

**Government of India
Ministry of Mines
National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust**

F. No.: 6/2/2015-NMET-Part(1)/125

dated: 06/05/2026

Subject: Circulation of minutes of 46th meeting of Executive Committee (EC) of National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust (NMET) held on 29th April 2026- reg.

Please find enclosed herewith the minutes of 46th meeting of Executive Committee of NMET held on 29th April 2026 for your kind perusal.

Encl.: As above

**[Geetika Sharma]
Director (Projects) & HoD**

To all EC Members,

1. The Joint Secretary (in-charge of Exploration), Ministry of Mines, GPOA-3, Netaji Nagar, New Delhi
2. The Joint Secretary & Financial Advisor, Coal & Mines, GPOA-3, Netaji Nagar, New Delhi
3. The Joint Secretary, Ministry of Coal, GPOA-3, Netaji Nagar, New Delhi
4. The Joint Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Kartavya Bhawan, New Delhi.
5. The Director General, Geological Survey of India, 27, J. L. Nehru Road, Kolkata
6. The Controller General, Indian Bureau of Mines, 2nd Floor, Indira Bhawan, Civil Lines, Nagpur.
7. The Chairman, Department of Atomic Energy, OYC Building, C.S.M. Marg, Mumbai
8. The Director General, National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust, 9th Floor, Jeevan Prakash Building, 25 K. G. Marg, New Delhi
9. The Principal Secretary, Mineral Resource Department, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh, Mantralaya
10. The Principal Secretary, Industries, Energy and Labor Dept., Govt. of Maharashtra, 114 Annex Building, Mantralaya, Mumbai
11. The Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Mines and Petroleum, Government of Rajasthan, Main Building Secretariat, Jaipur
12. The Additional Chief Secretary, Industries, Investment Promotion and Commerce Dept., Govt. of Tamil Nadu, Industries Department Secretariat, Chennai
13. Dr. P. Krishnamurthy, Flat No. 103, A-Block, IGV Apts., Ideal Homes Townships, RR Nagar, Bengaluru
14. Prof. Tapas Kr. Biswal, B- 4, 101, IIT Bhubaneswar Campus, Argul, Jatni, Khordha, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
15. Shri Bhagwati Prasad Raturi, Ex -GM (Exploration), MECL, Lane NO-7, New Garhwal Colony Near Malsi Puliya, Balawala, Dehradun, Uttarakhand.
16. Dr. Pankaj Satija, NTH Complex, 4th Floor, A-2 Shaheed Jeet Singh Marg, Qutub Institutional Area, New Delhi.
17. Shri. Hanuma Prasad Modali, Deccan Gold Mines Limited, No.77, 16th Cross, Sector IV, HSR Layout, Bangalore.

Copy to:

1. The Secretary (Mines), Government of Andhra Pradesh.
2. The Secretary (Geology and Mining), Government of Arunachal Pradesh
3. The Principal Secretary, Department of Mines and Minerals, Government of Assam.
4. The Principal Secretary-cum-Mines Commissioner, Government of Bihar.
5. The Secretary, Mineral Resource Department, Government of Chhattisgarh.
6. The Principal Secretary, Department of Mines and Geology, Government of Goa.
7. The Addl. Chief Secretary (Industries), Government of Himachal Pradesh.
8. The Principal Secretary (Industry and Mines), Government of Gujarat.
9. The Commissioner Secretary (Industries and Commerce), Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.
10. The Secretary (Industries, Mines and Geology), Government of Jharkhand.
11. The Secretary, (Industries and Commerce), Government of Karnataka.
12. The Principal Secretary, Industries Department, Government of Kerala.
13. The Secretary, Mineral Resource Department, Government of Madhya Pradesh.
14. The Addl. Chief Secretary (Industries and Mines), Government of Maharashtra.
15. The Commissioner and Secretary, Mining and Geology Department, Government of Meghalaya.
16. The Commissioner & Secretary, Geology and Mining, Government of Nagaland.
17. The Principal Secretary (Steel and Mines), Government of Odisha.
18. The Principal Secretary, Mines and Geology, Government of Punjab.
19. The Principal Secretary (Mines), Government of Rajasthan.
20. The Principal Secretary (Industries), Government of Tamil Nadu.
21. The Principal Secretary (Industries and Mines), Government of Telangana.
22. The Secretary (Mines and Geology), Government of Uttar Pradesh.
23. The Principal Secretary (Mines), Government of Uttarakhand.
24. The Secretary (Industry, Commerce and Enterprises), Government of West Bengal.
25. The Secretary, Department of Industries, Union Territory of Ladakh.
26. The Principal Secretary, Mines and Geology Department, Government Sikkim.
27. The Secretary, Department of Industries and Commerce, Government of Tripura.
28. The Secretary, Commerce and Industries, Government of Mizoram.
29. The Secretary, Textiles, Commerce and Industry, Government of Manipur
30. The Principal Secretary, Department of Mines and Geology, Government of Haryana.

Copy for information to:

1. PSO to Secretary, Mines/Chairman, EC, NMEDT, Ministry of Mines, New Delhi

Digitally signed by
Geetika Sharma
Date: 06-05-2026
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Ministry of Mines
National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust
Minutes of 46th Executive Committee meeting of NMEDT
Held on 29th April, 2026 at Conference Room, Ministry of Mines

The 46th meeting of the Executive Committee (EC) of the National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust (NMEDT) was held under the chairmanship of Shri Piyush Goyal, Secretary, Ministry of Mines/Chairman, EC, on 29th April 2026 in hybrid mode in New Delhi.

The list of participants is placed in Annexure.

The agenda items discussed and decisions taken during the meeting are detailed below:

Agenda 46.1: Overview of work of Project Sanctioning Committee of NMEDT

The EC was briefed on the functioning of NMEDT's Project Sanctioning Committee (PSC). EC was informed that in the last three months, three (03) meetings of the PSC have been held, during which 32 project proposals with a sanctioned cost of Rs. 117.24 crore have been approved. These include 30 mineral exploration projects with a sanctioned amount of Rs. 112.27 crore; of these, 24 projects are of critical minerals and 18 projects are of NPEAs.

EC was also briefed that expenditure of Rs. 266.58 crore was incurred by NMEDT in FY 2025-26 as compared to expenditure of Rs. 398.95 crore in FY 2024-25. EC noted that the expenditure incurred by NPEAs has increased in FY 2025-26 as compared to that in FY 2024-25. However, the expenditure incurred by GSI in FY 2025-26 (i.e. Rs. 97.17 crore) was substantially less as compared to that in FY 2024-25 (Rs. 155.48 crore).

Quarterly expenditure details are given below:

Sl. No.	Agency	FY 2024-25					FY 2025-26				
		Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4	Total	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4	Total
1	NPEAs	1.19	0.50	-	14.66	16.35	0.86	3.22	4.81	9.44	18.33
2	MECL	21.93	9.22	33.08	52.19	116.42	16.72	7.37	25.58	49.00	98.67
3	NEAs	12.14	9.25	24.90	42.44	88.73	3.68	7.07	14.40	16.36	41.51
4	GSI	87.84	14.84	11.98	40.82	155.48	20.11	18.67	26.56	31.83	97.17

Decision of EC: EC noted the progress of the work and instructed the following:

1. GSI be asked to provide the reasons for incurring less expenditure in FY 2025-26 as compared to FY 2024-25 along with the remedial action taken.
2. Henceforth, the agenda should provide a comparative overview of the work done by Project Sanctioning Committee and Technical cum Cost Committees.
3. In subsequent meetings, NMEDT to provide the status of expenditure, progress of ongoing projects with special reference to delayed projects and remedial measures taken to fast track the progress.

Agenda 46.2: NMEDT as Central Nodal Agency for the newly created scheme namely “Activities performed under NCMM through National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust Fund”

EC was apprised that NMEDT has been nominated as the Central Nodal Agency for the newly created scheme, namely “Activities performed under NCMM through National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust (NMEDT) Fund” as per the details mentioned below:

Information to be provided	Detail of information
Name of Scheme	Activities performed under NCMM through National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust (NMEDT) Fund
Scheme Code	4362
CNA Model (1 or 2)	01
Multiple CNA (Yes / No)	No

Agenda 46.3: Approval for project for Establishment and Operation of Data Processing, Interpretation and Integration Centre (DPIIC) at GSI Bengaluru through NMEDT fund

EC was apprised that the 1st phase of the project titled “Establishment of Data Processing, Interpretation and Integration Centre (DPIIC) at GSI, RSAS, Bengaluru” with sanctioned cost of Rs. 4.07 crore, including GST with timeline of 24 months for preparation of Expression of Interest (EoI), Request for Proposals (RFPs), evaluation of EoI/RFP(s), onboarding of vendor and deployment of vendor was approved by EC at its 37th meeting held on

23.09.2024. Accordingly, GSI have engaged Digital India Corporation (DIC) as their Project Management Unit (PMU) for preparation of EoI, DPR, RFP, vendor evaluation, & on-boarding for DPIIC. An EoI was floated on 23-01-2025, and based on the evaluation of the “EoI Eligibility and Qualification Criteria”, nine bidders were shortlisted for handing over the RFP.

EC was further apprised that DPIIC will be implemented in two phases over a five-year period under the supervision of GSI through the Digital India Corporation (DIC) as the Project Management Unit (PMU) that will monitor the progress and coordinate all activities. Hon’ble Union Minister of Mines has also approved the recommendations of Delegated Investment Board for Establishment and Operation of DPIIC at GSI, RSAS, Bengaluru with an estimated cost of Rs. 183,05,70,000/-, including applicable taxes and pre-investment cost of engaging Project Management Unit. Accordingly, GSI has requested to provide the necessary approval and budget provisioning as per the yearly phasing of project cost mentioned below:

No	Component	Cost Estimate (In Cr)					Total Cost (In Cr)	GST	Cost in Cr INR (inclusive of Taxes)
		(Yr-1)	(Yr-2)	(Yr-3)	(Yr-4)	(Yr-5)			
1	Domain Experts Cost (Recurring)	7.63	8.39	4.07	4.09	4.5	28.68	18%	33.84
2	Data Processing, Interpretation, and Integration Centre (DPIIC) Application Management team (Recurring)	3.36	3.03	2.62	2.88	3.16	15.05	18%	17.76
3	National Government Compute Cloud (Recurring)	13.48	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	53.48	18%	63.11
4	On-Premises Hardware cost on supply & Installation	3.12	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	3.90	18%	4.60
5	Software Licenses Cost based on deployment (Recurring)	4.564	4.564	4.564	4.564	4.564	22.82	18%	26.93
6	Installation & Fabrication Lab	2.40	0.150	0.150	0.150	0.150	3.00	18%	3.54
7	3D-Visulization Laboratory	1.54	0.0975	0.0975	0.0975	0.0975	1.93	18%	2.28

8	Training and Capacity Building (Recurring)	1.91	0.305	0.305	0.305	0.305	3.13	18%	3.69	
9	ISP Bandwidth (Recurring)	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	5.40	18%	6.37	
10	PMU Budget (Recurring)	0.00	1.49	1.50	1.50	1.50	5.99	18%	7.07	
11	Travel Budget (Recurring)	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	1.50	18%	1.77	
	I. Subtotal excluding taxes	39.38	29.60	24.88	25.16	25.85	144.88			
	II. Subtotal including taxes								170.96	
12	Miscellaneous & Contingency (@5% on the recurring expenditure)								8.027	
13	Pre-investment to PMU (ongoing)	Sanctioned amount including tax								4.07
	Grand Total Cost (including 18% taxes)								183.05	

Decision of EC: EC approved the proposal of GSI for Establishment and Operation of Data Processing, Interpretation and Integration Centre (DPIIC) at GSI Bengaluru. EC noted that the responsibility for timely completion of the project shall rest with DG, GSI, who must ensure that there is no delay in execution. EC also instructed that the project progress be reviewed by the PSC and the TCC on monthly basis.

Agenda 46.4: Approval for revision of sanctioned cost of project “Procurement of 04 Nos. EPMA Instrument” by GSI

EC was apprised that the proposal for the procurement of 04 nos. EPMA instruments at a cost of Rs. 62,39,52,000/- inclusive of all taxes with five years’ post-installation warranty and five years’ CAMC post-warranty, with a procurement timeline of 24 months was approved by EC in its 36th meeting held on 29.07.2024. Post approval from the Ministry of Mines, GSI floated a Global Tender Enquiry on the CPP portal, and the bid amounting to Rs. 69,65,81,692/-, offered by M/s Jeol India Pvt. Ltd., was considered after a two-bid evaluation process and a successful technical demonstration.

Director (Tech.), Ministry of Mines informed that the increase in the instrument's price was mainly due to increase in the USD exchange rate over time and M/s Jeol is the only OEM globally for this equipment.

EC was further apprised that the Ministry of Mines also provided administrative approval to GSI to procure four (04) EPMA instruments along with essential accessories, spares, a five-year warranty and a subsequent five-year Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract (CAMC), with a cost of Rs. 69,65,81,692/-. Subsequently, GSI submitted a proposal to NMEDT for revision of the sanctioned cost from Rs. 62,39,52,000/- to Rs. 69,65,81,692/- for procurement of 04 nos. EPMA instrument.

TCC-1 at its 94th meeting evaluated and recommended the revised cost of the proposal from Rs. 62,39,52,000/- to Rs. 69,65,81,692/- for the procurement of 04 nos. EPMA instruments along with required accessories, spares, 5-year warranty, and 5-year post-warranty CAMC from M/s Jeol India Pvt. Ltd.

Decision of EC: EC approved the revised cost of Rs. 69,65,81,692/- for 04 nos. EPMA instruments.

Agenda 46.5: Approval for revised project proposal for “Procurement of Digital Core Logger” by GSI along with additional timeline of 18 months

EC was apprised that a proposal of GSI for the procurement of one (01) Digital Core Logger for the establishment of Digital Core Library at a cost of Rs. 43,24,70,000/ inclusive of 18% GST and exclusive of customs duties, IGST and other statutory government levies/taxes, with an estimated timeline of 24 months, was approved at the 35th meeting of EC held on 16.05.2024. Now, GSI has submitted a revised proposal for the procurement of one (01) Digital Core Logger at an estimated cost of Rs. 33.70 crore, including GST and CAMC for 4 years, covering the complete instrument(s), consumables, hardware, compulsory yearly maintenance and repair visits with an additional timeline of 18 months. The proposed place of installation of the said instrument has also been changed from GSI, SR, Hyderabad, to GSI, CR, Nagpur.

Decision of EC: The EC noted that the proposed procurement by GSI is to be located in Nagpur where this core logger is already available with MECL, Nagpur. Since the instrument

at MECL has been procured with funds provided by NMEDT, they are a national asset. Therefore, EC rejected the proposal for procurement and directed that GSI shall use this facility available at MECL, Nagpur.

Agenda 46.6: Proposal to discontinue the practice of accepting hard copies of Geological Reports from exploration agencies

EC was apprised that presently the exploration agencies are submitting final geological reports to NMEDT in both hard copy (two copies) and soft copy (CD). Further, the exploration agencies are also uploading their geological reports in the NGDR Portal, and the reports are also being uploaded on the NMEDT Portal. Accordingly, the practice of submitting hard copy of the geological report may be discontinued.

Decision of EC: EC approved the proposal to discontinue the submission of Geological Reports in hard copy.

Agenda 46.7: Approval for revised guidelines for providing financial assistance for procurement of machinery/laboratory equipment/instruments etc. aimed at enhancing the exploration activities

EC was apprised that NMEDT provides funding support to Central Government agencies, CPSUs, State DGMs/DMGs to enhance the exploration activities. In order to ensure effective utilization of the instruments, it was proposed to amend the existing scheme by including the following changes:

- The procured machinery/equipment will be national property and therefore, in public interest, NMEDT, Ministry of Mines, may direct the procuring agency to allow the use of such facility on a complimentary basis.

Decision of EC: EC approved the proposal.

Agenda 46.8: Guidelines for funding of mineral exploration projects of the Geological Survey of India through the National Mineral Exploration & Development Trust

EC was apprised that presently GSI executes mineral exploration projects with funding support from the Consolidated Fund of India. Now GSI has increased the number of exploration projects with a focus on exploration of critical minerals. In order to execute these

exploration projects, GSI have sought funding support from NMEDT. Accordingly, NMEDT has formulated guidelines for funding exploration projects of GSI which has been concurred by JS&FA. The guidelines for funding these projects has been prepared is annexed at annexure A submitted for approval of EC.

Decision of EC: EC directed that only projects approved by Central Geological Programming Board (CGPB) shall be funded by NMEDT.

Agenda 46.9: Ratification of updated list of technical experts as peer reviewer to scrutinize the geological reports of exploration agencies

EC was apprised that the geological reports prepared by exploration agencies are scrutinized by the external peer reviewers for ensuring the quality and adequacy of data. It was observed that the present panel did not include certain critical minerals like Lithium, Graphite, Niobium, Tantalum, Molybdenum, and Rhenium. Apart from that, some empaneled peer reviewers have joined NPEAs, have become members of the TCC of NMEDT or expressed unwillingness to continue as peer reviewers. Consequently, the panel has been revised and approved by Secretary, Mines/Chairman, EC.

The updated list of peer reviewers is given below:

S. No.	Commodity (*indicated against the commodity are the new commodities)	Updated panel of Peer reviewers (includes existing and new) (Name in bold and italics are new peer reviewers)
1	Iron (Hematite, Magnetite) and Manganese	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shri Sarat Kumar Jena, DDG (Retd.), GSI 2. Shri C.R. Dash, Director (Retd.), GSI 3. Shri J Narayana Moorthy, DGM (Retd.) MECL 4. <i>Sh. N. Subramanian, Senior Geologist (Retd.), GSI</i> 5. <i>Sh. Lakhani Lal Vishwakarma, ADG (Retd.), GSI</i> 6. <i>Dr. Bhavesh Chandra Sarkar, Prof., IIT Bombay</i>
2	Gold	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. S.K. Biswas, Director (Retd.), GSI 2. Shri G.N. Dwivedi, ADG (Retd.), GSI 3. <i>Sh. R.L Jat, Director (Retd.), GSI</i> 4. <i>Dr. Shakti Sarvanan Chinnasamy, Asso. Prof., IIT Bombay</i> <p><i>(Considering the number of ongoing projects, number of peer reviewer has been reduced. Only four peer reviewer has been considered</i></p>

		as they are not nominated for other commodities)
3	Basemetal and associated elements (Cd, Se, Rh, Ni, Co, Mo & Precious metals)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. Kamlakaram Saripalli, DGM (Retd.) MECL 2. Shri Binod Kumar, DDG (Retd.), GSI 3. Shri R. N. Singh, Director (Retd.), GSI 4. Dr. Rajgopal Mohanty, AD (Retd.), AMD 5. Shri Jayant Kumar, DGM (Retd.) MECL 6. Shri J Narayana Moorthy, DGM (Retd.) MECL 7. Dr. P.R. Golani, DDG (Retd.), GSI 8. Dr. P. R. Sahoo, Asso. Prof., IIT (ISM) Dhanbad 9. Sh. A. K. Sharma, Director (Retd.), GSI 10. Sh. R. P.Nagar, ADG (Retd.), GSI 11. Sh. Arup Kumar Bora, (Retd.), GSI 12. Sh. V. K. Khadse, Director (Retd.), GSI 13. Dr. R. Krishnamurthy, Prof., IIT Roorkee 14. Dr. S. K. Mondal, Prof., Jadavpur University 15. Prof. A. S. Venkatesh, Prof. (Retd.), IIT (ISM) Dhanbad
4	REE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shri K. Shashidharan, DDG (Retd.), GSI 2. Dr. P.R. Golani, DDG (Retd.), GSI 3. Dr. A.K. Chaturvedi, AD (Retd.), AMD 4. Shri K. Ramesh Kumar, AD (Retd.), AMD 5. Dr. Alok Porwal, Prof., IIT Bombay 6. Dr. S. K. Som, DDG (Retd.), GSI 7. Dr. N. C. Pant, Scientist, NCPOR 8. Dr. Sanjay Das, DDG (Retd.), GSI 9. Prof. Sahendra Singh, Professor, IIT-ISM, Dhanbad
5	Tungsten, Tin	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. K Shashidharan DDG (Retd.) GSI 2. Dr. R. Krishnamurthy, Prof., IIT Roorkee 3. Sh. H. Sarvothaman, DDG (Retd.), GSI
6	Bauxite/ Laterite and associated elements (Ga, Sc, Ti, V, REE, Ni, Co)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shri Jayant Kumar, DGM (Retd.) MECL 2. Dr. S. K. Som, DDG (Retd.), GSI 3. Dr. Bhavesh Chandra Sarkar, Prof., IIT Bombay
7	Beach Sand Minerals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. A.K. Chaturvedi, Addl. Director (Retd.), AMD 2. Dr. Rahul Banerjee, Regional Director (Retd.), AMD & Adj. Prof., HBNI 3. Dr. Yugandhara Rao Allika, Adj. Prof., Andhra University

8	PGE, Nickel, Cobalt, Vanadium, Chromium, Titanium	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. N.P. Nathan, DDG (Retd.), GSI 2. Sh. K. C. Sahoo, DDG (Retd.), GSI 3. Dr. R. Krishnamurthy, Prof., IIT Roorkee 4. Dr. Muduru Lachhana Dora, DDG (Retd.), GSI 5. Sh. Kanu Charan Das, Director (Retd.), GSI
9	Airborne Geophysical Survey	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sh.V.K. Khadse, Director (Retd.), GSI 2. Dr.V. Chakravarthi, Prof., University of Hyderabad
10	Coal, Lignite and associated REE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shri Ajaya Kumar Mohanty, GM (Exploration) (Retd.), CMPDI 2. Dr A.K. Panda, Ex GM (Exploration), CMPDIL 3. Shri Bharat Kumar Gazarasan, Ex GM (Geology), CMPDIL
11	Fertilizer minerals: Rock Phosphate, Apatite, Potash, Glauconite	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sh. Arup Kumar Bora, (Retd.), GSI 2. Sh. H. Sarvothaman, DDG (Retd.), GSI <p>Fresh nominations can be sought after 06 months</p>
12	Industrial minerals: Magnesite, Limestone etc.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. G. Lakshminarayana, Director (Retd.) GSI 2. Sh. Subhash Yadav, Director (Retd.), GSI 3. Sh. K. Subba Rao, Director (Retd.), GSI 4. Sh. S. M. J Basha, Director (Retd.), GSI 5. Dr. Partha Pratim Chakraborty, Prof., Delhi University
13	Diamonds & Gemstones	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sh. S.S Nayak, DDG (Retd.), GSI 2. Sh. B. K. Mishra, DDG (Retd.), GSI
14	Graphite*	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sh. R. P. Nagar, ADG (Retd.), GSI 2. Sh. A. K. Sharma, Director (Retd.), GSI 3. Dr. Muduru Lachhana Dora, Prof. JNU and DDG (Retd.), GSI 4. Sh. H. Sarvothaman, DDG (Retd.), GSI
15	Lithium*	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. P R Sahoo, Asso. Prof., IIT (ISM) Dhanbad 2. Dr. S. K. Som, DDG (Retd.), GSI 3. Dr. Sourabh Bhattacharya, Asst. Prof., IISER Mohali 4. Dr. Muduru Lachhana Dora, Prof. JNU and DDG (Retd.), GSI

16	Molybdenum*, Rhenium*	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. S. K. Som, DDG (Retd.), GSI 2. Sh. R. P. Nagar, ADG (Retd.), GSI
17	Niobium*, Tantalum*	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. P R Sahoo, Asso. Prof., IIT (ISM) Dhanbad 2. Dr. S. K. Som, DDG (Retd.), GSI 3. Dr. Sourabh Bhattacharya, Asst. Prof., IISER Mohali

Decision of EC: EC ratified the list of peer reviewers.

The meeting ended with vote of thanks to the Chair.

Guidelines for funding of mineral exploration projects of the Geological Survey of India through the National Mineral Exploration & Development Trust

1. The National Mineral Exploration & Development Trust has been established under Section 9C of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, as a dedicated funding mechanism for regional and detailed exploration. As the principal national geoscience organisation, the Geological Survey of India carries out mineral exploration as part of its mandate. Further, with the launch of the National Critical Minerals Mission (NCMM), there has been a heightened focus on the exploration of critical minerals in the country. In line with this vision, GSI has taken up an increased number of projects aimed at critical mineral exploration. Under NCMM, NMEDT has been assigned the mandate to provide funding support for the exploration of critical minerals.
2. NMEDT funds exploration projects undertaken by Notified Exploration Agencies, Notified Private Exploration Agencies, State Directorates of Mines and Geology (DMGs), the Mineral Exploration Consultancy Limited (MECL), and other such agencies. This guideline provides for extending funding support for exploration projects undertaken by GSI.
3. NMEDT funding shall be released to GSI for outsourced and externally procured components of exploration projects, including drilling, geophysical surveys, geochemical analysis, remote sensing, hiring of equipment and vehicles, laboratory analysis, crop compensation, borehole plugging, construction of permanent markers and other miscellaneous costs of the projects. The funding will also be provided for other field components like logistics, travel & manpower etc., specifically related to the project. Any funding to be provided to GSI will be in compliance with the General Financial Rules and Government procurement procedures. The funding will be as per the Schedule of Charges of NMEDT.
4. Exploration activities shall be undertaken in accordance with the stages defined under the Minerals (Evidence of Mineral Contents) Rules, 2015, namely G4, G3, G2, and G1, to establish mineral resources as per the United Nations Framework Classification. However,

for the purpose of funding, baseline surveys and Regional Mineral targeting projects will also be included.

5. All Project proposals will be submitted by the GSI to NMEDT through the “NMEDT Connect” link available on the NMEDT portal. In exceptional circumstances, proposals can also be taken through email or physical mode. Project proposals submitted by GSI shall include details of the area, mineral commodities, detailed geological justification, exploration strategy, drilling plan map, methodology, timelines, and clearly demarcated components proposed for NMEDT funding.

6. All project proposals approved in Central Geological Programming Board (CGPB) will be taken up directly for consideration by the Technical cum Cost Committees. These projects shall not be sent to MECL, AMD and respective State DGMs for their comments as these agencies are members of CGPB.

7. Proposals submitted by the Geological Survey of India for funding under the National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust shall be evaluated based on clearly defined technical, financial, and outcome-oriented criteria to ensure optimal utilization of public funds and achievement of national mineral exploration objectives. In so far as the evaluation of project proposals is concerned, primary emphasis shall be placed on the geological merit and scientific rationale of the proposal. Each proposal shall be required to demonstrate a sound geological model supported by existing data, including previous exploration results, geophysical or geochemical anomalies, and regional mineralisation trends. The extent to which the proposal addresses identified data gaps and contributes to progressive advancement from lower to higher levels of exploration, as defined under the Minerals (Evidence of Mineral Contents) Rules, 2015, shall also be a key consideration.

8. The technical robustness of the proposed exploration methodology shall be critically examined, including the appropriateness of mapping scales, survey techniques, drilling plans, sampling protocols, and analytical methods.

9. Financial evaluation shall focus on the reasonableness and transparency of cost estimates. Funding shall be limited to mineral exploration activities that are aligned with the objectives of the MMDR framework and NMEDT Rules, 2015. Funding shall be restricted to

the components of exploration, in accordance with the approved financial framework of the Schedule of Charges of NMEDT.

10. Projects that do not demonstrate adequate geological justification, lack clear deliverables, involve disproportionate costs, or do not conform to applicable statutory and environmental regulations shall not be considered for funding. Due consideration shall also be given to avoiding duplication of efforts and ensuring optimal allocation of resources across different mineral commodities and geographic regions.

11. The appraisal of projects shall be carried out through a structured mechanism involving scrutiny by the Technical cum Cost Committee of NMEDT.

12. In order to ensure efficiency and timely decision-making, financial powers for the approval of projects have been delineated based on project cost. Based on the recommendations of TCC, the projects shall be approved by the Project Sanctioning Committee (PSC) of NMEDT or the Executive Committee (EC) of NMEDT, depending on the financial power delegated to the PSC.

13. The release of funds shall be linked to project components and milestones. Payments shall be made against verified progress, with adequate financial safeguards and audit provisions. The Deputy Director General, GSI, will be the Nodal Officer from the respective State Unit Office of GSI who will examine/monitor the work executed in the State and verify the bills pertaining to the project. Post verification of the bill, it will be submitted to NMEDT for payment.

14. A robust monitoring framework shall be implemented by GSI, including submission of the Monthly Progress Report by respective State Units of GSI to NMEDT Secretariat with a copy to GSI Central Headquarters and periodic field inspections, to ensure quality, reliability, and adherence to prescribed standards.

15. Raw data generated during the prospecting operations shall be preserved by the Geological Survey of India. The core logs generated in respect of the block have to be submitted to the nearest Regional Core Library of GSI as per the SOP of GSI for this purpose. All data generated under NMEDT-funded components shall be treated as a

national asset and shall be submitted to the National Geoscience Data Repository in standardised digital formats, in accordance with applicable data management policies.

16. After the completion of the project, GSI shall submit a Geological Report, which will provide UNFC-compliant mineral resource data and identification of mineral blocks suitable for auction, if any, under the Mineral (Auction) Rules, 2015, thereby strengthening transparency and investor confidence in the mineral sector.

17. Financial implications of the proposal shall be met entirely from the corpus of NMEDT, which is funded through statutory contributions under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, and shall not impose any additional burden on the Consolidated Fund of India.

Annexure**List of Participant**

S. No	List of Members	Position	Name of Member in Position
1	Secretary, Ministry of Mines	Chairperson, ex officio	Shri Piyush Goyal
2	Joint Secretary, in-charge of Exploration, Ministry of Mines	Member, ex officio	Smt. Farida M. Naik
3	Director General of Geological Survey of India	Member, ex-officio	Shri Asit Saha
4	Controller General of Indian Bureau of Mines	Member, ex officio	Shri. Pankaj Kulshrestha
5	Representative of Chairman, Dept. of Atomic Energy	Member, ex officio	Dheeraj Pande, Director, AMD
6	Director General National Mineral Exploration Trust	Member Secretary, ex-officio	Shri. Pankaj Garg
7	Director and HoD, NMEDT	Director and HoD, NMEDT	Smt. Geetika Sharma
8	Representative of Additional Secretary, Ministry of Coal	Member, ex officio	Shri Birendra Thakur Director (Tech.)
9	Representative of Joint Secretary (E), Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas	Member, ex officio	Sagar Singh Kalsi Director
10	Representative of Joint Secretary and Financial Advisor of Ministry of Mines or Coal	Member, ex officio	Shri Alok Kumar Dy. Secretary, IFD
11	DGM, Madhya Pradesh, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh	Members, ex officio	Vivek Nema Dy. Director
12	DGM, Maharashtra, Govt. of Maharashtra	Members, ex officio	Dr. T R K Rao Director General
13	DGM, Rajasthan, Govt. of Rajasthan	Members, ex officio	Mrs. Namrata Vrishni Special Secretary, Mines

14	CGM, Tamil Nadu, Govt. of Tamil Nadu	Members, ex officio	Mr. G. Ponnumani Assistant Director
15	Technical Expert	-	Dr. P. Krishnamurthy, Addl. Director (Retd.), AMD
16	Technical Expert	-	Sh. B. P. Raturi, General Manager (Retd.), MECL
17	Technical Expert	-	Prof. Tapas Kumar Biswal, Professor & HoD, IIT-Bombay (Retd.)
18	Technical Expert	-	Dr. Hanuma Prasad Modali, Managing Director, Deccan Gold Mines Ltd.
19	Technical Expert	-	Dr. Pankaj Kumar Satija, Executive In-Charge, Ferro Alloys and Minerals Division (FAMD), Tata Steel
20	Dy. Director General and Chairman, TCC-1	Special Invitee	Dr. S. Ravi
21	Dy. Director General and Chairman, TCC-2	Special Invitee	Shri Pradeep Singh