



Ministry of Mines to Launch Second Tranche of Exploration Licence Auctions

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Ministry of Mines will launch the 2nd Tranche of Auction of Exploration Licence (EL) Blocks on 12 February 2026 at the Civil Services Officers' Institute (CSOI), New Delhi, marking another important milestone in India's ongoing reforms aimed at strengthening mineral exploration and ensuring long-term mineral security, particularly for critical and deep-seated minerals.

The launch event will be held in the presence of the Union Minister of Coal and Mines, Shri G. Kishan Reddy, along with senior officials of the Ministry of Mines and representatives from State Governments, industry, and other key stakeholders.

On the occasion, the Ministry will also unveil the Next Generation Digital Portal of the Geological Survey of India (GSI). The portal brings together data acquisition, analysis, visualisation and dissemination on a single cloud-enabled platform. Equipped with AI/ML-based tools and interoperability with the National Geoscience Data Repository (NGDR), the portal is expected to significantly enhance transparency, efficiency and data-driven decision-making in the mineral exploration ecosystem.

As part of the launch, a comprehensive roadshow programme has been planned for stakeholders with the Exploration Licence framework, the auction methodology and the incentives available to explorers. The programme will include presentations on the e-auction process through the MSTC portal, auction rules, and the National Mineral Exploration Trust (NMET) scheme, which provides partial reimbursement of eligible exploration expenditure. An open house session will also be organised to address queries and suggestions from stakeholders.

The 2nd Tranche of Exploration Licence auctions builds upon the successful rollout of the first tranche. The 1st Tranche, comprising 13 Exploration Licence blocks covering critical minerals such as Rare Earth Elements (REE), Zinc, Diamond, Copper and Platinum Group Elements (PGE), was jointly launched on 13 March 2025 in Goa by Union Minister of Coal and Mines, Shri G. Kishan Reddy, and Chief Minister of Goa, Dr. Pramod Sawant.

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