खनन से खाली हो रही पहाड़ी
[रणथन्मोहर बाघ परियोजना] बाघ पर्यवेक्षक को नुकसान, वन विभाग नाकाम

रणथम्बोर बाघ परियोजना के कूंडेरा, विज्योलाल, शाहकुमर व बादगरह जिलों में अभियान चल रहा है। इन रेजिल्टियों में राजनीतिक, भविष्यवाणी, पर्यटन व वन विभाग के नेतृत्व में अघि खनन से खत्म हो रही पहाड़ी का स्वरूप निर्माण का कार्य चल रहा है।

अघि खनन से खत्म हो रही पहाड़ी
रणथम्बोर परियोजना के कूंडेरा, विज्योलाल, शाहकुमर व बादगरह जिलों में अघि खनन के छाप भरने वाले अलग-अलग क्षेत्र में अभियान चल रहा है। इन रेजिल्टियों में राजनीतिक, भविष्यवाणी, पर्यटन व वन विभाग के नेतृत्व में अघि खनन से खत्म हो रही पहाड़ी का स्वरूप निर्माण का कार्य चल रहा है।

उपरोक्त लेख में वर्णित लेखक ने अघि खनन से खत्म हो रही पहाड़ी का स्वरूप निर्माण का कार्य चल रहा है।
More trouble for Reddy brothers over panel report

statesman news service

BANGALORE, 9 JAN: The Opposition in the state has renewed its attack on the powerful Reddy brothers, mine barons and ministers in the Yeddyurappa government, following the submission of the Central Empowered Committee’s report.

The panel, appointed by the Supreme Court, has held Mr Janardan Reddy and his brother, Mr Karunakar Reddy, responsible for illegal mining in Andhra Pradesh and other related violations. While the brothers have, predictably, contested the claims of the panel, the Congress and the JDS have sharpened their knives to seek the resignation of the controversial mine barons from the Cabinet.

Mr Siddaramaiah, Opposition leader in the Assembly and a senior member of the Congress party, used the CEC report to mount an attack on the Yeddyurappa government as well. He demanded that the chief minister, too, should quit as he had been defending the Reddy brothers, even dismissing charges that they were involved in illegal mining.

The CEC report has come as the much-needed ammunition for the Opposition with Mr Siddaramaiah also accusing the chief minister of misleading the Assembly and the Governor, Mr Hansraj Bharadwaj, over the issue of alleged illegal mining by the brothers concerned.

“Our allegation that the Reddy brothers were engaged in illegal mining has been proved now. We will continue our fight against illegal mining,” he said.

Mr HD Kumaraswamy, former chief minister, and senior JDS leader, echoed his sentiments while seeking the resignation of Mr Yeddyurappa arguing that he had no right to continue in office now. At least on moral grounds, he said, the chief minister should step down along with the controversial ministers.

At another level, Mr Yeddyurappa may not actually shed any tears over the plight of his controversial ministers. Instead, he may seek to use the available opportunity to score some points against the brothers who have been his main detractors apart from being a thorn in his flesh.

BJP insiders told The Statesman that the CEC report puts the Reddy brothers in serious trouble and any attempt by the ruling party to defend them would not prove beneficial to the government.

Already, it is facing flak over a series of corruption charges with the Opposition bent on the resignation of the chief minister himself. The report against the Reddy brothers would only complicate matters further for the government.

Accordingly, the sources said, much would depend on how Mr Yeddyurappa tackles this situation, adding to the ones he is already facing. Also important is the nature of support he gets from the party’s leadership as the continuation of the Reddy brothers in the Cabinet now would prove extremely embarrassing, both for Mr Yeddyurappa, and the BJP.

How the chief minister and the BJP extricate themselves from their predicament is something that would need to be watched now, especially as the ruling party clearly sees some very difficult, even tough days ahead.
इस साल सोने में 19 फीसदी मूल्य वृद्धि की संभावना

बीते सालांत भारी मिशाल के बाद भी निराश नहीं है विकासकर्मी

सरकार ने 2011 के दौरान सोने के दामों में 19 फीसदी की तेजी अनलग की संभावना कहा है। विकासकर्मों का पूरा यह एक दाम का भारी निकाय और निराश नहीं है।

हालांकि बीते साल सोने के दामों में निगम का वर्ष की शुरुआत में निकाय का दाम नहीं है। यह निगम का कारण यह है कि शुरुआत में दामों के बाद निकाय के दाम को दर्शाते हैं।

जानकारों का भी हाल है कि चालू वर्ष 2011 में सोने की कीमतों में 19 फीसदी की तेजी अवश्य आने की संभावना है। लंचन मॉडल वित्त नीति परिषद के मुख्यमंत्री सरी जीता की दाम 1,457 डॉलर प्रति औसत रहने की संभावना है। साथ ही एक अन्य सरी में चाही हो भी जुड़ा रहने को चाहा गई है।

इससे दामों के मुख्यमंत्री वर्ष 2011 के दौरान सोने के आंक रहे डॉलर 29.88 डॉलर प्रति औसत रहने का अनुमान जताया गया है। वह वर्ष वर्ष 2010 के सुझाव में 48 फीसदी वृद्धि है। उपर सोने के दाम वर्ष 2011 के अनुसार दर्शक बाजार में सोने का दाम भी जुड़ा रहने की संभावना जताई जा रहा है। वर्ष 2011 के दौरान पोर्टल के दामों में 12.6 फीसदी की बढ़ी रहने की संभावना जताई जा रहा है। इस दाम के साथ पोर्टल के दाम 1,813 डॉलर प्रति औसत रहने की संभावना है।
संतुलन बढ़ी चुनौती : प्रणब

भूलकेश्वर * जाने बिल जर्न में 9 पीसी की विकास पर
हस्तित करने के प्रति आसामित रहा मंत्री प्रणब मुखर्जी ने
रिमिट की कहा है कि शेष के राहुल पक्ष की बढ़ी चुनौती
अर्थव्यवस्था और प्रौद्योगिकीय संसाधनों की निर्माण तथा
वृद्धि संतुलन प्रकाशित करना है। यहां जानकी के स्तान्त्र्य
विधारण पर नियंत्रण हुए मुखर्जी ने कहा कि जहां एक और
अर्थव्यवस्था की दुर्भ केंद्र से हुई हेरार में निबंधों
है, वहीं अर्थव्यवस्था के मिश्रित रूप में मजबूती प्रपन
करने की भी जरूरत है। मंत्री ने कहा कि सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र
की उपलब्धि के साथ ही सभी विभागों में निरस्त्रान्त और
प्रयोग सुसंगत स्थापित करने पर विचार कराना चाहिए।
प्रौद्योगिकीय संसाधनों के दोहर में निर्माण का मथात रखते हुए
माहू और पतरीय्युक्त मुँहों पर भी समान रूप से ध्यान दिए
जाने की आगामिता है। उन्होंने कहा कि वैश्विक विद्युत
संचार और अन्य संचार युक्ति आर्थिक एवं व्यवसायिक
पटमें सफल रहे है।
Govt shopping for minerals

CHINA FACTOR Policy for acquiring scarce natural resources abroad in the works

Anupama Airy & Gaurav Choudhury

NEW DELHI: India is planning a major overseas shopping drive to ensure a secured supply of scarce natural resources such as crude oil, gas, iron ore and coal to push the country's strategic and domestic needs.

The government is putting together a comprehensive policy framework that includes setting up of a specialised cell to help firms, including private sector companies, acquire these scarce resources.

India is waking up to the fact that countries such as China have made a head-start in the race for natural resources.

In a meeting convened by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) last month, it was decided that the department of industrial policy and promotion (DIPP) will draft a formal policy.

"DIPP will seek cabinet approval to a government policy on facilitating outward investment by Indian private sector companies," said a senior official.

A centralised nodal cell will be set up, empowered with strategic and decision-making powers. The cell is likely to be located either in the PMO or in the cabinet secretariat.

"Outward investment by the private sector companies may be for many purposes, acquisition of raw material resources being one," the official said.

"What is required is a policy statement to avoid criticism from any quarter on why government agencies are promoting the cause of private companies, and to create a mechanism to provide necessary help wherever required," he said.

State-owned companies such as Coal India, NTPC and Steel Authority of India are eyeing purchase of mines in Australia, Africa, Indonesia, the US, Chile and Namibia, and are ready with detailed acquisition plans.

The external affairs ministry has been asked to work out a strategy as acquisition of such resources in many countries would require a diplomatic push.
Value addition of minerals likely: FM

Mukherjee says balance between economy and natural resources must

Bhubaneswar: The Centre is working together with the chief ministers of mineral-rich states on value addition and the new mining policy would include all suggestions, finance minister Pranab Mukherjee said on Sunday.

“When the new mining policy will be formulated, all these will be factored in,” said Mukherjee. “I received a representation from Orissa in this regard (value addition to minerals). I had a discussion with the chief minister too.”

Mineral-rich states such as Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Karnataka and Rajasthan have been demanding among other things inclusion of a value addition clause in the new mining policy. There is also a strong demand for substantial increase in coal royalty.

He said the challenge was to find the correct balance between the need for economic growth and sustainability of resources.

“One of the biggest challenges is to find the correct balance between the need for economic growth, sustainability of resources and natural habitats and the opportunities that need to be created for bringing people such as those in tribal belts into the mainstream of the development process,” he said.
The Supreme Court-appointed Central Empowerment Committee’s recommendation for cancellation of all three mining leases of the powerful Reddy brothers in Andhra Pradesh due to various irregularities is a big blow to them. The Reddy brothers—Janardhana Reddy, Karunakara Reddy and Somasekhara Reddy—are not only Karnataka’s nouveau mining magnates but also ministers in the B.S. Yeddyurappa government. The committee, which submitted its report to the apex court on Friday, has recommended cancellation of leases on the mines of the Obulapuram Mining Company spread over 140 acres as well as its sister concern, the Ananthpur Mining Company. Among the reasons cited are illegal extension of the lease by the authorities; illegal mining beyond approved areas and depth; and illegal construction within the Bellary reserve forest in violation of the provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act. It found that a mining lease of 39.5 hectares, executed by the Andhra Pradesh Government’s Department of Mines in favour of the company, differed materially from the area for which environmental clearance had been taken under the Act.

Keeping in view the nature, the extent and the magnitude of the irregularities, the empowered committee’s report for action against the Reddy brothers needs to be pursued to its logical conclusion expeditiously. However, an early action seems unlikely because a three-Judge Forest Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Justice S.H. Kapadia has said that it would look into the report from the “larger perspective” and not just on the “individuals”. Not surprisingly, the Reddy brothers have dubbed the report as “biased” and “vindictive.”

Paradoxically, the Reddy brothers are a boon and bane for the Yeddyurappa government. Their illegal mining operations in Karnataka’s Bellary district and in Andhra Pradesh are now legion. After the late Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy’s death and his son Jagan Mohan Reddy’s exit from the Congress, their troubles have multiplied. Lokayukta Justice Santosh Hegde has said that he would name all those involved in the mining scam in his report to be ready by March. Governor H.R. Bhardwaj says that he has received complaints accusing the Reddy brothers of constantly shifting the boundary marks between Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh and supporting illegal mining activities besides transporting iron ore. The CBI, the Income Tax and the Enforcement Directorate are also probing into their assets. Clearly, the heat is on the most powerful family in Karnataka.
अरावली पहाड़ी में फिर सक्रिय हुए खनन माफिया

अरावली पहाड़ी क्षेत्र में एक खनन माफिया की फिर सक्रियता हुई गई है। अभी तक यह खनन क्षेत्र में किसी भी बातचीत की जानकारी नहीं मिली है। 

बाद में मौकेआप पाकर देखकर व अन्य मामलों से खनन माफिया का पता चलने में हुआ है। इस बार अधिकारियों के कारण कोई भी संदेह से खनन करने में विशेष लागत नहीं दिखाई दिग्गज खनन कार्यकर्ता होते हैं।

उदाहरणतया अरावली पहाड़ी क्षेत्र वन क्षेत्र है। इस क्षेत्र में किसी भी पक्ष के निर्देशन से खनन करने पर प्रतिबंध मान्यता है।

दूसरे बाद भी अधिकारियों के अनुसार कोई निर्देशन नहीं मिला है। खनन कार्य पर पूरी तरह प्रतिबंध के बाद भी इस पर संदिग्धता नहीं लगा गई है। बताया जाता है कि आधिकारिक खनन कार्य जड़ में होते हैं। लेकिन तारीख से। पाकर के बीच से मिलने का इंतजार किया जा रहा है जिससे पाकर
कारों ने खिलियों के उखनन के लिए भारतीय लेखिकाओं को दिया नौकर।

नई दिल्ली, (भाषा): खिलियां समय से मालामाल करते हुए खिलियों के उखनन और उत्क्षेत्र के लिए भारतीय समाज को आमंत्रित किया है जो दोनों देशों के लिए फर्जियां बना सकता है।

खान मेमो, नी. के. इतर, एन. ते बढ़ा,

"कारों के पास खिलिया, हाँ, संभावित, तरंग, वीडियोग्राफ और जल्द के कारों प्रभाव में भंडार है। अधिकतम देश बाहर है कि भारतीय लेखिकाओं के उखनन और उपचार के लिए कारों आएं।"

कारों के खान मेमो इतर, एन. बढ़ा, 
वाले कला की प्राथमिक से वाले में की वह और खिलियों के उखनन के लिए भारतीय लेखिकाओं को अपने देश आने का नौकर दिया। इतर ने कहा कि सामाजिक वातावरण के दोनों वह खिलियों के उखनन के लिए समर्पित कर सकते हैं। कारों के दो भी खिलियाँ भंडार है, जहां दो कंपनियाँ -

gलोलामक्ष्य और नोटिंगलिंग के लिए वातावरण है।
आदिवासियों के साथ लाभ का करना होगा बंतवारा

एमएसडीआर एक्ट

• कौनसा और स्टील मंसूबां भी अंत: करते हैं
• एमएसडीआर विषयक को इस हालत जीसीएम की मंजूरी संबंध
• वजह से निवेदक देन का सीधा सुसारा आता है संसद

उपरोक्त रंग, नई दिल्ली

खनन कंपनियों के लाभ में विश्वासित आदिवासियों को हिस्सा देने के लिए, परम्य उपभोक्ता कंपनियों ने कोई नहीं धारण की होती थी। कंपनियों की भी अपने लाभ में 26 जीसीएम विज्ञापन स्थानीय उद्योग और आदिवासियों परिवारों को देता है। यह प्रस्ताव का विवेचन कर रहे जोधपुर आयोग, जीसीएम मंसूबा और स्टील मंसूबा।

इस प्रस्ताव का विवेचन राज्य सरकार के साथ ही प्रतिरोध खनन और जीसीएम (विभाग एवं नियम) स्थानीय (एमएसडीआर) आयोग के यहाँ की कहानी भी हो गई है। सबूत के पूर्विक के प्रदर्शन के लिए इसे इस्तेमाल करने सुझाव दिया।

जीसीएम की अधिकांश बैंक जीसीएम, 2010 को हुई थी जिसमें 26 जीसीएम विज्ञापन हेतु के मुद्दे पर समझौता नहीं किया गया था। जहां इस प्रस्ताव का सबसे बड़ा विषय कंपनियां मंसूबा त्रहाड़ नामक शुद्धिकर्ता के बीच सीधे तरीके में एक सँग थे। महेंद्र सिंह जीसीएम, जो भारतीय आयोग के प्रमुख रूप से दायित्व ग्रहण करते हुए अहवाल जारी कर रहे थे।

कौनसी और स्टील मंसूबा की कहानी भी है। यह कंपनी के मुख्यालय में संबंधित नामित कमिश्न के समुह (जीसीएम) को बैठक में दोनों मंजूरी मिलने की संभावना है।

इस विषय में ही खनन परियोजनाओं से विभाजित स्थानीय नागरिकों को कंपनी के बुध लाभ में 26 जीसीएम विज्ञापन देने का प्रस्ताव किया जा रहा। मईं के अंतिम महीने तक इस प्रस्ताव को आगामी बजट में रेखा कर अपनी छवि को भी बेहतर कर जाती है।

सैकड़ों निवडित परिवारों को हिस्सा देना होगा। इसके अलावा, बाकी कंपनियों ने भी अपने लाभ में 26 जीसीएम विज्ञापन हेतु के मुद्दे पर समझौता किया गया है। अंतिम विषय कंपनियां यहाँ के सीधे चयन नहीं हो सकते हैं।
नकसलियों ने खदान में आग लगाई।

जमशेदपुर/चाईबाग (जारी)। नकसलियों ने मानवमिहर्षक कार्यक्रम डा. विनाकर सेन को उड़ाकिया की सज़ा सुनाई जाने के विरोध में हारखेड़ सिनेमा एक ठीक अंतक खदान में आग लगाकर लाखों के कई उपकरण नष्ट कर दिए।

आतंकी-तूफान ने रविवार को बताया कि नकसलियों द्वारा संगठन भागवत भक्तों के लगभग दो दर्जन हिंसिकारक सदस्यों ने परियोजना चितहूलू अंतर्गत सरकार की कंपनी टिल्लर अमरिटाइट ओवर इंडिया लिमिटेड (टाइटल) की एक खदान पर चल रहे हैं। उन्होंने भगवान दुर्गा करने वाले संबंधित केस के साथ कुछ अन्य उपकरण में आग लगा दी।
NOVELIS’ UK UNIT MAY SEE PART-SALE, NOT CLOSURE

SHUBHASHISH
Mumbai, 9 January

Novelis, part of Aditya Birla Group’s Hindalco Industries, is close to selling at least a part of its Bridgnorth foil plant in Britain, which it had decided to shut down by the end of April. Three companies are conducting due diligence at the site.

Caroline Crolley, regional industrial officer of Unite, a prominent employee union, in an emailed response to Business Standard, said, “We are presently awaiting the outcome of three bids for purchase of approximately a third of the company. This, if successful, would save approximately 100 jobs.”

She did not reveal the names and said the talks were at a very “delicate stage”. Emails to Novelis and Hindalco went unanswered.

Novelis had hinted at the possibility that part of the packaging operation at Bridgnorth may be sold as a going concern. It had said, “Novelis is in discussions with potential buyers for the printed confectionery packaging business on the site.”

Novelis, in a statement on December 14, 2010, had said the company would cease operations of foil rolling at Bridgnorth and part of the packaging business on the same site, by the end of April 2011. The move had put jobs of 319 employees at the plant at stake. However, with three companies showing interest in buying a part of the foil mill, employees and the union are hopeful that at least 100 jobs can be saved.

The move is aimed at improving competitiveness of its foil and packaging production, as it believes there is considerable over-capacity in the European foil market and the competition from producers in low-cost countries is a major threat.

Apart from the decision to shut Bridgnorth, Novelis, on December 6, has shut an aluminium smelter in Aratu, Brazil, effective December 31. The company had said the 60,000-tonne smelter was running into losses for the past two years and efforts to improve performance did not yield much results.

Around 300 employees are affected.
Congo invites India to tap mining biz

CONGO HAS invited Indian firms to take part in the exploration of mines and production of minerals in the African country. Speaking on the possible synergies between the two countries, mines minister, Mr B.K. Handique, said: "Congo has plenty of minerals, diamond, gold, copper, cobalt and zinc among others. It wants Indian firms to go to Congo for help in exploration and production of minerals." Congo's mines minister, Mr Martin Kabwelulu, had called on his Indian counterpart and discussed the potential the African country has to offer India. Mr Handique added both countries would ink a pact for mineral exploration probably during his counter visit.
CEC accuses AP of ‘gross illegality’

S.S. NEGI
NEW DELHI

Jan. 9: The Supreme Court-appointed Central Empowerment Committee (CEC) probe into the Reddy brothers’ mining contracts in Andhra Pradesh has revealed how the state government had acted on mere “presumption” without going into the field to renew the lease contract of one of the three mining areas measuring 25.98 hectares to their Obulapuram Mining Company.

The Centre had granted permission for the first renewal to the OMC for 20 years in 1984 and the state government sanctioned it accordingly from December 14 the same year.

It was in fact a “transfer deed” to the company of the Reddy brothers from another leaseholder, who had the initial contract with the state government.

The contract for transfer of the lease with OMC was executed by the AP government for the “unexpired period” up to December 13, 2004.

But on a representation from OMC, the lease period was actually decided from April 26, 1997, giving them a clear leverage of 13 years on the “presumption” that they had not extracted any mineral from this mining area between 1984 and 1997.

This was made a ground for extending the lease up to April 25, 2017 when the 20 years period expired in 2004 to compensate the “non-extraction” of minerals during the 13-year period.

But on the ground-level, the situation was entirely different. The company in fact had been continuously extracting minerals since 1984, thus the renewal extended up to 2017 was not only grossly illegal but had allowed the Reddy brothers to take away precious minerals for 13 years virtually “free of cost”.
Pranab asks states to give food subsidy

Bhubaneswar, Jan 9: Union finance minister Pranab Mukherjee on Sunday said the state governments should take immediate measures to provide some relief to the BPL families from the present price rise situation.

He suggested the state governments should subsidise to some extent the food articles to protect the poor people from the price rise. “We can’t completely insulate ourselves from the price rise”, he said. “Even though we have taken all stops to meet the demand-supply gap by introducing zero-based tax on imports of essential commodities, the rising crude oil price is having its impact on the process”, he said.

The finance minister said the state governments have been asked to take measures to remove the hurdles in free movement of the commodities and check hoardings by traders. Mukherjee, who is the chairman of the group of ministers (GoM) on the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act 1957 Amendment Bill, said the memorandums given by Orissa chief minister Naveen Patnaik and other chief ministers of mineral-rich states are being considered by the GoM.

The finance minister was here on Sunday to deliver the 10th Series of Nalco Foundation Day lecture. The meeting was attended by Union secretary for mines S Vijaya Kumar, Nalco chairmancum-managing director A K Srivastava and Nalco directorfinance BL Bagar.

Mukherjee, while delivering the Foundation Lecture, said that India would be a big economic power next to US in next 20 years. With 50 million skilled manpower and huge population with high purchasing power, India would find its rightful place in the international community by then, he added.

“During the next Five Year Plan (2012 to 2017), we envisage financial outlay of over $1 trillion on infrastructure projects”, he said, adding the private investment, both domestic and foreign, will have to play a vital role developing the infrastructure in our economy.”

Expressing satisfaction over the country’s GDP growth in the first half of 2010-11, which has touched 8.9% after an average 7% in the last twofiscals, the finance minister said, “The recovery has been broad based with agriculture, industry and services all contributing to the consolidation of the growth process”. However, stressing need for inclusive growth, he said the government has increased the social sector spending to 37% of the total plan in 2010-11. Another 25% of the plan allocations are devoted to the development of rural infrastructure.

Speaking on the occasion, Union mines secretary Vijaya Kumar indicated that a competitive regime would be put in place in the Indian mining sector.
Gold, silver could lose sheen, safe-haven assets to rule in 2011

BASE metals, which are used in various industrial applications, have taken cues from global economic developments in the past year. Additionally, inherent fundamentals also played a major role in price determination as in certain cases supply-side issues supported prices, whereas other base metals suffered a year-end surplus which deterred sharp upside in prices. The major beneficiary of supply-side concerns was nickel in 2010, which gained more than 30%. The long strike at Brazil-owned Vale’s Canadian operations was the highlight from the supply side in nickel this year.

Copper on the other hand was supported by a combination of factors like tight supplies, deficit of the metal, falling inventories and expectations of a rise in demand in 2011. Copper inventories on the LME in 2010 declined 30%, indicating tight scenario in the physical market.

In 2011, the highlight in the global financial markets will continue to be—recovery in the US and the eurozone. Since recovery is expected to be slow, demand for safe-haven assets will continue to remain bullish in the first-half of the year. However, sharp gains in bullion will be capped as gold and silver have already witnessed sharp rise in prices in 2010. Also, recovery in the Asian economies may help to offset the sharp impact of slow recovery in the advanced economies. Further moves by the US Federal Reserve to support its economy will also provide further direction to the market.

Although recovery in the Asian economies is expected to offset the concerns in the advanced economies, we feel that we are in for yet another eventful year in terms of global economic uncertainty and the never-ending developments attached with it. Slowly and steadily, market participants have gathered hope that somewhere down the line the world’s largest economy, the US will eventually fall on track of positive growth. This optimism coupled with high expectations and forecast of rise in demand for commodities is adding to the upside that we are witnessing currently. From bullion to energy and base metals, the commodities space is enjoying a joyride which is actually not in line with the prevalent global economic scenario.

In this year, we expect economic concerns to continue to dominate the global financial markets. Base metals will take cues from developments on the economic front. Additionally, any move by the US Federal Reserve to rescue its economy further from the worst financial crisis may lead to volatility in the markets. Apart from economic worries in the US and the eurozone, we cannot ignore the impact of China on the base metals market. Not only is the country a major driver of base metals and energy demand, China’s importance has also grown in the bullion space with its emerging dominance in production and consumption of the yellow metal.

We expect copper, the leader of the base metals pack to continue to trade higher in this year, taking cues from the tight supply situation. From the long-term perspective, Nickel prices are not expected to rise sharply as rise in nickel production in 2010 may help to bring down deficit in the metal, thus capping sharp rise in prices. Also, from the consumption perspective, demand is expected to decline due to slowdown in demand from the steel sector. Lead prices are expected to trade lower in this year, mainly due to rising LME inventories, surplus of the metal in the market and China’s move to increase interest rates in order to relax inflation. In this year, we expect zinc prices to witness downside pressure as fundamentals indicate a huge surplus of the metal and rising inventories also indicate a bearish trend. Any move by China to tighten its monetary policy further could lead to downside in zinc. In case of Aluminium, we expect prices to rise this year on the back of expected rise in demand for the metal from China in 2011. Consumption in the US in 2010 has also revived and will act as a supportive factor.

The views are personal.
Selling may continue in gold on euro’s weakness

M.R. Subramani
Chennai, Jan 9

Last week, gold dropped 3.7 per cent to $1,368.90 an ounce, while silver fell 7.3 per cent to $28.67 an ounce. It was one of the sharpest fall in the last few months and it is dollar’s strength that has stopped the bulls in the precious metals in their tracks.

In fact, the strength of the dollar saw a drop in the prices of other commodities, too, leading to fears that the bubble in the commodities is about to burst. The Greenspan’s gain also witnessed unwinding of positions and selling in various counters led to all-round fall in prices.

Any prospect for the precious metal should now be viewed with the outlook for the US currency. According to Forex Crunch, the euro closed at 1.2904 against the dollar. This closure last week is below its second support level of 1.2920. This level now turns to be a resistance.

Immediate support for the euro is 1.280 but 1.2722 is seen as a better support for the euro against the dollar. Since the euro has dropped below the critical support level of 1.2920, the scenario is bearish for it with dollar set to gain further this week.

Therefore, the coming week could see the strengthening of the dollar casting a psychological effect on the gold which could test support at $1,350.

This is all set to be tested since selling could continue in the wake of the dollar gaining strength.

BUYING SUPPORT
The problem for gold now is that selling has not got over and there seems to be no buying support. Critically, interest on haven buying seems to have taken a back seat with the dollar’s bullish outlook.

If gold is not supported at $1,350, then it could drop to as low as $1,320. In case this too is breached, then gold could head to levels of $1,250. The other bearish factors for gold are the US economy is tending to look up while Europe seems to facing more problems. The key to euro’s fortune this week are French and German industrial production data, decision on interest rate hike by the European Central Bank and the Consumer Price index on Friday.

The US economic indicator is also likely to propel the dollar further up. On the other hand, Mr Nick Barisheff of Bullion Management Group sees an uptrend for gold and silver in the medium to long term.

FOCAL POINT
According to him, the shift away from dollar with gold becoming a focal point and China’s mindset building around gold that will perk up the yellow metal’s purchase are factors that will drive the precious metal up.

Also, the talk of rebound in the US economy could prove short-lived.

In fact, a section of economists feel there is more fall likely in the US home buying and things could be in a flux until 2012.

Mr Barisheff feels ageing population, particularly in China, further devaluation of the Greenback and peak oil production leading to surging inflation all indicative of gold scaling up further.

Though gold is under pressure now, it could go past $1,700 this year or even near $2,000.

For that prices will have to get past a stiff resistance of $1,437.

Until that happens, the market could witness selling at every rise in the yellow metal. For silver, the crucial support lies at $23.
Fiscal autonomy for Orissa sought

Special Correspondent

BHUBANESWAR: The ruling Biju Janata Dal, which has been trying hard to strengthen its votebank by blaming the Centre for the backwardness of Orissa on various fronts, on Sunday went one step further and passed a resolution seeking fiscal autonomy for the State to ensure all-round development. A resolution with regard to this demand of the regional party was passed at its executive meeting held under the chairmanship of Chief Minister and party president Naveen Patnaik.

The party also demanded payment of 50 per cent royalty on various minerals being extracted in the State. The Centre was taking maximum benefit of the State’s mineral wealth, it alleged.

Interestingly, the party passed the resolution for fiscal autonomy for the State and reiterated its campaign against the alleged negligence of the State by the Congress-led government at the Centre at a time when cracks appeared in its organisation in several districts.

The BJD has been adopting an anti-Centre stand to cope with the opposition criticism in the wake of the Centre’s orders against the industrial projects of Vedanta and POSCO, and the High Court order quashing the notifications for acquisition of land for the proposed Vedanta university.

Addressing the meeting, Mr. Patnaik said the party would launch its membership drive from January 17. The party would try to reach out to 80 lakh families in the State during the programme.
GUJARAT may have to be content with just one 4,000 mw ultra mega power project as the two other sites offered by the state for building such projects have not been found feasible by the power ministry due to environmental reasons. The state had identified two sites—one near Junagarh and another near Jamnagar—for setting UMPPs of 4,000 mw capacity each.

"Junagarh is not possible, as it is near the Gir Forest area, and as far as Jamnagar is concerned, it is near the limestone mines and we have to receive permission from the Gujarat State Mining Corp," a power ministry official said. "These two projects look unlikely...but let’s see," he added.

At present, the country’s largest private power producer, Tata Power, is executing the 4,000 (800x5) mw UMPP at Mundra in the state.

The first 800 mw unit of this coastal project is expected to be completed during the current 11th Plan period (2007-12).

Power Finance Corporation (PFC), the nodal agency for these kind of projects, has already awarded four projects to the successful bidders. Reliance Power bagged three of the allotted four projects at Sasan (Madhya Pradesh), Krishnapatnam (Andhra Pradesh) and Tilaiya (Jharkhand), while the Tatas won the Mundra project.

The government, which plans to add 1,00,000 mw of electricity in the upcoming 12th Plan period (2012-17), is relying on the contribution from these UMPPs. These projects are likely to be commissioned over a period of 4-5 years from now.

The invitation of preliminary bids for the two proposed projects at Bedabahal (Orissa) and Sarguja (Chhattisgarh) are stuck because of lack of environment clearance for the coal blocks allotted to the projects. Therefore, the power ministry would not finalise any other site in any other part of the country without obtaining the mandatory approvals from the respective authorities.
FM assures states on local value-addition clause in mining policy

Nageshwar Patnaik

FINANCE minister Pranab Mukherjee on Sunday said the Centre is working with the chief ministers of mineral-rich states on value additions and the new mining policy would include all suggestions.

"When the new mining policy will be formulated, all these will be factored in," Mr Mukherjee said. "I have received a representation from the Orissa government in this regard (value addition to minerals). I had a discussion with the chief minister too," he said. Mineral-rich states like Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Karnataka and Rajasthan have been demanding a value addition clause in the new mining policy to ensure proper utilisation of mineral resources in their respective areas. They also have urged the union government for a substantial increase in coal royalty.

Speaking at Nalco foundation day here, Mr Mukherjee said India has done well in regaining its growth momentum after the global financial crisis and was poised to register a 9% growth by the end the current fiscal. He said the GDP growth in the first two quarters of 2010-11 had touched 8.9%, after an average of 7% in the last two years, and hoped that the growth momentum would be retained till the end of the year.

The finance minister said since 2003-04, the Indian economy had moved to a higher growth path. This has come about due to a significant improvement in domestic investment and saving rates, he said. Noting that the biggest challenge before the country was to find a correct balance between the need for economic growth and sustainability of resources and natural habitats, Mr Mukherjee said opportunities need to be created for bringing tribals into the mainstream. While we ought to retain growth momentum, we also need to strengthen the inclusive character of the economy, he observed.

The FM claimed that the economic reforms pursued by successive governments at the Centre since 1991 had unleashed a new era of growth, providing the private and public sector companies with enough opportunities to rise.
Demand likely to remain robust this year too

DEMAND for gold was strong in India during 2010 despite an escalation in prices as consumers saw the yellow metal as a safe investment which could protect them from economic uncertainty. The prices climbed as much as 30% to touch a record as dollar weakened. The robust demand is expected to continue this year.

India’s imports surged in 2010

After a decline in imports in 2009 due to the impact of the global economic recession, gold’s inward shipment picked up in 2010. Against 559 tonne in 2009, last year’s import is estimated to be around 700 tonne. As most Indians invest in physical gold, the imports are predicted to rise to last year’s level especially if the prices dip below 20,000 per 10 gm.

Domestic consumption going up

India and China continue to be the biggest consumers of the precious metal. Investors are keen to buy gold at a hedge against inflation. As most investors believe that gold prices will keep going up, they are not hesitant to buy at the current prices. The demand for gold jewellery showed over 70% rise last year. The World Gold Council reckons that 60% to 65% of the overall gold demand in India will come from the rural market. Most of the jewellery chains are now expanding to smaller towns, especially in south India, to cash in on the new trend. The volumes in exchange-traded funds are also steadily climbing up.

Improved dollar may limit gold gains

Last year, gold prices reached a record high of $1,431 per ounce helped by a weak dollar and the poor state of the US economy. This year, the improved dollar may depress gold prices initially. Last Friday, the price stood at $1,399 per ounce. Standard gold prices in India fell to 20,370 per 10 gm. A market prediction is that the prices could hover in the range of $1,270 and $1,300 per ounce by the end of March. But this could be just a temporary phase as the economies in the US and Europe are yet to recover fully. The currency volatility will also help sustain investor interest in gold. So, gold prices will continue to be bullish though they may not peak to a new high.

Global prices may jump on low supply

Globally, fears of low supply could push up the demand for gold in the long run. Currency volatility and rising inflation may lead to more gains in the coming days. The timing of these gains will depend largely on the changes in the interest rates in the US, China and Europe.

PK Krishnakumar
Gold futures see biggest decline since July

SEATTLE: Gold futures fell in New York on Saturday, capping the biggest weekly loss in six months, on expectations that the US economy's recovery will erode demand for the metal as a haven. The dollar was poised for the largest weekly gain since August against a basket of six major currencies. Reports this week signalled an improving US labour market and expansion in manufacturing and services. Gold advanced 30% in 2010 and rose to a record last month on concern that a rebound from a global recession would falter. "As the economy continues to improve, downward pressure will mount on gold," said Matthew Zeman, a metal trader at LaSalle Futures Group in Chicago. "There's less need for a safe-haven asset." Gold futures for February delivery fell $2.80, or 0.2%, to settle at $1,368.90 an ounce on the Comex in New York. The price lost 3.7% this week, the most since July 2. The metal fluctuated after the dollar pared earlier gains following Sunday's report that the US added fewer jobs in December than economists forecast. The unemployment rate fell to the lowest level since May 2009.
We can maintain 9% GDP growth rate: Pranab

"The economy has become remarkably resilient to both external and domestic shocks"

Staff Reporter

BHUBANESWAR: Union Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee has exuded confidence that India will maintain 9 per cent GDP growth rate by the end of current fiscal — 2010-2011.

Delivering the NALCO Foundation Day lecture here on Sunday, Mr. Mukherjee said the GDP growth in the first half of 2010-11 touched 8.9 per cent after an average of 7 per cent in the past two years.

"The economy has become remarkably resilient to both external and domestic shocks. More importantly, the recovery has been broad-based, with agriculture, industry and services all contributing to consolidation of the growth process," he said.

Mr. Mukherjee, however, expressed concern over the rising fiscal deficit. "We need to work on a roadmap. By 2010-11, fiscal deficit will be around 5.5 per cent. It should be around 4.8 per cent by 2011-12. Every year we are reducing the fiscal deficit by around 0.7 per cent."

The Minister said: "During the next Five Year Plan, from 2012 to 2017, we envisage financial outlays of over $1 trillion on infrastructure projects. To accelerate the pace of infrastructure development, we have to ensure timely and adequate capacity addition across different sectors of the economy."

Emphasising on inclusive growth, he said: "To fulfil commitments, spending on the social sector has been rapidly increased and now stands at 37 per cent of the total plan in 2010-11. Another 25 per cent of the plan allocation is devoted to the development of rural infrastructure."

Mr. Mukherjee, while pointing out that the public sector enterprises were the foundation of the economy, said the government was committed to giving PSUs the flexibility and autonomy for operating effectively in a competitive environment.

Bringing the economy back to the growth path could be possible due to timely intervention of the government, the Minister said.

"When the whole of Europe was in turmoil because of recession, from October 2008 to November 2009, in almost 13 months, our exports had continuously gone downwards because Europe as a whole accounts for 36 per cent of our total export," he said.

Turning the 50 million-strong young workforce to skilful labour would help India take its rightful place in the international community, Mr. Mukherjee said while spelling out future strategies.
Using electricity to treat wastewater:

Scientists at the University of Utah have developed a new concept in water treatment. The researchers have made an electrobiochemical reactor in which a low electrical voltage is applied to microbes to help them quickly and efficiently remove pollutants from mining, industrial and agricultural wastewater. The patented electrobiochemical reactor (EBR) process replaces tons of chemicals with a small amount of electricity that feed microbes with electrons.
Govt honours 15 overseas Indians on Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

The Government on Sunday honoured 15 eminent overseas Indians in the valedictory function of the three-day-long Pravasi Bharatiya Divas. Activist Lata Pada, who fought for justice for victims of Air India’s Kanishka disaster, and Rajiv Seth, chief of the USAID and key member in US President Obama’s team, are among this year’s Pravasi Bharatiya Samman recipients.

Inaugurating the valedictory function, President Pratibha Patil called upon Indian Diaspora to participate in building a better future of India for the disadvantaged sections of society. She urged the overseas Indians to contribute their services in health and education sectors, in efforts to make India slum-free, as well as in the participation in infrastructure development projects.

The other recipients of Pravasi Bharatiya Samman are Governor General of New Zealand Sir Anand Satyanand, Professor Veena Hariharan Sahajwalla (Australia), Harindrapal Singh Banga (Hong Kong), Mohammad Munir Nazir Hasan (Pakistan), Pragya Singh (Malaysia), Amritpal Singh (Netherlands), Indian Community Benevolent Forum of Qatar, Mohaddin Syed Karimuddin of Saudi Arabia, Mano Selvaranthan (Sri Lanka), Mohan Jashanmal (UAE), Baroness Sandip Verma (UK) and Askeek Kumar Ramgara (USA). The awardees were selected by the jury headed by Vice-President Hamid Ansari.

Union Ministers Vayalar Ravi, B.K. Handique, Secretary, Ministry of North Eastern Region Jayati Chandra, Secretary, and Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs A.Didur Singh were also present on the occasion.

In the Chief Ministers’ interaction with overseas Indians, Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi said that Gujarat had brought a paradigm shift in the strategy for inclusive growth and during last whole decade. Urging the Diaspora to Gujarat he said: “We have made all out efforts to remove darkness of poverty, IMR-MMR rates, diseases and unemployment to bring happiness on the face of deprived.”

Bihar was represented by Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi. He said though there is a single window act in the State, there are several small windows behind that single window. “We discussed the issue with the Chief Minister last month and I can assure you before March 31 we will provide single window which will be actually functioning as single window,” he said.

His promise to potential investors came when one of the doctors currently based in United Kingdom expressed his frustration at having to run from one official to another to set up a super speciality hospital in the State.

Modi contended that things have changed for the better in Bihar and it is not the same as it used to be five years back. “About five years back people used to hide their Bihar identity. I know many people who used to say they belonged to some other place. Now things have completely changed,” said the Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar.