



Mineral Conservation and Development (Amendment) Rules, 2021

Why in News

Recently, the **Ministry of Mines** has notified the **Mineral Conservation and Development (Amendment) Rules, 2021** to amend the Mineral Conservation and Development Rules (MCDR), 2017.

- The MCDR has been framed **under section 18 of the [Mines and Minerals \(Development and Regulation\) Act, 1957](#)** [MMDR Act].
- They provide rules regarding conservation of minerals, systematic and scientific mining, development of the mineral in the country and for the protection of the environment.

Key Points

- **Compulsory Drone Survey:**
 - Rules prescribed that all plans and sections related to mine shall be prepared by combination of **Digital [Global Positioning System \(DGPS\)](#)** or **Total Station** or by **drone** survey in relation to certain or all leases as may be specified by **Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM, Nagpur)**.
 - A **total station** is an optical instrument commonly used in construction, surveying and civil engineering. It is useful for measuring horizontal angles, vertical angles and distance.
- **Digital Image Submission:**
 - New Rule inserted to provide for **submission of digital images of mining areas by lessees and Letter of Intent holders**.
 - Lessees having annual excavation plans of 1 million tonne or more or having leased area of 50 hectare or more **are required to submit drone survey images** of leased area and up to 100 meters outside the lease boundary every year.
 - **Other lessees** submit high resolution satellite images.
 - This step will not only **improve mine planning practices, security and safety** in the mines but also **ensure better supervision of mining operations**.
- **Reduction of Compliance Burden:**
 - Provision of **daily return omitted to reduce compliance burden**. Power of taking action against incomplete or wrong or false information in monthly or annual returns given to IBM, in addition to State Government.
- **Penalty Provisions:**
 - Penalty provisions in the rules have been **rationalized**. Amendment in the rules **categorized the violations** of the rules under the following major heads:
 - **Major Violations:** Penalty of imprisonment, fine or both.

- **Minor Violations:** Penalty reduced. Penalty of only fine for such violations prescribed.
- **Decriminalization of Rules:** Violation of other rules has been decriminalized. These rules did not cast any significant obligation on the concession holder or any other person.

▪ **Financial Assurance:**

- Provision of forfeiture of financial assurance or performance security of the lease holder added **in case of non-submission of final mine closure plan within the period specified.**

▪ **Increased Employment Opportunity:**

- Allowed engagement of a **part-time mining engineer or a part-time geologist** for small mines which will **ease compliance burden for small miners.**
- Diploma in mining and mine surveying granted by duly recognized institute along with a second class certificate of competency issued by the Director General of Mines Safety is added in qualification for full time Mining Engineer.

- Also, **qualification for part time Mining Engineer added.**

[Source: PIB](#)

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