



Mines Ministry Adopts Scheme For Accreditation of Private Exploration Agencies for Undertaking Prospecting Operations of Minerals

Guidelines for Notification of Accredited Private Agencies Under Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 Issued

The Ministry of Mines has adopted the scheme for accreditation of private exploration agencies developed by the National Accreditation Board for Education and Training of the Quality Council of India (QCI-NABET).

The QCI-NABET will grant accreditation to private exploration agencies for undertaking prospecting operations of minerals in accordance with the standards and procedures of the scheme. The interested private exploration agencies shall be required to obtain accreditation in accordance with the scheme and thereafter apply to the Ministry for their notification under the second provision to sub-section (1) of section 4 of the Act. The Ministry has formulated guidelines for the considering the exploration agencies for notification containing detailed procedure, terms and conditions for the same.

The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, MMDR Act was recently amended through the MMDR Amendment Act, 2021, w.e.f. 28.03.2021 which, inter alia, empowers the Central Government to notify entities, including private entities, that may undertake prospecting operations, subject to such terms and conditions as may be specified by the Central Government. With the view to increase the pace of exploration in the country and to bring advance technology in exploration of minerals, it has been decided to notify private exploration agencies to undertake prospecting operations under the second proviso to section 4(1) of the MMDR Act.

At present, only Government agencies are involved in exploration and the pace of exploration is limited by their capacity. The present step of the Government is a major regulatory reform in the mineral sector aimed to unleash the economic potential of the sector by bringing more agencies in exploration of minerals. This will increase the pace of exploration, create new employment opportunities in the sector and bring more explored blocks for auction. The scheme will also help in encouraging new entrepreneurs in the field of exploration and bringing latest technology and expertise to the sector.

Please find the attached the detailed document on the same for your kind reference.

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Warm Regards,

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