Mining industry must respect law, people’s interests: Mitra

Raiya Sabha member and Editor-In-Chief of The Pioneer Chandan Mitra observed here on Saturday that mining activity is necessary for growth of many States, including Odisha, but he frowned upon the prevalent practices in the industry which have become a byword for corruption and violation of law of the land.

He said that the problem has become so acute that now the corruption issues have taken the centrestage and pushed the challenges facing the industry to the status of fringe issues.

Mitra, who was speaking at the chief guest at the fifth anniversary celebration of fortnightly Industry and Mines Observer (IMO), said the mining industry is widely seen as trampling upon the rights and aspirations of the local people everywhere and the origin of the raging Maoist problem in many parts of the country can be traced to the un-redressed grievances of people affected by mining activity.

He appreciated the IMO for carrying on in the face of daunting financial and operational challenges and urged it to create awareness about local issues which is the major responsibility of the media.

State’s Revenue Minister Surjya Narayan Patro said the mining industry has contributed significantly to the spectacular growth in GDP logged by the State in recent times and hoped that if this trend continues Odisha would soon be recognised by people all over the world.

Bhubaneswar MP Prasanna Patasani complimented the journal for highlighting issues relating to use of the State’s natural resources.

Professor Sivaji Sarkar of the Indian Institute of Mass Communication congratulated the journal for establishing a good track record and cautioned it against the scourge of paid news which has tarnished the image of journalism in India.

Keonjhar MLA Suvarna Nayak requested the journal to present a comparative report of the loss and benefits of the local people due to mining activity.

IMO Editor Sirish Chandar Mohanty welcomed everybody at the beginning while publisher Amar Mohanty delivered the vote of thanks.