during the period.					

2.3 TREND IN RECONNAISSANCE PERMITS (R.P.)

Table – 20: Details of Reconnaissance Permits

Mineral	State/District	Area in sq km	Date of Approval of Grant	Name & Address
No such information is received during the period.				

Section -3

Highlights

A. DOMESTIC

RARE GOOD NEWS FROM A RARE METAL: RESERVES OF LITHIUM, CRITICAL FOR EV BATTERIES, FOUND NEAR BENGALURU

Reserves of lithium, a rare metal critical to build batteries for electric vehicles, have been discovered in Mandya, 100 km from Bengaluru — a find that should boost local manufacturing of EV batteries. Researchers at the Atomic Minerals Directorate, a unit of India’s Atomic Energy Commission, have estimated lithium reserves of 14,100 tonnes in a small patch of land surveyed in the Southern Karnataka district, according to a paper to be published in the forthcoming Issue of the Journal “Current Science”. The present data provides a total estimation of available Li_2O as about 30,300 tonnes over an area of 0.5 km x 5 km, which works out to about 14,100 tonnes of lithium metal,” said N Munichandraiah, Emeritus Professor at the Indian Institute of Science and an expert on battery technologies.

But, to put this in perspective, the lithium find is small compared to many major producers. As the professor puts it “If one compares with 8.6 million tonnes in Chile, 2.8 million tonnes in Australia, 1.7 million tonnes in Argentina or 60,000 tonnes in Portugal, 14,100 tonnes is not that large.

Economics Times – 18 February, 2020

INDIAN SCIENTISTS TO SET SAIL IN SEARCH OF VALUABLE MINERALS

Indian scientists are preparing to set sail to a region of the Indian Ocean, off the East coast of Madagascar, where they believe are plenty of valuable minerals to pick up. It’s been two years since India leased a 10,000 sq km area (for 15 years) from the International Seabed Authority, part of the United Nations; so, there is a lot of work to be done before the country shovels in the riches. But a beginning is to be made at least by next year, said M Ravichandran, Director, National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), Goa.

Business Line, – 8 January , 2020

GOVERNMENT’S NEW STEEL SCRAP RECYCLING POLICY AIMS TO REDUCE IMPORTS

In a bid to ensure quality scrap for the Steel industry, the Government on Friday came out with a Steel Scrap Recycling Policy that aims to reduce imports, conserve resources and save energy. The country’s steel scrap imports were valued at Rs 24,500 crore in 2017-18, while the deficit was to the tune of 7 MT. “The policy aims to promote circular economy in the Steel Sector”. Besides promoting “a formal and scientific collection, dismantling and processing activities for end of life products that are sources

of recyclable (ferrous, non-ferrous and other non-metallic) scraps which will lead to resource conservation and energy savings and setting up of an environmentally sound management system for handling ferrous scrap,” the Ministry of Steel said in a statement.

National Steel Policy 2017 aims to develop a globally competitive steel industry by creating 300 MT per annum steel production capacity by 2030 with a contribution of 35-40 per cent from EAF/IF (Electric Arc Furnace/Induction Furnace) route. It said the scrap policy will ensure processing and recycling of products in an organised, safe and environment-friendly manner, besides, evolving a responsive ecosystem and producing high quality ferrous scrap for quality steel production minimise the dependency on imports.

The Financial Express, New Delhi – 9 November, 2019

MADHYA PRADESH: NEW MINING POLICY IN PLACE, BUT OPERATIONS TO BEGIN FROM NEXT YEAR

As per the new mining policy, mining operations in Madhya Pradesh would not start before next year. The State Government introduced the new mining policy this year, but after some delay. This pushed back the auction procedure, which is still in process. The Mining Department has invited online tenders for lease of mines. The technical bids would be opened. It would start from Bhopal and Hoshangabad Divisions. The process would continue and after scrutiny of technical bids financial bids would be opened. The successful bidders would deposit money after that within 10 days. Bidders would have to take clearance from environment, mining and pollution departments besides completing other formalities. It would require at least a month more in the New Year before mining could start. Till then the existing system would be in place and panchayats would run the mines. According to the new mining policy, auction would be held in district-wise groups.

The Times of India, Bhopal – 14 November, 2019

DGMS VOWS TO ELIMINATE MINING ACCIDENTS BY 2030

A National workshop on “Assessment of current status of Safety Management Plan (SMP) in Mines and way forward” was organised by the Directorate General of Mines Safety (DGMS). The workshop was attended by different mining companies both from private as well as public units. At the day-long workshop experts discussed on ways to eliminate mining accidents. The experts attending the workshop opined that unlike major industries, mining has very high potential risk for accidents. It has a peculiar distinction of involving serious hazards the reason for which are that the environment changes continually with the progress of work.

The Pioneer, Ranchi – 27 November, 2019

GOA JUST 32% OF IRON ORE SOLD AT E-AUCTION

While stakeholders continue to push for the resumption of mining in the State, the recent iron ore e-auction turned out to be a dampener despite 13 bidders having expressed interest. Only 32% or 1.7 million tonnes of the 5.3 million tonnes of iron ore put up for e-auction was sold by the mines department. Poor response to the e-auction resulted in the generation of just Rs 100 crore in proceeds, 60% of which will go to the State as revenue. The remainder will be paid to mining firms towards extraction costs. The e-auction was aimed at clearing stacks of iron ore lying at jetties and plots. The State Government had priced the ore above 60 grades at Rs 500 per tonne, ore above 50 grades at Rs 400 per tonne and ore below 50 grades at Rs 300 per tonne. Thirteen bidders participated in the e-auction. Mining after 2007 had been declared illegal (in Goa).

The Times of India, Panaji, 25 August, 2019

INDIA TO BE NEXT EXPORTER OF STEEL FOR YEARS: PRADHAN

India will become a net exporter of steel in the next three years says, Union Petroleum and Steel Minister. At present, the country is importing around 2-3 million tonnes (mt) of steel from the overseas market. “Our overall capacity is around 140 mt and our production is around 100 mt. We want to be a net exporter of steel for a long period of time in the next three years. India is targeting an increase in its capacity to around 300 mt by 2030, of which around 250 mt is consumable. During 2018-19, India’s total steel exports declined by 34 per cent to 6.36 mt compared to 9.62 mt during 2017-18. On the other hand, finished steel import stood at 7.83 mt, valued at Rs 49,317 crore, up 4.7 per cent compared to 2017-18. The Minister also batted for “zero export” of natural resources from India. “Our raw materials should not go out. There should be zero export of natural resources and our industry should focus on value addition,” he added. The Government on 23rd September also launched a new campaign called “Ispaati Iraada” to use more steel products in place of single-use plastics. The Steel Industry is expected to play an important role in the transition to make India a \$5 trillion economy. State-run Steel Authority of India (SAIL) said on Monday that the Company was exploring options to set up a separate subsidiary for certain downstream operations to avail of the recent tax sops announced by the Government for new manufacturing companies.

The Financial Express, New Delhi, 24 September, 2019

HIGH AUCTION PRICES OF LIMESTONE MAY NOT AFFECT CEMENT MAKERS' MARGIN

Limestone auctions by the Centre have witnessed winning bids as high as Rs 735 a tonne, going by latest data available with the Ministry of Mines. In 2015, the Centre amended the mining laws, through the MMDR Amendment Act 2015, wherein it was stated that instead of renewing the mining concessions post expiry, they are to be granted only through competitive bidding by auction. The process of bidding was resorted as this would enable add significant premiums to the State's kitty – on the royalty currently earned – and to ensure minimum disruption in mineral availability.

Analysts estimate that the effect of inflated prices in limestone bidding will only reflect in the long term. This is because remaining lease period for the limestone reserves allotted (under the old regime) to cement manufactures on a royalty basis is very long. This is also reflected in the fact that, over the last three years, since the amendment to MMDR Act, only 2.7 billion tones have been auctioned. This is only 1 per cent of the 230 billion tonne limestone reserves in the country. Secondly, the consolidation in the industry has had a multitude of benefits for cement manufactures, in the form of synergies in logistics and procurement and better pricing power.

The Hindu Business Line, New Delhi 24 September, 2019

SCIENTISTS TO DRILL THE 'MOST VALUABLE MINERAL PROVINCE ON EARTH'

South African and German researchers are about to conduct scientific drilling at the Bushveld Complex, regarded as the most valuable mineral province on Earth. Their goal is to clarify several unresolved scientific questions related to the genesis of the unique body of rocks and its associated mineral deposits. Located in the Limpopo, Mpumalanga, North-West and Gauteng provinces of South Africa, the Bushveld Complex hosts the majority of the global platinum-group element, chromium and vanadium resources, as well as major deposits of copper, nickel, gold, tin, iron, fluorite and dimension stone.

“As of 2006, more than 200 million ounces of platinum have already been mined from the Bushveld complex and, between the depths of 1 kilometer and 5 kilometers, an estimated 6.8 billion ounces still remain,” this according to a university press release state. “At current rates of extraction, the complex will likely not be mined out within the next 700 years, with much of the ore deeper than 1 kilometer still left intact.

Mining.com, Canada – 12 September, 2019

B. ABROAD

INDIA TO OVERTAKE CHINA AS LARGEST IMPORTER OF COKING COAL: FITCH SOLUTIONS

India will overtake China as the largest importer of coking coal by 2025. The forecast of India's coking coal consumption opines that the annual average growth rate would be 5.4 per cent between 2019 and 2028, driven by an equally robust expansion in steel production in the country. "As a result, we expect India to overtake China as the largest importer of global coking coal by 2025, despite the country only importing half as much as China in 2017." It added. While China will remain dominant in terms of overall market share, India will become increasingly important in terms of seaborne demand.

Business Standard, New Delhi – 30 August, 2019

CHINA DEMAND MAY SPIKE STEEL, IRON ORE PRICES

For India steel imports, South Korea and Japan pose a bigger threat than China, which is third on the list. Nearly 40 per cent of India's steel imports is coming from South Korea and 20 per cent from Japan. China is only 15-18 per cent. According to the WSA, world crude steel production stood at 925.1 million tonnes during January-June, up by 4.9 percent compared to 2018. In the period under review, Asia produced 660.2 million tonnes of crude steel, an increase of 7.4 per cent over the first half of 2018. Just as China is putting its act together to revive its economy, India too needs to take relevant steps to up steel demand in the domestic market, said industry officials. While the domestic Steel Industry is holding on to its steel prices at present, it remains to be seen if steel producers will be able to keep the domestic price stable in the ongoing dull demand environment. According to the WSA, China's crude steel production for June was 87.5 million tonnes up 10 per cent from last year, while India produced 9.3 million tonne in the same period – an increase of 4 per cent year-on-year.

Business Standard, New Delhi – 23 August, 2019

STEEL MINISTER SEEKS JAPANESE INVESTMENT IN FAST-GROWING INDIAN STEEL MARKET

Union Steel Minister urged Japanese investors to invest in India's Steel Sector, saying the country offers a fast-growing market and steel consumption will more than double in the coming years. Union Steel Minister also assured investors that India will provide necessary support to facilitate them in setting up businesses.

The Minister was speaking at a 'Workshop on Enabling Procedures for Increase of Steel Usage for the Growth of Economy' event organised jointly by Ministry of Steel, industry body CII and Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan.

"We are here to discuss topics such as increase of steel usage in India, market in India, economic growth. ... we (India) aim to become a USD 5 trillion economy by 2024-25. India would spend about Rs 100 lakh crore on infrastructure. All this will result in increased use of steel, "Indian Steel Sector is a fast-growing steel market, besides setting up 300 steel making capacity by 2030, the country is also aiming to increase its per capita steel consumption to 160 kg from about 70 kg at present. By 2022, Government's ambitious housing scheme Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana will be completed. Steel in huge quantity will be required to build the houses under the scheme. We (India) also aim to set up new gas pipeline of 14,000-km in next 3 years. Our aim is to provide piped water to every household. So there are lot of areas where steel finds application.

The Hitavada – 25 February, 2020

THE GEOPOLITICAL RISE AND FALL OF CRUDE AND GOLD

It is well recognised that the crude oil and gold markets are always susceptible to geopolitical developments. More often than not, rather than an actual event, rhetoric from adversaries impacts the sentiment. We have seen umpteen times in the past that the rise and fall in the prices of the two commodities are directly related to escalation and de-escalation in geopolitical tensions. Alongside, we find the flow and ebb of speculative capital, as is its wont. It is no different this time. Both crude and gold markets rallied following the US drone attack on the Iranian general and Iran's retaliatory action. Tensions spawned by such events peter out either quickly or gradually, unless the actions result in an escalation towards conflict. This time the change in sentiment has been dramatic, much against the expectation of bulls.

Gold, the punters' eternal favourite, suffered a greater pounding. After rallying to well over \$1,600 a troy ounce – the highest since March 2013, the precious metal registered one of the sharpest falls the following day, to trade at some stage at around \$1,540/oz, a collapse of \$70/oz. Profit-taking, as evidenced by the outflow from ETFs, contributed to the slump. All this happened just when speculative investors in the yellow metal thought there would be a further rise in price. But that was not to be, demonstrating once again the fickle nature of this market.

Business Line– 11 January, 2020

COMMERCE MINISTRY PROPOSES CUT IN GOLD IMPORT DUTY IN BUDGET

The Commerce Ministry has sought reduction in the import duty on gold in the forthcoming budget with a view to pushing exports and manufacturing in the Gems and Jewellery sector. In its budget proposals, the Ministry has suggested its finance counterpart to consider a significant reduction in the import duty on the yellow metal, they said. In the last Budget, the Government has increased the import

duty on the yellow metal to 12.5 per cent. The Gems and Jewellery Export Industry has sought reduction in the import duty to 4 per cent in the budget, which is scheduled to be presented on February 1. Gold imports in December declined sharply to 39 tonnes, from 152 tonnes. India's gold imports, which have a bearing on the current account deficit (CAD), fell about 7 per cent to \$ 20.57 billion during April-November period of the ongoing financial year, according to the Commerce Ministry data. Imports of the yellow metal stood at \$ 22.16 billion in the same period of 2018-19. The decline in gold imports has helped in narrowing the country's trade deficit to \$ 106.84 billion during the eight-month period under review as against \$ 133.74 billion in the year-ago months. Gold import had been recording a negative growth since July this year. However, it grew about 5 per cent to \$ 1.84 billion in October and 6.6 per cent to \$ 2.94 billion in November. India is the largest importer of gold, which mainly caters to the demand of the Jewellery Industry. In volume terms, the country imports 800-900 tonnes of gold annually. To mitigate the negative impact of gold imports on trade deficit and CAD, the government increased the import duty on the metal to 12.5 per cent from 10 per cent in this year's budget.

Industry experts claim that businesses in the sector are shifting their manufacturing bases to neighbouring countries due to this high duty. Gems and jewellery exports declined about 1.5 per cent to \$ 20.5 billion in April-November this fiscal. The country's gold imports dipped about 3 per cent in value terms to \$ 32.8 billion in 2018-19. The CAD narrowed to 0.9 per cent of GDP or \$ 6.3 billion in July-September, 2019-20 from 2.9 per cent or \$19 billion in same period last year, according to the RBI data.

Business Line,— 13 January, 2020
