

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

F. No. 6/3/2015-NMET/ 176

New Delhi, 27th June, 2024

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: Scheme for engagement of Notified Private Exploration Agencies in Mineral Exploration directly through NMET - reg.

In supersession to the OM F.No.6/3/2015-NMET/380 dt. 12th December, 2023 the Competent Authority has approved the revised scheme for engagement of Notified Private Exploration Agencies (NPEA) in mineral exploration directly through NMET. The details of scheme are attached for information and necessary action.

However, the projects sanctioned under the scheme released vide OM F.No. 6/3/2015-NMET/28 dt. 10.05.2022 will be executed as per the sanction orders already issued.

Encl: As above


(Geetika Sharma)
Deputy Secretary & HoD, NMET

To

1. The Secretary (Mines), Government of Andhra Pradesh.
2. The Secretary (Geology & Mining), Government of Arunachal Pradesh.
3. The Principal Secretary, Department of Mines & 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 & Geology, Government of Goa.
7. The Addl. Chief Secretary (Industries), Government of Himachal Pradesh.
8. The Principal Secretary (Industry & Mines), Government of Gujarat.
9. The Commissioner Secretary (Industries & Commerce), Government of Jammu & Kashmir.
10. The Secretary (Industries, Mines & Geology), Government of Jharkhand.
11. The Secretary, (Industries & Commerce) Government of Karnataka.
12. The Principal Secretary, Industries Department, Government of Kerala.
13. The Secretary (Mines), Government of Madhya Pradesh.

14. The Addl. Chief Secretary (Industries & Mines), Government of Maharashtra.
15. The Commissioner and Secretary, Mining & Geology Department, Government of Meghalaya.
16. The Commissioner & Secretary, Geology & Mining, Government of Nagaland.
17. The Principal Secretary (Steel & Mines), Government of Odisha.
18. The Principal Secretary, Mines & 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 & Mines), Government of Telangana.
22. The Secretary (Mines & Geology), Government of Uttar Pradesh.
23. The Principal Secretary (Mines), Government of Uttarakhand.
24. The Secretary (Industry, Commerce & Enterprises), Government of West Bengal.
25. The Secretary, Department of Industries, Administration of Union Territory of Ladakh.
26. The Principal Secretary, Mines and Geology Department, Government of Sikkim.

Copy to:

1. The Director, Department of Mines and Geology, Government of Andhra Pradesh.
2. Director, Directorate of Geology & Mining, Govt. of Assam.
3. Director, Department of Mines & Geology, Govt. of Bihar.
4. The Director, Directorate of Geology & Mining, Govt. of Chhattisgarh.
5. The Director of Mines & Geology, Government of Goa.
6. Commissioner of Geology and Mining, Govt. of Gujarat.
7. The Director, Department of Industries, Govt. of Himachal Pradesh.
8. The Director, Department of Geology and Mining, Government of Jammu and Kashmir.
9. The Director (Mines), Directorate of Mines, Government of Jharkhand.
10. The Director, Department of Mines & Geology, Government of Karnataka.
11. The Director, Directorate of Mining & Geology, Government of Kerala.
12. The Director, Directorate of Geology & Mining, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh.
13. The Director, Directorate of Geology and Mining, Government of Maharashtra.
14. The Director, Directorate of Mineral Resources, Government of Meghalaya.
15. The Director, Directorate of Mines, Government of Odisha.
16. The Director, Mines and Geology Directorate, Government of Rajasthan.
17. The Commissioner of Geology & Mining, Government of Tamil Nadu.
18. The Director of Mines and Geology, Government of Telangana.

19. The Director, Geology and Mining Unit, Govt. of Uttarakhand.
20. The Director, Directorate of Mines & Minerals, Government of West Bengal.
21. Shri Pudi Srinivasa Rao, Natural Resources Division - Tata Steel Limited, Room No. 349, 3rd Floor, Commercial Centre, General office, Bistupur, Jamshedpur East Singhbhum, Jharkhand-831001 (pudi.srinivas@tatasteel.com).
22. Shri Arijit Dey, United Exploration India Pvt. Ltd., Tower 2A, 5th Floor, Action Area II, Ecospace Business Park, Rajarhat, New Town, Kolkata, West Bengal-700156 (admin@unitedexploration.co.in).
23. Dr. Nirode Behari Chanda, Indian Mine Planners & Consultants, GE-61 Rajdanga Main Road, Behind Vivanta Hotel, West Bengal, Kolkata - 700107 (nbc@impcon.in).
24. Shri Jijo George, Gemcokati Exploration Private Limited, Plot No 34, Bapat Nagar, Maharastra Chandrapur - 442401 (jijo@gemcokati.com).
25. Dr. S. Karuppannan, Geotechnical Mining Solutions, 1/213B Natesan Complex Tamil Nadu, Dharmapuri - 636705 (info.gtmsdpi@gmail.com).
26. Mr. Channamallikarjun B. Patil, Geoexpore Private Limited, No 12-28/2, SY No. 28/2, Karnataka, Bangalore - 560077 (cm@geoexpore.com).
27. Mr. Leo Christy A, V.M. Salgaocar & Brother Pvt. Ltd, Salgaocar House, Off F. L. Gomes Road, Vasco Da Gama, South Goa-403802 (leochristy@vmsbgoa.com).
28. Mr. Loknath Rath, Geovale Services Private Limited, GN 38/5, 3rd Floor, Sector V, Salt Lake, Kolkata 700 091, India West Bengal (loknath.rath@geovale.com).
29. Mr. Sanjeev Ganeriwala, Maheshwari Mining Private Limited, 21, CLM Lane, Raniganj, Dist: Burdwan, West Bengal (anu.thakur@maheshwaree.com).
30. Mr. P. Praveen Kumar, Geo Marine Solutions Pvt. Ltd. MP VIII/357B, First Floor, Shreesha Complex, Udyawar village, Manjeshwar, Kasargod, Kerala, India- 671323 (praveen@geomarinesolutions.in)
31. Dr. Ifthikhar Ahmed, Geo Exploration and Mining Solution, 17, Advaita Ashram Rd, Arthanari Nagar, Fairlands, Salem, Tamil Nadu 636004 (ifthiahmed@gmail.com).
32. Mr. Murali Manas B., Ecomen Laboratories Pvt. Ltd., B-1/8, 2nd Floor, opposite Mahalaxmi sweet, Sector H, Sector-A, Aliganj, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh 226024 (murali.manas@ecomen.in)
33. Ms. Soumi Chakraborty, Novomine India Private Limited, 4th Floor, Building No-65 , Opp-The Children's Hospital, Pohkseh, Shillong, East Khasi Hills, Meghalaya- 793006, India (novomineceo@gmail.com).
34. Mr. Abhijit Pednekar, Infrastructure Logistics Private Limited, 205, 2nd Floor, Kamat Metropolis-I, Behind Caculo Mall, St Inez Panaji North Goa 403001 (abhijit.pednekar@fomento.co).
35. Mr. Nitin Kohad, Kartikay Exploration & Mining Services Pvt. Ltd., 199A/18, Chitnavis Marg, Crorepati Gali, Civil Lines, Nagpur, Maharashtra 440001 (nitin.kohad@kartikay.co.in).
36. Mr. Indraneel Dawande, Engeotech Consultant, 1338, Kachnar City Rd, Vijay Nagar, Jabalpur, Raksha, Madhya Pradesh 482002 (engeotech@rediffmail.com).
37. Mr. Om Prakash Somani, Ramgad Mineral and Mining limited, Baldota Enclave, Abheraj Baldota Road, Hosapete 583203 (omprakash.s@rmml.in).

38. Mr. B. Raghushe, PRB Infraprojects Limited, Ratan Heights, S-3, 2nd Floor, Beside Indian Oil Petrol Pump, Medical Square, Nagpur-440024 (prbinfraprojects@gmail.com).
39. Ms. Shivani Gupta, Kundan Concentrates Private Limited, 3, Scindia House, 2nd Floor, Janpath, Connaught Place, New Delhi-110001 (shivani.gupta@kundangreenenergy.com).
40. Mr. Deepak Kumar, Gems Project Private Limited, Dugdugiyatoli, Argora, Ranchi, Jharkhand 834002 (md@gemsgroup.in).
41. Mr. Deependra Singh, Mis FCI Aravali Gypsum and Minerals India Limited, Institutional Area Sector B Vivek Vihar Yojna, Jodhpur, Rajasthan, Jodhpur -342005. (fagmill@rediffmail.com)

Copy for information to:

1. PSO to Secretary, Ministry of Mines, Shashtri Bhawan, New Delhi-110 001
2. PPS to AS, Ministry of Mines, Shashtri Bhawan, New Delhi-110 001

Scheme for engagement of Notified Private Exploration Agencies in Mineral Exploration directly through National Mineral Exploration Trust

1. Background

- 1.1** Central Government has made several policy reforms to boost the mineral production in the country and make the country self-reliant in mineral sector. The amendments in the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act) in 2021 have empowered the Central Government to notify private sector entities to undertake prospecting operations.
- 1.2** After the amendment in the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act) in 2023, empowered the Central Government to exclusively auction Composite Licence and Mining Lease for critical and strategic minerals listed in the Part D of the first Schedule of the Act, a scheme for engagement of Notified Private Exploration Agencies (NPEAs) in mineral exploration directly through NMET was notified vide O.M. F.No.6/3/2015-NMET/380 dt. 12th December, 2023. As a result, since notification of this scheme, there has been a significant improvement in sanction of exploration projects by NMET to NPAs for critical, strategic minerals and deep-seated minerals. However, sanction of exploration projects by NMET to NPEAs for other minerals has not picked up. It has also been observed that there is a considerable delay in sanction of projects as well as release of funds to the NPEAs when these projects are routed through the State Governments.
- 1.3** In view of the above, it will be appropriate that the exploration of all major minerals other than minerals mentioned in Part B of the First Schedule of the MMDR Act, 1957 is funded directly by National Mineral Exploration Trust (NMET). The project proposals submitted by Notified Private Exploration Agencies (NPEA) for all major minerals other than minerals mentioned in the Part B of the First Schedule of the MMDR Act, 1957 may directly be handled by NMET for approval and sanction.

1. Objective

- 1.1** The objective of the Scheme is to boost the exploration activities in the country by engaging NPEAs in mineral exploration of all major minerals other than minerals mentioned in the Part B of the First Schedule of the MMDR Act, 1957 by the Central Government and to ease out the process of reimbursement/ funding of the operations by NPEA through NMET.

2. Procedure for Engagement of Notified Private Exploration Agencies by Central Government and their Funding

2.1 General Conditions

- (i) The present scheme is applicable for exploration of all major minerals other than minerals mentioned in Part-B of the First Schedule of the MMDR Act 1957.
- (ii) Exploration operations shall be undertaken in accordance with the provisions regarding such operations in the Minerals (Evidence of Mineral Contents Rules) 2015, the Mineral Conservation and Development Rules, 2017 (MCDR), the Guidelines for notification of accredited private exploration agencies issued by Ministry of Mines on 12th August, 2021 and any other applicable law for the time being in force.
- (iii) NPEA shall undertake exploration in respect of the category of minerals and mineral deposits under which it has been notified.
- (iv) Approval for exploration to NPEA or their funding from NMET shall not confer any right on the NPEA for grant of any mineral concession in the area explored. The mineral concession (composite licence, mining lease, etc.) in such explored area shall be granted in accordance with the provision of the MMDR Act, 1957 and rules made thereunder. A NPEA may participate in auction of mineral concession over the block or a part thereof which has been explored by such NPEA subject to provision of the MMDR Act, 1957 and rules made thereunder.
- (v) In case of exploration projects of minerals as mentioned in Part-D of First Schedule and Seventh Schedule of the MMDR amendment Act 2023, already sanctioned by NMET in the name of State Government to be executed by NPEA also, the NPEA will be eligible to participate in auction of these blocks.
- (vi) The details of any related party to the NPEA, participating in the auction for mining lease has to be declared beforehand to the Central Government/ State Government.

2.2 Mode of Engagement of Notified Private Exploration Agencies (NPEA) and Funding by NMET for Exploration of all major minerals (other than minerals mentioned in the Part B of the First Schedule of the MMDR Act, 1957)

The engagement of NPEA by Central Government and the funding of exploration projects will be done as per the following details:

- i. NPEA may select the area for exploration based on available geoscience data and submit a proposal in respect of the same to NMET. The geoscience data may be accessed from Geological Survey of India's baseline geoscience database available free of cost in the NGDR/Bhukosh portal of Geological Survey of India (GSI), database of other government or private agencies, etc.
- ii. NPEA may submit an application outlining the details of the area, mineral commodities, etc., it proposes for undertaking exploration to NMET in the format specified in Schedule to this Scheme (**Annexure 1**).
- iii. Upon receipt of such application from NPEA, NMET shall send the proposal to Geological Survey of India (GSI), State Government (DGM/DMG), Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited (MECL) and Atomic Mineral Department (AMD, specifically for REE & RM) for their comments for submitting report on the feasibility for undertaking the item for the identified commodity within one month of the receipt of the application from NMET.
- iv. Upon receipt of comments from GSI, MECL, AMD and State Government (DGM/DMG), Technical-cum-Cost Committee (TCC), NMET shall grant the in-principle approval to NPEA or reject the proposal.
- v. Upon grant of in-principal approval, the NPEA shall prepare and submit the detailed exploration proposal to NMET within three months from the date of receipt of in-principle approval for evaluation for reconnaissance or prospecting surveys in the format prescribed.
- vi. The proposals submitted to NMET shall be evaluated and approved as per the prescribed procedure of NMET and the concerned NPEA will be responsible for defending the proposal before the TCC of NMET. Further, on recommendation of TCC the projects will be reviewed by Executive Committee (EC) of NMET for approval and sanction.
- vii. On approval of EC, NMET shall issue the sanction order to NPEA and funds will be released by NMET to NPEA as per the norms.

- viii. As per Rule 172 (1) Para (ii) of GFR 2017, in case the NPEA wishes to avail mobilization advance (up to 30% of the approved project cost), the NPEA has to submit a Bank Guarantee (BG, including e-bank guarantee) of equal value of advance to NMET. Advance paid will be adjusted in the first bill submitted by the NPEA and a Utilization Certificate of the same has to be submitted along with the bills. Further payment will be made on reimbursement basis against the bills submitted by NPEA. The BG should remain valid for a period of 60 days beyond the date of completion of project and acceptance of geological report by NMET. The Bank Guarantee will be released within 30 days after the settlement of mobilization advance.
- ix. 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 by the NPEA in the State and verify the bills claimed by NPEA for such purpose. The NPEA will submit bill to NMET after verification/certification of the Nodal Officer.
- x. The NPEA undertaking exploration shall submit the yearly geological report(s) and final geological report(s) of the exploration projects to NMET, State Government and Regional Controller or the authorized officer of Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM) in accordance with rule 9 of MCDR, 2017. In case of projects with a timeline of more than one year, an interim report will be submitted by NPEA.
- xi. The raw data generated by NPEA during the prospecting operation shall be submitted to State Government, Geological Survey of India (GSI) and Regional Controller or the authorized officer of Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM). Core logs generated by NPEA have to be submitted to the nearest Regional Core Library of GSI as per the SOP of GSI for this purpose in respect of the block.
- xii. The Central Government shall technically evaluate the geological report and decide about the potential mineral blocks which can further be taken up for auction. The Central Government or State Government, as the case may be, shall put the block for auction as per the procedure prescribed in the Mineral (Auction) Rules 2015 for grant of composite licence or mining lease, as the case may be. The Central Government shall mention the name of NPEA who has prepared the Geological Report in the tender document.

FORMAT FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSAL FOR UNDERTAKING EXPLORATION

To,
The Director & HoD,
National Mineral Exploration Trust,
Ministry of Mines
New Delhi - 110001

Madam/Sir,

I/we am/are submitting the following details for granting 'in-principle' approval by NMET on the proposal of reconnaissance or prospecting surveys to NMET under the "Scheme for Engagement of Notified Private Exploration Agencies in Mineral Exploration directly through National Mineral Exploration Trust issued by Ministry of Mines vide OM No.____ dt ____.

1. Name and Address of the Applicant

(a)	Name of NPEA:	
(b)	Name of Authorized Signatory	
(c)	Postal address:	
(d)	Telephone Number (Office):	
(e)	Fax number (Office):	
(f)	Mobile No:	
(g)	Telephone Number (Residence):	
(h)	E-mail address:	

2. Details of Accreditation as Private Exploration Agency and Notification under the proviso to Section 4(1) of the MMRD Act

(a)	Date of accreditation granted by QCI-NABET:	
(b)	Date of expiry of accreditation:	
(c)	Date of Notification under the proviso to Section 4(1) of the MMRD Act:	
(d)	Date of expiry of Notification:	
(e)	Category of the exploration Agency (Category A or B) under Notification:	

3. Location Details of the Area Proposed

(a)	State	
(b)	District (s)/ Taluka(s)/ Block(s)	
(c)	Nearby Village (s)	
(d)	Survey of India (SOI) Toposheet (s) No.	
(e)	Area in sq. km.	
(f)	Boundary coordinates of the proposed block (in Decimal degree)	

4. Mineral Potential of the Area

(a)	Name of Mineral(s) identified/ expected in the area/ block	
(b)	Title of the Project with name of the block	
(c)	Stage of Exploration	
(d)	Basis on which mineral potential in the area has been identified	

5. Documents to be enclosed with the application

- (i) Location of the proposed block demarcated on Survey of India (SOI) Toposheet No.
- (ii) Documents mentioned in item 4(d) above.
- (iii) Other necessary documents

Place:**Date:****Signature of Applicant**