

Proposed mining area home to wildlife

Eco impact reports on Sindhudurg area have made no mention of it

Alok Deshpande

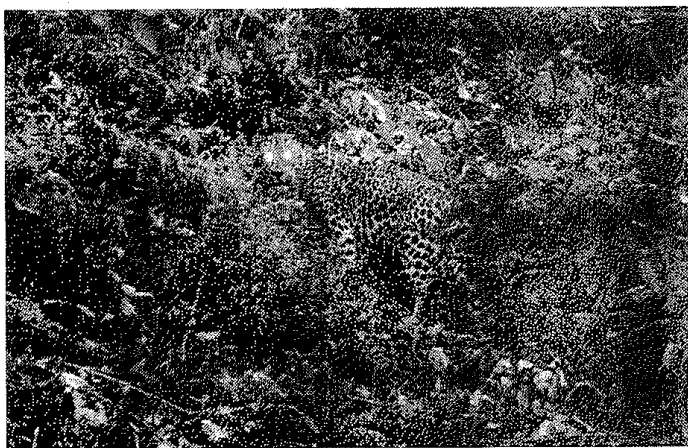
The cat's out of the bag. Earlier in October, DNA had exposed how environment impact assessment (EIA) reports are cooked up to facilitate an easy entry for mining companies into the Sindhudurg district in Maharashtra (As Goa's mineral resources dry up, miners turn to Maharashtra, October 7). This time, a leopard has lent credibility to the allegation.

The animal was sighted at the Dingane village near the Kalane iron ore mines — the same area that figures in the

iron ore mining proposal and an EIA report. No surprises that neither of the two reports has mentioned the presence of wild animals in the area.

The photograph of the leopard, taken in mid-October, shows that this part of the Western Ghats is home to wild animals and that a more detailed and scientific environmental study must be conducted before going ahead with any mining activity.

DK Sawant of Dwarka Krushna Tourism Private Limited was part of the group that shot photos of the leopard. "We were going to the Dingane village on October 9. Around 6.30pm, the leopard came out on to the road and stopped in front of the car. I was there along with Prof Fartekar and two local journalists. We took the pictures



The leopard that was sighted at the Dingane village near the Kalane iron ore mines, suggesting that more animals live in the area

and even did some video shooting," claimed Sawant, a resident of Sawantwadi in Sindhudurga.

He added that two days later, some villagers claimed to have sighted a leopard. But,

no visual proof is available for that.

Sindhudurg, which is at the southern-most corner of the state, bagged the tag of an eco-tourism district in 1997. It also has the largest green

NO WILD ALLEGATION

Around 6.30pm on October 9 in Dingane village, a group of people saw a leopard jump on to the road and stop right in front of their car

Two days later, some villagers claimed to have seen a leopard. No visual proof of it is available

Opponents of mining claimed that even elephants live in this part of the Western Ghats and have demanded a list of wild animals in the district under the Right to Information Act

cover in the state.

No new mines have begun extraction in the district, except in Kalane, due to a moratorium imposed by the ministry of environment and forests (MoEF).

Ramesh Gauns, one of the staunch opponents of mining in Goa and Sindhudurga, told DNA that the photograph proves how carelessly the EIAs were made. "There is no mention of wild animals in the EIAs. On the contrary, not only leopards but there are instances when even elephants have been seen in the jungles here. There has been no consideration for environment while giving mining leases to companies in the Western Ghats in Sindhudurga," he said.

The only way to bring out the truth, according to Gauns, is to acquire the list of wild animals in Sindhudurga under the Right to Information (RTI) Act. The villagers have demanded cancellation of the existing EIAs and mining leases granted to the companies.

सवालिया निशान } वेदान्त के आगे लाचार सरकार नहीं सुधार रही गलती

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केन्द्र की तत्कालीन एनडीए सरकार द्वारा नौ साल पहले सरकारी उपक्रम हिन्दुस्तान जिंक लिमिटेड का विनिवेश कर इसे निजी कम्पनी वेदान्त समूह की स्टर्लाइट ऑप्टिकल एंड वैचर्स लिमिटेड (एसओवीएल) के हाथों में सौंपने (बेचना) का फैसला संवैधानिक प्रावधानों के खिलाफ था। जानकारी सूत्रों के अनुसार सितम्बर 2003 में सुप्रीम कोर्ट के एक फैसले को आधार माना जाए तो केन्द्र सरकार केन्द्रीय कानून के जरिए अधिग्रहित की गई कम्पनी पर बिना कानून में संशोधन किए अपना नियंत्रण समाप्त नहीं कर सकती। तेल कम्पनियां बीपीसीएल व एचपीसीएल के प्रस्तावित विनिवेश के खिलाफ दायर याचिका पर सुप्रीम कोर्ट का यह फैसला आए भी आठ साल हो चुके हैं लेकिन वेदान्त



समूह के आगे लाचार मौजूदा केन्द्र की संप्रग सरकार अब भी गलती नहीं सुधार रही है।

पहले था मैटल कॉरपोरेशन ऑफ इण्डिया

पुराने रिकॉर्ड को खंगालने पर पता चला कि हिन्दुस्तान जिंक लिमिटेड 1966 से पूर्व मैटल कॉरपोरेशन ऑफ इण्डिया था। यह कॉरपोरेशन सामरिक जरूरतों में काम आने वाले सीसा व जस्ता धातुओं का खनन करता था। केन्द्र सरकार ने चीन व पाकिस्तान से युद्धों के बाद राष्ट्रीय हित व सामरिक जरूरतों की चीजों पर पूर्ण नियंत्रण का ध्यान में रख 1966 में मैटल कॉरपोरेशन ऑफ इण्डिया का

अधिग्रहण किया था। इसके लिए संसद में बाकायदा 'द मैटल कॉरपोरेशन ऑफ इण्डिया (एक्विजिशन एंड अण्डरटेकिंग) एक्ट, 1966' विधेयक पारित कर कानून बनाया गया था। अधिग्रहण के बाद मैटल कॉरपोरेशन हिन्दुस्तान जिंक लिमिटेड बन गया।

कानून अब भी, लेकिन कम्पनी निजी हाथों में

जिंक लिमिटेड को सरकारी नियंत्रण में लेने के लिए पारित कानून आज भी मौजूद है, लेकिन इस कानून की अनदेखी कर कम्पनी को 2002 में विनिवेश के नाम पर बेचान का निर्णय कर लिया। अप्रैल 2002 में हुए समझौते के तहत जिंक के 26 फीसदी शेयर 40.51 रुपये प्रति शेयर के भाव से 445 करोड़ रुपये में वेदान्त समूह की एसओवीएल को बेच दिए गए।

पढ़ें हिन्दुस्तान @ पेज 5

हिन्दुस्तान...

समझौते के तहत ही नवम्बर 2003 में जिंक के 18.92 प्रतिशत और शेयर एसओवीएल को बेचे गए। निजी कम्पनी ने 20 फीसदी अन्य शेयर बाजार से खरीद कर जिंक में अपनी हिस्सेदारी 64.92 प्रतिशत कर भिनी नवरत्न का दर्जा प्राप्त हिन्दुस्तान जिंक लिमिटेड पर अपना प्रभावी नियंत्रण कर लिया। सुप्रीम कोर्ट के फैसले से आखें मूंदी : केन्द्र की एनडीए सरकार ने सामरिक महत्व के खनिजों का नियंत्रण खोने का फैसला तो कर लिया, लेकिन बाद में सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने विनिवेश के बारे में एक अहम फैसला किया तो केन्द्र सरकार ने जिंक के संदर्भ में उस फैसले पर अपनी आखें मूंद ली। केन्द्र सरकार ने 2003 में भारत पेट्रोलियम कॉरपोरेशन व हिन्दुस्तान पेट्रोलियम कॉरपोरेशन के भी विनिवेश का प्रस्ताव रखा था। ये कम्पनियां भी संसद में कानून बना कर अधिग्रहित की गई थी। विनिवेश के प्रस्ताव के खिलाफ सेंटर फॉर पब्लिक इंटेस्ट लिटिगेशन व ऑयल सेक्टर आफिसर्स एसोसिएशन ने सुप्रीम कोर्ट में जनहित याचिका दायर की थी। इस याचिका पर 16 सितम्बर 2003 को दिए फैसले में कहा कि कानून बना कर अधिग्रहित की गई कम्पनियों को अधिग्रहण के लिए बनाए गए कानून को समाप्त करने या उसमें संशोधन किए बिना विनिवेश नहीं किया जा सकता। रिकॉर्ड बताता है कि तेल कम्पनियों व हिन्दुस्तान जिंक का एक ही कानूनी स्तर पर होने से सितम्बर 2003 का फैसला जिंक पर भी लागू होता है। अदालती फैसले के बाद केन्द्र सरकार को चेत जाना चाहिए था और एसओवीएल को आगे जिंक के शेयर बेचे जाने पर रोक लगानी चाहिए थी। लेकिन केन्द्र सरकार ने ऐसा नहीं किया बल्कि फैसले के दो माह बाद ही एसओवीएल को 18.92 फीसदी शेयर और बेच दिए गए। ...अब संवैधानिक अड़चन : आश्चर्य की बात यह है कि एक ओर सुप्रीम कोर्ट के फैसले के विपरीत हिन्दुस्तान जिंक की पूर्ववर्ती कम्पनी मैटल कॉरपोरेशन के अधिग्रहण का 1966 का कानून अस्तित्व में है और उसमें कम्पनी का नियंत्रण सरकारी हाथों में लिया गया था। दूसरी ओर जिंक का नियंत्रण सरकार के हाथ से चला गया है जो अधिग्रहण कानून के खिलाफ है। ऐसे में सितम्बर 2003 के सुप्रीम कोर्ट के फैसले के बाद

संवैधानिक अड़चन यही है कि किस कानून के
तहत कम्पनी काम कर रही है। सरकार ने न
1966 का कानून वापस लिया है और न ही
उसमें संशोधन किया है।

Moratorium on green clearance in Western Ghats extended

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 31

MOEF WON'T CLEAR NEW PROJECTS IN RATNAGIRI, SINDHUDURG DISTRICTS TILL YEAR-END

in the biodiversity hotspot of Western Ghats.

The moratorium was imposed in August last year by then Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh. The notice dated October 25 states that both the MoEF and the Maharashtra State Environment Impact Assessment Authority

(SEIAA) would not consider any new projects in the two districts until December 31, 2011. The decision announcing the extension states that the MoEF is at present studying the Western Ghat Ecology Expert Panel (WGEEP) report which will decide the future course of projects in the

ecologically fragile districts.

"According to the MoEF orders, no EC will be granted for new mining and thermal projects or even for expansion of existing projects under the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) notification 2006. In the meantime, the MoEF has asked us to submit our

views on the WGEEP report," said Valsa Nair, state Environment Secretary. The detailed report prepared by a committee headed by ecologist Dr Madhav Gadgil was submitted to the MoEF on August 30, 2011. The report is expected to have an overbearing impact on mining leases in Sind-

hudurg and Ratnagiri districts as well as those in Goa.

Another MoEF commissioned report, which was released in 2002, recommends that entire Western Ghats be declared as the Sahyadri Ecologically Sensitive Area and that all mining leases in the belt should be terminated

within ten years to preserve the bio-diversity. However, in January 2009, a state government resolution allowed mining and thermal power plants in Sindhudurg. This stripped the region of the ecologically fragile status that was given to this tourism zone 12 years ago, a label that gave it some

protection from polluting industries.

Since then the government granted 53 mining leases in the district, of which four are operational now. The MoEF had in October last year even issued a directive to the state asking the latter to review 49 mining leases in the belt as they were allegedly based on flawed EIA reports.

Copper falls as Greece plans bailout ballot

Bloomberg
Nov. 1

Copper fell for a second day in New York as a planned referendum on Greece's latest bailout fuelled concern that Europe's debt crisis will curb metals demand.

"Sentiment has turned more negative after the announcement of the referendum," Mr William Adams, head of research at Basemetals.com in London, said in a report.

Copper for December delivery declined 3.9 per cent to \$3.489 a pound by 8:22 a.m. on the COMEX in New York.

Prices climbed 15 per cent last month, the most since December.

The metal in London fell 3.7 per cent to \$7,692 a tonne.

SMALLER STOCKPILES

Copper inventories monitored by the LME declined for a ninth session, extending the biggest monthly slide since June 2009.

Stockpiles dropped 1.1 per cent to 424,750 tonnes, daily exchange figures showed. That's the lowest level since March 3, according to data compiled by Bloomberg.

Stocks are down 11 per cent from the 2011 high on June 10.

Orders to draw copper from LME stocks, or cancelled warrants, fell for a fifth session, sliding 8.6 per cent to 47,650 tonnes.

Aluminium for three-month delivery on the LME fell 2.8 per cent to \$2,155 a tonne, zinc dropped 3.7 per cent to \$1,926 a tonne and nickel slid 3.8 per cent to \$18,837 a tonne.

Lead declined 2.5 per cent to \$2,029.50 a tonne and tin decreased 2.5 per cent to \$21,450 a tonne.

NMDC not to renew ore export contracts

PRIYADARSHI SIDDHANTA
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 1

STATE-RUN National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) has decided against renewing iron ore export contracts with Japan and South Korea until the situation arising out of the Supreme Court's ban on ore exports from Karnataka is back to normal.

In a recent meeting convened by steel minister Beni Prasad Verma, the company's top brass pleaded their inability in renewing their export ties with Japanese steel producers and South Korean giant Posco on account of production from the company's Donimalai and Kumaraswamy mines being re-



stricted to 33,000 tonnes a month.

"NMDC officials said that the issue of renewing the Long Term Agreement with their overseas buyers be taken up after the situation of iron ore supply in Karnataka is normalised," steel ministry sources told The Indian Express. The overall ex-

ports from NMDC's mines have been minimal in 2011-12.

The apex court in its recent judgment had ordered that the quantum of ore to be mined from NMDC's Karnataka mines through e-auction to be monitored by a Monitoring Committee. While 80 per cent of the proceeds would accrue to NMDC, the remaining 20 per cent would be set aside for compensating environmental degradation by mining activity.

To meet the production needs of another steel ministry PSU, Kudremukh Iron Ore Company Limited, is considering to supply ore from its Bailadila mines in Chhattisgarh.

According to sources, the NMDC management said that if

exports were to continue uninterrupted, with supplies being provided by the Bailadila mines, then local buyers would complain as supplies to them would be governed by the Monitoring Committee that is restrictive.

The Union Cabinet had approved exports to the two nations at the request of the commerce ministry, which had cited long-term commercial relations with India. NMDC is opposed to exports as realisations are lesser than domestic sales.

In view of the fluctuating prices of iron ore globally, NMDC has decided to lower its premium to 10 per cent against 15 per cent in the third quarter of this fiscal in respect of its iron ore lumps.

NALCO SEARCH FOR SMELTER UNIT IS OVER

NALCO'S SEARCH for a suitable site for its second smelter unit seems to be over, with the Central public sector navratna company weighing options to establish the smelter unit in Sundergarh district in Odisha, reports our correspondent. According to sources, the PSU has engaged Lahmeyer International for conducting water availability study for its proposed Greenfield smelter in Sundergarh. Nalco was advised by the state government to look for new sites after its proposal to build the second smelter in Odisha was not considered due to crowding of smelting industries in the region and the attendant pollution. Nalco chairman, Mr B.L. Bagra, said the firm is expected to get the state government's nod to set up the plant in Sundergrah district, if the study established availability of adequate water.

FUELLING POWER PROSPECTS

ACCOUNTING FOR 81.1% OF INDIA'S OVERALL COAL PRODUCTION, **COAL INDIA LIMITED** IS THE SINGLE LARGEST COAL PRODUCER IN THE WORLD



As an organised state owned coal mining corporate, Coal India Limited (CIL) came into existence in November 1975 with the Government of India taking over private coal mines. Starting out with a modest production of 79 million tonnes (MTs) in the year of its inception, CIL today is the single largest coal producer in the world. Operating through 81 mining areas, CIL is an apex body with seven wholly owned coal producing subsidiaries and one mine planning and consultancy company spread over eight provincial states of India. Coal India Limited also fully owns a mining company in Mozambique christened as Coal India Africana Limitada. CIL also

manages 200 other establishments like workshops, hospitals etc. Further, it also owns 26 technical and management training institutes and 102 vocational training institutes. The Indian Institute of Coal Management (IICM) as a state-of-the-art management training Centre of Excellence - the largest corporate training institute in India - operates

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THE MISSION
OF COAL IN-
DIA LIMITED
IS TO PRO-
DUCE THE
PLANNED
QUANTITY OF
COAL, EFFI-
CIENTLY AND
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under the aegis of Coal India Limited and conducts multi disciplinary management development programmes.

The mission of Coal India Limited is to produce the planned quantity of coal, efficiently and economically with due regard to safety, conservation and quality. It has also constantly sought to minimise the degradation of land and

environment through various quantifiable initiatives. Coal India has made afforestation over an area of around 32,000 hectares while the total forest area degraded due to mining operation is around 12,800 hectares, which means, for every hectare of forest land degraded, CIL has made plantation in 2.5 hectares of land.

Another step towards making the environment green and healthy is CIL's integration of Environment Management System (ISO:14001) with Quality Management System (ISO:9001) and till date it has successfully achieved certification of 53 of its projects. This integration is being extended to all mines in phases.

UNMATCHED PERFORMANCE

◆ Produces around 81.1% of India's overall coal production. That makes CIL the undisputed leader in its chosen field. It also commands 74% of the Indian coal market

◆ In India where approximately 52% of primary commercial energy is coal dependent, CIL alone meets primary commercial energy requirement to the tune of 40%

◆ Feeds 82 out of 86 coal based thermal power plants in India, which alone is indication of the significance that Coal India Limited commands

◆ Accounts for 76% of the total thermal power generating capacity of the utility sector making it integral to the country's thermal power sector

◆ supplies coal at prices discounted to international prices thereby insulating Indian coal consumers against price volatility and making the end user industry globally competitive