

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COAL
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO- 1616
ANSWERED ON- 30/07/2025

Rat-hole Coal Mining Accident in Assam

1616. MD. RAKIBUL HUSSAIN:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the rat-hole coal mining accident that occurred in January 2025 in Dima Hasao district, Assam along with the number of casualties and timeline of the rescue operation;
- (b) whether the Government has received any requests or recommendations to transfer the investigation to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI);
- (c) if so, the details and status thereof; and
- (d) the measures taken by the Government to ensure accountability of public officials involved in regulatory failure and to prevent similar incidents in Assam's coal mining regions?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF COAL AND MINES
(SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)

(a) A tragic mining incident took place on 06/01/2025 at Kalamati under Umrangso Police Station of Dima Hasao district, Assam. An unspecified number of mine workers were inside a deep well of illegal rat hole mine for extracting coal when water suddenly gushed and flooded the well. Some of the mine workers managed to come out while nine of them got trapped inside. State Govt responded promptly and rescue operations were mobilized immediately involving several Central and State agencies. Operation was started on 10.01.2025 and completed on 20.02.2025. 4 death bodies were recovered initially and mortal remains of 5 mine workers were recovered on 21st February, 2025 after prolonged 44 days of relentless rescue operation.

(b) & (c) Illegal mining is primarily a law and order issue, which is in the domain of the State Governments concerned. An FIR into the incident was lodged on 07/01/2025 under section 3(5)/105 of Bhartiya Nayay Smhita, 2023, read with section 21(1) of the Mines and Minerals (Regulations and Development) Act, 1957 and investigated. A total of 12 (twelve) accused persons have been arrested so far and legal actions are being taken as per the law. A Special Investigation Team (SIT) was constituted by the Director General of Police, Assam. The SIT investigated the case and submitted its findings on 05.03.2025. Further, a multi-agency team comprising Executive

Magistrates, Police Officials and Assam Mineral Development Corporation (AMDC) officials has been formed to identify and ensure that all such illegal mines are closed, sealed and dismantled.

(d) An Inquiry Commission headed by Justice Anima Hazarika, former Judge of Gauhati High Court, has been constituted to investigate the incident of Umrangso Mines Tragedy and fix responsibility on concerned officers, individuals, mining companies and institutions.

A Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for safe & secured mining and control of illegal/pit/rat hole coal mining has been issued by Govt of Assam on 24th June, 2005.

State Government has imposed a blanket ban on rat hole mining in the state. Blanket ban on rat-hole mine has been implemented by District Administrations through District Level Task Force. So far 249 rat-hole mines have been sealed in Umrangso area of Dima Hasao.
