Chapter IV: Internal Control System

4.1 *E-rawannas* and weigh bridges

Weigh bridges play a vital role in the collection of royalty by the Mines Department. Correct weighment of the mineral not only ensures correct collection of royalty but also provides a check on illegally transported mineral. Improper working of weigh bridges can cause huge loss to the Department. Audit analysed the *e-rawannas*, confirmed by weigh bridges, available on *DMGOMS*; the results are discussed hereunder.

According to the rule 60 (8) of RMMC Rules, 2017 the Director may authorize any electronic weigh bridges established in the State by third parties for weighment of mineral, on such conditions as may be specified. Further, the sub-rule (9) provides that the mineral concession holder or registered weigh bridge owner shall allow authorities to examine and test every weighing machine to ascertain whether the same are correct and in good condition and order and if any ambiguity is found, the same shall be rectified by the weigh bridge owner.

DMG prescribed (18 October 2017) the process for weighment of the mineral to be dispatched, and for generation and confirmation of *e-rawanna*. The important points to be followed are as under:

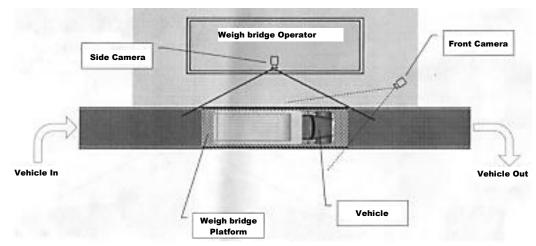
- (i) Lessee has to choose empaneled weigh bridges nearest to his lease and has to link these weigh bridges to lease on Departmental website. On any other weigh bridge that is not linked by the lessee, vehicles related to the lease shall not be weighed and *e-rawanna* shall not be confirmed.
- (ii) A lessee can generate unconfirmed *e-rawanna* through departmental website or mobile app, and in any circumstance, vehicle cannot transport the mineral outside the lease area without unconfirmed *e-rawanna* and message of unconfirmed *e-rawanna* on driver's mobile.
- (iii) Confirmed *e-rawanna* shall only be generated on weigh bridge when there is balance in the account of lessee for royalty of mineral.
- (iv) Till the completion of the maximum time period, mentioned in *e-rawanna* for reaching the destination for a vehicle, no other *e-rawanna* can be generated for that vehicle.

DMG further issued (5 October and 15 October 2018) direction for compulsory installation of cameras on empaneled weigh bridges by October 2018. The main directions were as follows:

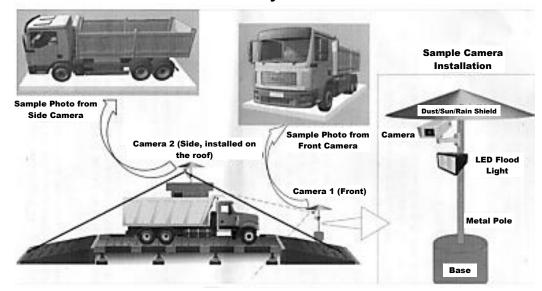
- Minimum two cameras shall be installed on weigh bridge.
- Cameras shall be installed in such a way that vehicle and weigh bridge platform shall be clearly visible in picture.
- One camera shall be on the front side for capturing the image of the vehicle from front side showing the number plate of vehicle and weigh bridge platform and the other camera shall be put on long side of vehicle in such a way that vehicle's upper body, long body and weigh bridge platform shall be clearly visible.

• Photo shall be captured by both the cameras while taking the weight from the terminal by software¹ and no separate provision shall be given in software for photo capturing.

These instructions were also applicable on the transit passes which were generated by dealers/stockiest of minerals and manufacturers of grit, marble slab *etc.* for dispatch of goods procured on valid *rawannas*.



Camera Layout - Part 1



Camera Layout - Part 2

Figure 1: Correct position of CCTV cameras to capture image of vehicle

During the audit period, there were 2,781 active empanelled weigh bridges in the State, out of which 365 weigh bridges were active in the selected divisions. It was observed that 32 weigh bridges were engaged in confirming transit passes used for movement of royalty paid minerals. Audit test checked ten e-rawannas² confirmed by each weigh bridge during last month of working of weigh bridges upto March 2020 from the 333 (365 – 32) weigh bridges. Audit

¹ The weigh bridge owner had to purchase the Software from the firms approved by the Department.

Audit selected ten *e-rawannas* of each weigh bridge, confirmed during the month of March 2020, however, if any weigh bridge did not confirm any *e-rawanna* during March 2020 then Audit selected *e-rawannas* from the previous working month of March 2020 of that weigh bridge.

scrutinised 2,966 *e-rawannas*³ in *DMGOMS* and noticed serious irregularities as discussed below:

4.1.1 Audit noticed that at 215 weigh bridges out of selected 333 weigh bridges, CCTV cameras were installed in such a way that the photographs of vehicles were not clear or did not provide the complete picture of the vehicle as per the guidelines. In the absence of a complete and clear picture of the vehicle, audit could not ascertain the actual vehicle on the weigh bridge. Further, mineral mentioned in the *e-rawanna* and its quantity as shown in confirmed *e-rawanna* could not be ascertained.

To illustrate the observation, two images are given hereunder:

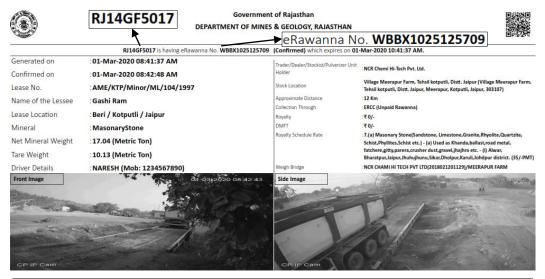


Figure 2: CCTV cameras installed in such a way that vehicle number and mineral was not visible at Weigh bridge Registration Number: 2018021201129

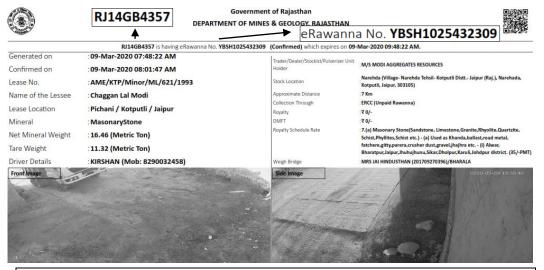


Figure 3: CCTV cameras installed in such a way that vehicle number and mineral was not visible at Weigh bridge Registration Number: 201709270396

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Only 196 *e-rawannas* were confirmed by the 56 selected weigh bridges, therefore, total 2,966 (2,770 of 277 weigh bridges + 196 of 56 weigh bridges) *e-rawannas* were selected for scrutiny.

4.1.2 In 987 *e-rawannas* (33.28 *per cent* of test checked), Audit noticed that photograph of the same vehicle was used two to ten times for confirmation of different *e-rawannas for* different vehicles *i.e.* the same photograph was used to confirm *e-rawannas* of other vehicles. This shows that vehicles for which *e-rawannas* were generated actually did not get weighed at the weigh bridges. It also indicates that dummy vehicles were used for generation of *e-rawannas* for those vehicles which were not weighed at all. Thus, weigh bridges owners were in collusion with other stake holders *i.e.* lessees, transporter, *etc.* to manipulate the process of confirmation of *e-rawannas*.

It is evident that *e-rawannas* were confirmed by manipulating the process of confirmation of *e-rawannas*. A few instances are given hereunder:

(A) Weigh bridge Registration No.: 201712210804 (Same Picture along with Vehicle number RJ37GA2405 for different *rawannas*/vehicles)

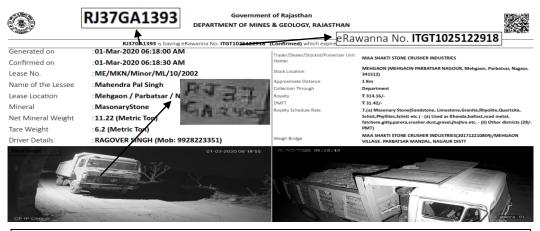


Figure 4: Vehicle Number RJ37GA2405 was used for generating e- rawanna of vehicle number RJ37GA1393



Figure 5: Vehicle number RJ37GA2405 was again used for generating e-rawanna of another vehicle number RJ37GA1394

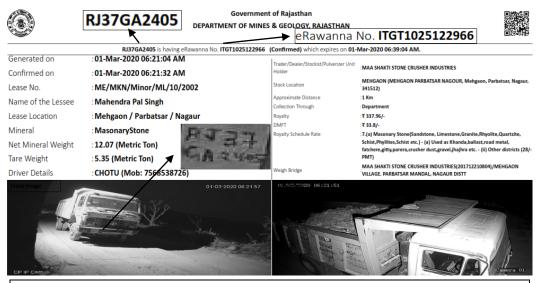


Figure 6: Correct e-rawanna generated for actual Vehicle Number RJ37GA2405 with actual Vehicle.

(B) Weigh bridge Registration Number: 201710310248 (Vehicle number tampered)

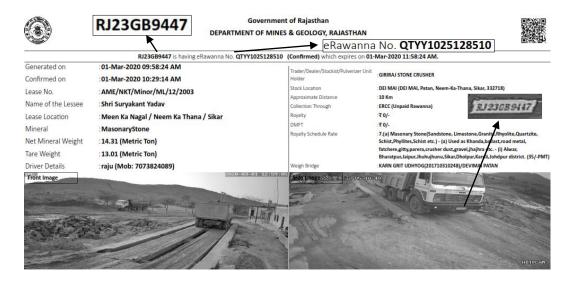


Figure 7: Vehicle shown in figure 7 and 8 is same, however, number was tampered to generate e-rawanna.

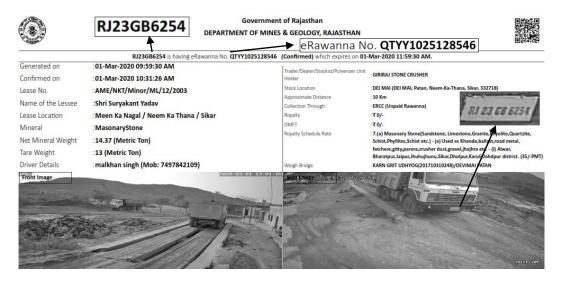


Figure 8: Vehicle shown in figure 7 and 8 is same, however, number was tampered to generate e-rawanna.

(C) Weigh bridge Registration number : 2020022602593 (Number plate of vehicle intentionally covered by a man)

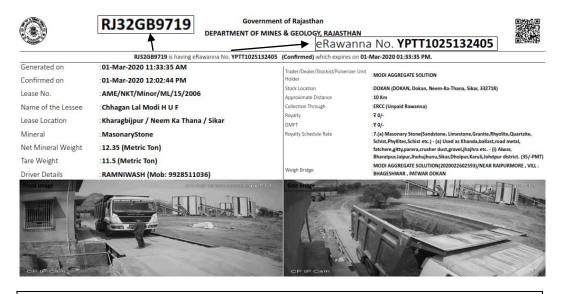


Figure 9: Cases where number plate was intentionally covered (Figure 9 and 10)

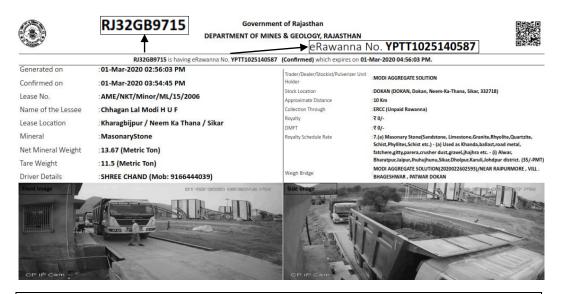


Figure 10: Cases where number plate was intentionally covered (Figure 9 and 10)

(D) Weigh bridge Registration Number: 2019031402099 (Number plate intentionally omitted after first *rawanna*)

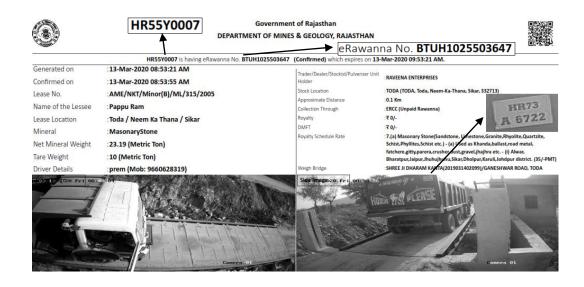


Figure 11: Vehicle Number HR73A6722 was used for generating e-rawanna of vehicle number HR55Y0007 as shown in figure 11, thereafter, number of vehicle was omitted to generate e-rawannas of vehicle number HR55V0007 and HR55Y0007 as shown in figure 12 and 13.

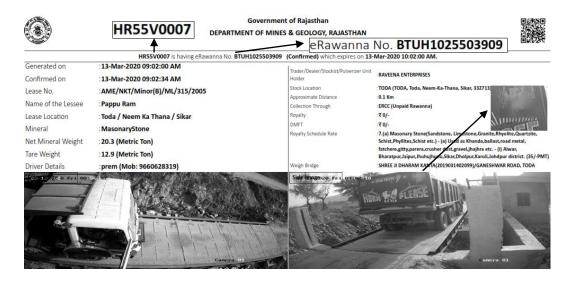


Figure 12: Vehicle Number HR73A6722 was used for generating e-rawanna of vehicle number HR55Y0007 as shown in figure 11, thereafter, number of vehicle was omitted to generate e-rawannas of vehicle number HR55V0007 and HR55Y0007 as shown in figure 12 and 13.

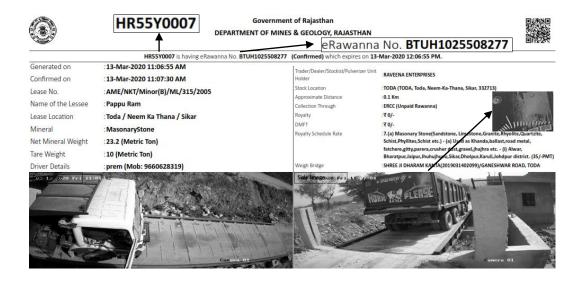


Figure 13: Vehicle Number HR73A6722 was used for generating e-rawanna of vehicle number HR55Y0007 as shown in figure 11, thereafter, number of vehicle was omitted to generate e-rawannas of vehicle number HR55V0007 and HR55Y0007 as shown in figure 12 and 13.

4.1.3 Audit further noticed that in 1,571 *e-rawannas* (52.97 *per cent* of selected *e-rawannas*) number plates of vehicles were not visible. Therefore, it could not be ensured that the vehicle for which *e-rawanna* was generated was actually on the weigh bridge. An illustrative image is given hereunder:



Figure 14: Photo of vehicle was taken in such a way that vehicle number cannot be seen.

4.1.4 Audit further noticed that in 154 *e-rawannas* (5.19 *per cent* of selected *e-rawannas*), vehicle numbers for which the *e-rawannas* were confirmed, were different from the registration number shown on the number plate of the vehicles in the photograph captured by the CCTV cameras installed at the weigh bridges. This indicated that the *e-rawannas* were confirmed by violating guidelines issued by the Department. In such cases possibility of illegal transportation of mineral could not be ruled out.

The above findings indicated that though manipulation of *e-rawannas* could have been checked from the available data with the Department, no effective action was taken to curb such malpractices.

Government of Rajasthan HR38AA5174 DEPARTMENT OF MINES & GEOLOGY, RAJASTHAN **→** eRawanna No. **AXWF1023635843** HR38AA5174 is having eRawanna No. AXWF1023635843 (Confirmed) which expires on 18-Jan-2020 02:01:23 PM 18-Jan-2020 02:01:23 AM :18-Jan-2020 02:02:16 AM Confirmed on signee Address PALI ZONE, 20 AME/KTP/Minor(B)/ML/1/2002 : Ghanshyam Sharma ollection Through ERCC (Unpaid Rawanna) Name of the Lessee ₹ 0/-:Buchara / Kotputli / Jaipu Lease Location DMFT ₹0/-Mineral MasonaryStone , polite, Quar , pollast, road metal, I, jhajhra etc. - (i) Alwar, pur, Karuli, Johdpur 2)/CHA 7.(a) r... Schist,Phyllites,Schist ... fatchere,gitty,parera,crush Net Mineral Weight :21.37 (Metric Ton) Alwar, our district. (35/-PMT) Tare Weight 12.55 (Metric Ton) Bura (Mob: 9720577187) 61 8:1

Weigh bridge Registration Number: 2018051801532

Figure 15: Vehicle number HR55AF0048 was used to confirm e-rawanna for Vehicle number HR38AA5174.

4.1.5 Audit further noticed that in 42 *e-rawannas* (1.42 *per cent* of selected *e-rawannas*), different vehicles were seen in the photographs having the same vehicle registration number mentioned in the *e-rawannas*. These *e-rawannas* were generated for 14 vehicles (one vehicle number for two or more than two *e-rawannas*). At the time of confirmation of *e-rawannas* at weigh bridges, images captured by CCTV cameras depict that vehicles were not the same for the same vehicle number every time. This indicated that either lessee or the transporter or both indulged in the malpractice.

Thus, the process put in place for confirmation of *e-rawanna* to check the evasion of royalty was ineffective.

Weigh bridge Registration Number: 2018102001828



Figure 16: Figure 16 and 17 showed that vehicle number was not visible in e-rawanna, however, it can be seen that different vehicles were used to confirm e-rawanna for the same vehicle number RJ32GB9705.



Figure 17: Figure 16 and 17 showed that vehicle number was not visible in e-rawanna, however, it can be seen that different vehicles were used to confirm e-rawanna for the same vehicle number RJ32GB9705.

4.1.6 At one weigh bridge under jurisdiction of AME Kotputli, Audit noticed that *e-rawanna* was confirmed without parking of vehicle at weigh bridge. This indicated that software used in weigh bridge was not foolproof in preventing manipulation by weigh bridge operator. Illustrative image is given hereunder:

Weigh bridge Registration No.: 2019102302421

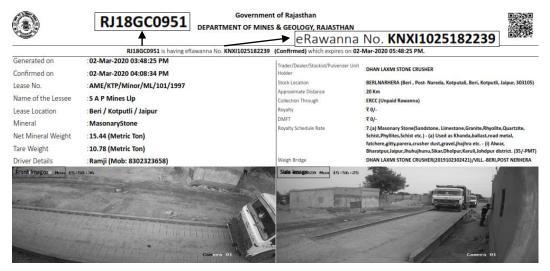


Figure 18: E-rawanna was confirmed without parking of vehicle on weigh bridge.

• In another case in the jurisdiction of ME Makrana, it was noticed that images of two vehicles, different for front image and side image, were shown in one *e-rawanna*. It indicated that application software was not properly mapped with cameras installed at weigh bridges. Thus, *e-rawannas* were confirmed by manipulating the vehicle images. Illustrative image is given hereunder:

Weigh bridge Registration No.: 2018022701247

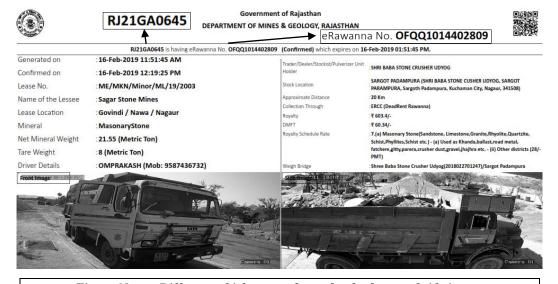


Figure 19: Different vehicles were shown for the front and side image.

Regarding Paragraph 4.1.1 to 4.1.6 the Government replied (February 2022) that a new module named 'weigh bridge e-rawanna viewer' has been made in online system for the checking of weigh bridges. Further, online system of the Department is being upgraded so that latest technologies can be used for effective

monitoring. Department also intimated that concerned ME/AME offices are taking actions as per rules in the objected cases.

4.1.7 Information available on *DMGOMS* revealed that in selected five division offices 8.27 lakh transit passes⁴ were generated for dispatch of 3.08 crore MT of mineral. Audit analysed the confirmed transit passes on *DMGOMS* and noticed that photographs of vehicles were not attached with the transit passes. Therefore, Audit could not analyse the confirmation process of transit passes. The process of confirmation of transit passes was the same as for the *e-rawannas*. Audit is of the view that, therefore, manipulation in confirmation of transit passes could not be ruled out.

Weigh bridge Registration No. 201710300229 (Picture of vehicle was not shown in Transit Pass)

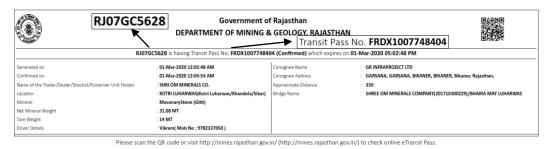


Figure 20: Picture of vehicle was not shown in TP

The Government replied (February 2022) that due to problem of space in e- $Vault^5$, images of vehicles were not depicted in the transit passes, however, the same are now depicted.

The reply of the Government is not tenable as the very purpose of installation of CCTV cameras was defeated and irregularities in confirmation of *e-Transit* passes could not be checked.

4.1.8 Control of the Department on the software used by weigh bridges

According to the information available on *DMGOMS*, empaneled weigh bridge owners of selected division offices installed software provided by 11 firms approved by the Department for confirmation of *e-rawannas/*Transit passes. DMG allowed the empaneled weigh bridge owners to use software of any of the approved firms.

Scrutiny of information/reports available on *DMGOMS* and records of selected Division offices disclosed that Department did not have any control over the software used by the empanelled weigh bridges, thus making the software prone to manipulation. Therefore, the Department through preventive measures could not control irregularities noticed during the review as discussed in paragraphs number 4.1.1 to 4.1.7.

e-Vault: The term is used to describe the transfer of data by electronic means to a backup site, as opposed to the physical shipment of backup tapes or disks.

44

⁴ According to Rule 2(lvii) of RMMC Rules, 2017, Transit Pass means a pass including e-transit pass duly issued by the Department or generated online, to the lessee, stockiest, trader, dealer *etc.* for lawful transportation of royalty paid mineral.

Best practice adopted by Government of Goa

Mines and Geology Department, Goa developed a software⁶ and made it compulsory for the weigh bridges to install the system. Further, calibration of weigh bridge before every year was also made compulsory. Thus, the Department had overall control over the software to prevent any malfunctioning or manipulation.

4.1.9 Certification of weigh bridges by Metrology (Weight & Measure) Division

Certification of weigh bridges by Metrology (Weight & Measure) Division, Department of Consumer affairs is essential and mandatory for all the weigh bridges. Department belatedly issued (5 August 2020) instructions to all the weigh bridge owners to get their weigh bridges certified by the Metrology Division. However, compliance with the instructions was not monitored. Audit also observed that DMGOMS did not provide a column for showing the status of certification by the Metrology Department.

The matter was brought to the notice of SME, Jaipur. In reply it was stated (5 April 2021) that the time for compliance had been extended till April 2021 by DMG. Reply of SME is not tenable since it was mandatory for all weigh bridges owners to get their weigh bridges certified by Metrology Division and hence needs to be done within the stipulated time. Further, delay in certification may lead to manipulation in weighment, which could cause loss to exchequer.

Deliberate inaction against persons involved in illegal mining activities

Scrutiny of records of selected division offices and SME Jaipur revealed that the Department deliberately took no action against defaulting weigh bridges, transporters and lessee. Two case studies are given as under:

Case Study 1

AME Kotputli intimated (31 January 2020) SME Jaipur that during checking (30 January 2020), one vehicle (RJ40GA2612) loaded with masonry stone was checked. On weighment it was found that actual weight of mineral was 35.09 MT whereas weight mentioned in the confirmed e-rawanna was 21.06 MT. The mineral was loaded from lease number 123/2002. Thus, 14.03 MT mineral was found in excess of quantity mentioned in e-rawanna. It was also intimated that there was a collusion between lessee, weigh bridge owner and vehicle driver. AME requested SME Jaipur to deactivate e-rawanna generation of the lessee, deactivate the weigh bridge and black-list the vehicle.

Simultaneously, AME issued notices to the lessee and the weigh bridge owner in this regard. In their reply, both informed that they were not involved in the matter

Source: Brief presentation on steps taken by Government for curbing Illegal Mining in the State of Goa presented by Shri Pawan Kumar Sain (I.A.S.) Secretary (Mines) Government of

as the mineral was not overloaded by the lessee and at the time of confirmation of the *e-rawanna* the vehicle was not overloaded. Mining Foreman inquired about the matter and submitted his report wherein it was concluded that the vehicle driver was responsible for this violation as he loaded extra mineral without bringing this to the knowledge of lessee. It was also suggested in the report that instructions should be issued to the lessee to instruct the driver not to load mineral from elsewhere as otherwise it would be the responsibility of the lessee. Acting upon the report AME recommended (20 July 2020) to SME Jaipur for activation of weigh bridge. The weigh bridge was activated accordingly on the same day.

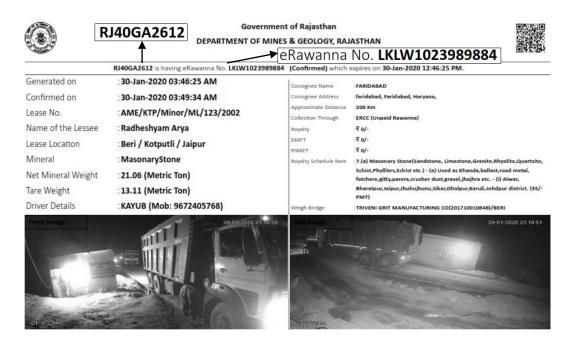


Figure 21: Vehicle was not parked at Platform of weigh bridge at the time of confirmation of e-rawanna, therefore, correct weight cannot be taken.



Figure 22: Images in figure 21 and close up image of vehicle in figure 22 showed that minerals were loaded upto the top of the vehicle. Further, loading of 14.5 MT of mineral was not possible.

Audit noticed that the investigation report was prepared overlooking the *e-rawanna* images with an intent to provide undue benefit to lessee and weigh bridge owner.

To corroborate the above audit finding, Audit further analysed all 33 *rawannas* confirmed by this weigh bridge on 30 January 2020. Following violations were noticed:

- CCTV cameras were not installed according to the instructions issued by DMG.
- Vehicles were partly parked on the platform of the weigh bridge so that vehicles were under-weighed.
- *E-rawannas* were confirmed for those vehicles which did not reach the weigh bridge for weighment.

These facts indicated inaction on the part of the Department against these defaulters by overlooking the facts available on *DMGOMS*.

Case Study 2

AME Kotputli intimated (23 January 2020) SME Jaipur that during checking (21 January 2020), one vehicle (RJ32GB4236) loaded with masonry stone was checked. On weighment it was found that actual weight of mineral was 25 MT whereas weight mentioned in the confirmed *e-rawanna* was 14.60 MT. The mineral was loaded from lease number 1/2002. Thus, 10.40 MT mineral was found in excess of quantity mentioned in *e-rawanna*. It was also intimated that there was a collusion between vehicle lessee, weigh bridge owner and vehicle driver. AME requested SME Jaipur to deactivate *e-rawanna* generation of the lessee, deactivate the weigh bridge and black-list the vehicle.

Simultaneously, AME issued notices to the lessee and the weigh bridge owner in this regard. In their reply, both told that they were not involved in the matter as the mineral was not overloaded by the lessee and at the time of confirmation of the *e-rawanna* the vehicle was not overloaded. Mining Foreman inquired the matter and submitted his report wherein it was concluded that the vehicle driver was responsible for this violation as he loaded extra mineral without bringing this action to the knowledge of lessee. It was also suggested in the report that instructions should be issued to the lessee to instruct the driver not to load mineral from elsewhere as otherwise it would be the responsibility of the lessee. Acting upon the report AME recommended (20 March 2020) to SME Jaipur for activation of weigh bridge. The weigh bridge was reactivated on 20 May 2020.

Scrutiny of the *e-rawanna* confirmed by weigh bridge during 21 January 2020 to 23 January 2020 revealed that CCTV cameras were not installed properly at the weigh bridge and mineral loaded in the vehicle could not be seen in the photographs of *e-rawanna*. Therefore, it could not be concluded that vehicle was empty or under loaded. Even after reactivation of weight bridge CCTVs were not installed properly and mineral could not be seen in the vehicle. Illustrative images are given hereunder:

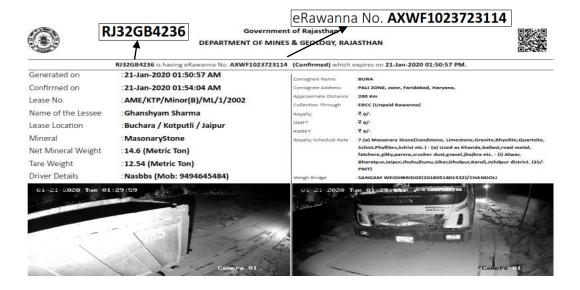


Figure 23: Above image (21 January 2020) showed that CCTV cameras of weigh bridge were not installed according to the direction of the DMG on the date of Panchnama.

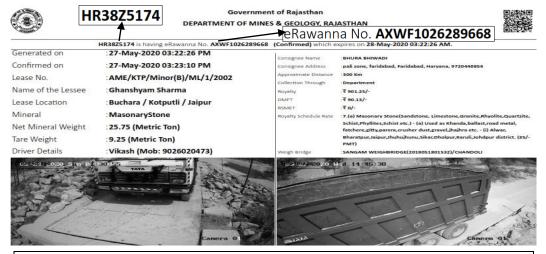


Figure 24: Above image (27 May 2020) showed that Department did not ensure installation of CCTV cameras according to the directions of the DMG before activation of the weigh bridge.

It is evident from the available facts that the weigh bridge had not worked according to the instructions. However, Department did not take stringent action against the weigh bridge owners involved in the malpractices. Further, action was also not taken against the government officials who were responsible for monitoring and supervision of these empanelled weigh bridges. Thus, rampant illegal mining activities continued which resulted in loss to the State exchequer.

The Government replied (February 2022) regarding paragraph 4.1.8 and 4.1.9 that online application were invited to make software, integrated with the departmental online system, for weighment of mineral carrying vehicles. Further, software were prepared under the directions of the Department and Rajcomp. Rajcomp has also checked these softwares.

The reply of the Government is not tenable as the irregularities discussed in the preceding paragraphs could not have occurred without shortcomings in the softwares. Thus, there is a need for departmental control for sanctity and foolproof working of the software.

4.2 Panchnamas

DMG *vide* circular dated 24 November 2017 issued instructions for preparation of *Panchnama*⁷ as and when illegal mining activity was noticed. Following instructions were issued thereunder:

- *Panchnama* should be uploaded on the *DMGOMS* within 24 hours of inspection and progress of the case should be updated online continuously. Thereafter, the time limit was extended to 72 hours.
- Source of illegal mining was to be identified in the cases of illegal transportation of minerals;
- Actions against the involved persons *i.e.* transporter, person involved in illegal mining, weigh bridge owner, lessee were to be taken simultaneously.
- Photograph of illegal mining pit was to be taken and uploaded on *DMGOMS*.
- Photograph of vehicle involved in illegal transport was to be uploaded on *DMGOMS*.
- *Panchnama* should be prepared in the prescribed format.

Information available on *DMGOMS* disclosed that 3,390 cases of illegal mining activities *i.e.* illegal mining, transportation and stock of minerals were identified by the departmental officials⁸ of selected offices during the period 2015-16 to 2019-20. Details are given in the **Table 4.1:**

Table 4.1 Cases of illegal mining activity in selected offices

Year	Illegal Mining	Illegal Transportation	Illegal Stock	Total
2015-16	90	543	17	650
2016-17	30	542	9	581
2017-18	34	443	0	477
2018-19	49	766	8	823
2019-20	60	787	12	859
Total	263	3,081	46	3,390

To check the compliance with the above instructions Audit test checked all the *Panchnamas* related to illegal mining and 100 *Panchnamas* related to illegal transportation and stock of minerals for the period 2015-16 to 2019-20. Scrutiny of these *Panchnamas* and other related records revealed following deficiencies:

Panchnama: This is an inspection report made by the official who checked the illegal mining activity.

Division offices: ME Sikar, AME Neem ka Thana, AME Kotputli, ME Alwar and ME Makrana.

Vigilance offices: ME (Vigilance) Sikar, AME (Vigilance) Neem ka Thana, AME (Vigilance) Kotputli, ME (Vigilance) Alwar, AME (Vigilance) Tijara and AME (Vigilance) Makrana.

4.2.1 Non-uploading of Panchnamas on *DMGOMS*

Scrutiny of records of SME Jaipur revealed that 4,457 *Panchnamas* were prepared during the period April 2018 to December 2018 under the jurisdiction of SME Jaipur. Only 3,897 *Panchnamas* were uploaded on the *DMGOMS*. Thus, 560 *Panchnamas* were not uploaded on *DMGOMS* up to 4 January 2019. DMG issued (January 2019) instructions to upload the pending *Panchnamas* on *DMGOMS* within two days and asked explanation for non-compliance with the instructions.

Audit checked (5 April 2021) updated position of *Panchnamas* and found that 3,946 *Panchnamas* were uploaded on *DMGOMS* for the above referenced period. Thus, 511 *Panchnamas* were not uploaded despite directions given by the DMG even after lapse of a period of 28 months. However, no further action was taken against the defaulting officials.

The Government replied (February 2022) that remaining *Panchnamas* would be uploaded. Disciplinary action would be initiated against the concerned officials if discrepancy persisted.

4.2.2 Deficiency in preparation of *Panchnamas*

Scrutiny of *Panchnama* records revealed that *Panchnamas* were prepared on photo copy/printed copy of the proforma prescribed by DMG. It was further noticed that *Panchnamas* did not have serial numbers printed on it. In the absence of such a system, it could not be assessed as to how many *Panchnamas* were actually prepared by the officials of the Department and how many were reported to higher authorities/uploaded on *DMGOMS*.

The instances shown in paragraph 4.2.1 showed that lack of system leads to non-accounting of all the *Panchnamas* which may lead to leakage of revenue.

Good practice adopted by Transport Department, Rajasthan

In Transport Department, Rajasthan books of *Panchnama*/challan proformas with machine printed numbers are being issued to the concerned offices by the head office. Each proforma have triplicate copies; one for the defaulter, second for office record and third to be returned to the store on completion of the book. The authorised officials get issued the book from store. Thereafter, on completion of the book the official returned back the book to the store with third copy of the *Panchnamas*/challans. Further, handheld online devices are the key features of this system. This system ensures that each and every *Panchnama* prepared is accounted to the Government account.

DMG may consider adopting a similar system to ensure transparency and to check the leakage of revenue if any.

The Government replied (February 2022) that issue of numbered *Panchnamas* would be reconsidered after discussion with the departmental officers.

4.2.3 Non-investigation of source of illegal mining

It was noticed that out of 1,122 cases⁹ of illegal transportations in selected divisions, sources/sites of illegal mining were not investigated except in one case.

Scrutiny of *Panchnamas* further revealed that 26 lessees¹⁰ were involved in the illegal dispatch of minerals according to the statement of vehicle drivers. However, the concerned authorities did not investigate the matter to find out the source of transported mineral.

The Government replied (February 2022) that generally wrong information about source of illegal mining was given by the accused, therefore, investigation could not be initiated at illegal mining point. It was also, replied that instruction would be issued to investigate the source as far as possible.

The reply of the Government is not tenable as the concerned officials did not investigate the matter even in those cases where illegal mining was reported from the lease areas.

The facts remained that illegal mining activities could not be prevented as the directions of DMG were not adhered by the Departmental officials.

4.2.4 Lack of coordination with Transport Department

Scrutiny of records revealed that 112 vehicles¹¹ without registration number plate were seized by the Department due to involvement in illegal transportation of minerals. However, Department did not inform Transport Department to take penal action against these defaulting vehicles.

The Government replied (October 2021 and February 2022) that involvement of the Transport Department would lead to a long process and it would be a time-consuming task. Due to shortage of staff and resources, Department gave priority to checking other illegal transportation cases instead of spending time by involving Transport Department. It was also intimated that letters had been written to Transport Department for taking action against the vehicles transporting minerals without registration number plate.

Reply is not tenable as no legal action can be taken against the owner of the vehicle without registration number plate, therefore, sharing of information with the Transport Department is necessary.

4.2.5 Deficiencies in *Panchnamas*

As per instruction issued (November 2017) by DMG, photographs of illegal mining pits and vehicles involved in illegal transportation were to be captured and uploaded on *DMGOMS*.

⁹ AME Kotputli (98), AME (Vigilance) Kotputli (99), AME (Vigilance) Makrana (87), AME Neem ka Thana (102), AME (Vigilance) Neem ka Thana (85), AME (Vigilance) Tijara (102), ME Alwar (95), ME (Vigilance) Alwar (101), ME Makrana (198), ME Sikar (95) and ME (Vigilance) Sikar (59).

¹⁰ Lessees (26): AME Neem ka Thana (3), AME Kotputli (9) and ME Alwar (14).

¹¹ Vehicles without registration number 112: AME Kotputli (26), ME Alwar (35), ME (Vigilance) Alwar (34) and AME (Vigilance) Tijara (17).

Test check of 1,351 out of 3,390 *Panchnama* files of selected offices and information available on *DMGOMS* revealed that photographs of the pits of illegal mining and vehicles involved in illegal transportation of mineral were not taken in any case by the concerned officers at the time of inspection/checking.

Photographs of illegal mining pits/vehicles were not even available in the files in physical form. In the absence of pictures, actual situation could not be assessed by an independent authority and it lacks transparency. Further, these photographs could be used as significant evidence of illegal mining activities.

The Government replied (October 2021) that suitable provisions would be made in *DMGOMS*. Thereafter, it was also intimated (February 2022) that it would be considered to issue numbered *panchanamas* to subordinate offices.

4.2.6 Non-auction of illegal mining prone areas

Administrative Report (2018-19) envisaged that auction of those plots which were illegal mining prone would be done on priority basis by the Department.

Scrutiny of records of selected divisions revealed that in the selected offices the Department identified 263 cases of illegal mining during the period 2015-16 to 2019-20. However, the Department did not initiate process of identifying illegal mining prone areas which could be auctioned. In the absence of this, activities of illegal mining continued, which adversely impacted the environment, employment and revenue to the State exchequer.

The Government replied (February 2022) that directions were issued to delineate plots in illegal mining prone areas for auction and where such areas falls under forest and *charagah*, process would be initiated for diversion or no-objection certificate.

Deficient process for preparation of *Panchnamas*, resulted in non-accounting of *Panchnamas* on departmental online system which leads to non-monitoring of penal action on the accused, if taken. Further, sources/sites of illegal mining were not investigated. Cases of illegal transportation, were not pursued with the Transport Department and therefore, action could not be taken by the departmental officials against the illegal miners. Thus, not only were the directions of DMG not followed, but no action was taken against the illegal miners which could have a deterrent effect on illegal mining.

4.3 Assessment of illegally excavated mineral

Rule 54(1) of RMMC Rules, 2017 stipulates that no person shall undertake any mining operations in any area without holding any mineral concession, permit or any other permission granted or permitted under these rules and shall not despatch mineral from the mine without valid *rawanna*. Rule 54(5) of the *ibid* Rules further provides that whenever any person without a lawful authority, raises any mineral from any land other than under any mineral concession or any other permission and where mineral so raised has already been despatched or consumed, the authorities shall recover cost of mineral along with the compound fee. A mining plan of a lease provides the recovery factor of mineral from ore.

During compliance audit of seven division offices¹², Audit noticed short raising of demand of ₹ 14.20 crore being cost of mineral in 28 cases of illegal mining activities. Concerned authorities while raising the demand of cost of illegally excavated mineral ignored the bulk density factor, recovery factor given in the mining plan and other irregularities. Details are given in **Table 4.2**:

Table 4.2
Details showing deficiencies in assessments

(₹ in crore)

Sl. No.	Name of	1 (022220002	Site	As per final assessment		As per Audit		Demand
	Division	mining leases	inspection date	Quantity assessed in MT	Royalty amount	Quantity assessed in MT	Royalty amount	short raised
1	Udaipur	113	August 2018	10,327.50	0.63	13,260	0.81	0.18
				t demand was i is awaited (Mar		t the lessee. H	lowever, the le	essee had
2	Sikar	4 ¹⁴	February 2019	22,998.00	0.81	28,278.91	0.99	0.18
	nent replied ion of lease	•		tire amount in	three cases	had been reco	overed and in	one case
3	Churu	7 ¹⁵	July 2017 and September 2017	52,540.00	1.21	97,569.29	2.24	1.04
₹ 0.72 cm	Government replied that demand of ₹ 2.24 crore has been raised (October 2019) of which an amount of ₹ 0.72 crore has been recovered in three cases and recovery in remaining four cases has been stayed by Hon'ble Rajasthan High Court, Jodhpur Bench. (November 2020).							
4	Jhunjhunu	10 ¹⁶	March 2019	98,606.17 ¹⁷	No amount shown in notices	1,01,205.19	2.91	2.91

The Department did not initiate the process of raising of the demand for the cost of illegally excavated mineral after lapse of notice period of 30 days in all the 10 cases. Further, in six cases out of 10 cases, competent authority applied incorrect bulk density and recovery factor which resulted in short quantification of 2,599.01 MT mineral.

Government replied (February 2022) that demand was raised in 10 cases. In one case, the demand amount was deposited by the lessee. However, in nine cases the lessees appealed against the demand. The Appellate Authority ordered to re-examine the cases and the same were under progress in eight cases. Regarding one case it was intimated that the matter was re-examined and it was reported by the foreman that the mining was done during the period of STP issued previously, therefore, it could not be considered as illegal mining. Reply of the Government regarding later case is not acceptable as no supporting evidence was made available.

¹⁴ 44/1998, 605/2003, 195/1997 and 291/2007.

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¹² Division offices (7): Churu, Dholpur, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Jhunjhunu, Sikar and Udaipur.

^{13 296/2008}

¹⁵ 41/2001, 41/1978, 06/1997, 47/2001, 98/1996, 40/2001 and 74/1978.

¹⁶ 423/2006, 12/1995, 198/1996, 63/1995, 23/1999, 41/2001, 80/2000, 164/2003, 167/2003 and 166/2003.

¹⁷ Masonry Stone and *murram*.

Sl. No.	Name of Division	Number of mining leases	Site	As per final a	assessment	As per	Audit	Demand short
	Division		ning date	Quantity assessed in MT	Royalty amount	Quantity assessed in MT	Royalty amount	raised
5.	Jaipur	3 MLs and one housing project ¹⁸	June 2018 to December 2019		0.18	1,42,919.7	4.45	4.27

The Government replied (February 2022) that notices were issued in three cases and amount of ₹ 17.80 lakh was recovered. Reply regarding one case was not made available.

Department did not diligently examine the issue of illegal excavation and misuse of rawannas by the lessees at the time of assessment which resulted in non-raising of demand of cost of illegally excavated mineral as discussed below in Serial number 6 and 7:

6	Dholpur	119	September	 0.01	1,504	 4.56
			2017			

A site inspection (September 2017) revealed misuse of rawanna by the lessee. However, departmental officials did not investigate other rawannas used by the lease. Assessment was finalised in August 2018 but the Assessing Authority failed to make a reference to illegal mining in the assessment order. Audit pointed out non-recovery of ₹ 36.09 lakh being cost of 1,504 MT mineral despatched by misusing rawannas. Thereafter, the Department carried out site inspection (July 2020) of the leased area and concluded that the lessee illegally excavated and despatched 19,015.29 MT mineral sandstone valuing ₹ 4.56 crore by misusing the rawannas.

Demand of ₹ 4.56 crore was raised. The lessee did not deposit it, therefore, action for cancellation of lease was initiated.

The Government replied (February 2022) a demand of ₹ 4.56 crore was raised and recovery under Land Revenue Act was being done.

7	Jodhpur	1 ²⁰	January 2017 and February 2018	14,700	 23,625	1.06 ²¹	1.06
			2018				

Department, despite being aware that lessee indulged in illegal mining and despatching minerals by either misusing rawanna or without rawanna, failed to mention these facts in royalty assessment and ignored the bulk density factor of mineral while raising the demand, which resulted in short raising of demand of ₹ 1.06 crore.

The Government replied (July 2020 and October 2020) that demand notice has been issued (February 2020) and cancellation of mining lease is under consideration. The demand, however, was set aside by the Hon'ble Rajasthan High Court, Jodhpur (July 2020) which ordered that a fresh speaking order, after providing opportunity of being heard to the lessee, may be passed. Thereafter, it was also intimated (February 2022) that a demand was raised against the lessee, however, the Hon'ble Rajasthan High Court, Jodhpur had stayed it. Further, progress is awaited (March 2022).

Total	27 MLs			14.20
	and one			
	housing			
	project			

¹⁸ 217/2000, 14/1995, 105/2003 and Sun City Project Private Limited.

^{67/1988.}

²⁰ 36/2002.

²¹ Cost of 19,650 MT mineral masonry stone: 19,650 MT X ₹ 23 (Royalty rate) X 10 = ₹ 45,19,500 + cost of 22,593 MT mineral masonry stone : 22,593 MT X ₹ 28 (Royalty rate) X 10 = ₹ 63,26,040. Total ₹ 1,08,45,540.

Short demand = ₹ 106.36 lakh (₹ 108.46 lakh – ₹ 2.10 lakh)

4.4 Summary of findings

Weigh bridges plays a vital role in collection of royalty. Correct weighment of the mineral not only ensures correct collection of royalty but also provide enhancing a check on illegally transported mineral. Imprudent working of weigh bridges can cause huge loss to the Department. The Department got installed CCTV cameras at each weigh bridge for enhancing transparency and to check leakage of royalty.

However, scrutiny of the e-rawannas confirmed by weigh bridges revealed serious irregularities in the working of 81.68 per cent of selected weigh bridges. In 33.28 per cent e-rawannas, photograph of one vehicle was used many times for confirmation of e-rawannas. It showed that vehicles for which e-rawannas were generated either did not reach at the weigh bridges or passed without weighing. These cases indicate that e-rawannas were confirmed without actual weighment of the vehicle. Department failed to monitor the working of the weigh bridges, which had a direct impact on royalty collection. There was laxity in the system for effective monitoring on the functioning of the weigh bridges. The Department did not have a mechanism to use printed serial numbered Panchnamas. These were prepared by the Departmental officials by putting numbers manually. In the absence of such a system, it could not be assessed as to how many Panchnamas were prepared by the officials and how many were reported. Audit noticed that 511 Panchnamas were not uploaded on DMGOMS and higher authorities also remained uninformed of illegal mining activities due to this deficient process of numbering. Further, sources/sites of illegal mining were not investigated in respect of 1,121 cases of illegal transportation of minerals.

Audit also found that the assessments of royalty were not finalized with due diligence which resulted in incorrect assessment of royalty, cost of mineral and compounding fee of ₹ 14.20 crore in 28 cases.

4.5 Recommendations

The Department may consider:

- 1. developing or approving a single software to be used by weigh bridges across the State under overall control of the Department to check the malpractices;
- 2. strengthening its monitoring of weigh bridges through IT system at a centralized centre;
- 3. pursuing cases of vehicles used in illegal transportation with the Transport Department so that stringent action can be taken against vehicles owners.
- 4. optimally using the date and photos available in DMGOMS to investigate complaints on illegal mining and take stringent action against those involved in the malpractices so that is acts as a deterrent and
- 5. to adopt the good practice of processing Panchnama with printed serial numbers which is being implemented by the Transport Department of Rajasthan for transparency and accountability.

	56	

Audit Report (Performance Audit) for the year ended 31 March 2020