

Regarding need to integrate Rajasthan specially Buchara Block in the state into National Critical Mineral Corridor-laid

SHRI RAO RAJENDRA SINGH (JAIPUR RURAL): Rajasthan is among India's most mineral-rich States with mining activity spread over just 0.68% of its geographical area, reflecting both efficiency and immense untapped potential. Rajasthan's strategic importance is especially evident in copper, where it accounts for over 52-54% of India's reserves and contributes 41-43% of national copper concentrate production. With a global copper shortage expected from 2026 onwards, Rajasthan's mineral endowment assumes heightened national significance. Within this broader framework, the Buchara Block stands out as a critical mineral asset. Legally, it is a Protected Forest where diversion of forest land for mining is permissible under law with safeguards. Elevating it to a Conservation Reserve would prohibit all mining and allied industrial activity in and around the area, despite the block not fulfilling the statutory criteria of an ecological corridor. Buchara hosts uranium occurrences identified by the Atomic Minerals Directorate, alongside world-class industrial minerals, supporting solar energy, defence and space sectors. Economically, the block's mineral reserves exceed 16 lakh crores, with potential to generate ₹5,000 crore in mining revenue, and create employment for nearly 50,000 people. Integrating Rajasthan, and Buchara in particular, into national Critical Mineral Corridors will strengthen resource security, reduce import dependence and support India's economic resilience.