Illegal mining wrecking communities: HRW report

The rights body has blamed Indian government for encouraging ‘lawlessness’

Subir Ghosh @ BANGALORE

The Indian mining industry has spiraled out of control, and the government has miserably failed to regulate it. The scale of lawlessness in the multi-billion dollar industry is hard to assess, and the industry has not only fuelled corruption, but also wrecked havoc on both local communities as well as the environment.

This overview of the mining industry comes from a 70-page damning report – Out of Control: Mining, Regulatory Failure, and Human Rights in India, released by New York-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) on Thursday. The report lays the blame squarely on the Indian government. “It has encouraged lawlessness by failing to enforce law or even monitor whether mine operators are complying with them,” HRW said.

The report delves deep into the reasons for the state of dismal affairs – it says that deep-rooted shortcomings in the design and implementation of key policies have effectively left mine operators to supervise themselves. The pervasive lawlessness in the scandal-ridden mining industry is essentially the failure of governance.

The HRW report acknowledged it as a national problem, but narrowed down on illegal mining in Goa and Karnataka for its two well-documented case studies.

The report talks of an annual rate of 30 criminal acts for every legitimate mining operation in the country, and goes on to show how even mines operating with the approval of government regulators are able to violate the law with impunity.

HRW researchers visited iron mining areas in Goa and Karnataka and found that reckless mine operators had destroyed or contaminated water sources people depend on for drinking water and irrigation. In some cases, miners even heaped waste rock and other mine waste near the banks of streams and rivers, leaving it to be washed into local water supplies or agricultural fields during the monsoon rains.

If this was not all, some mine operators punctured the local water table and then simply discarded the vast torrents of water that escape—permanently destroying a resource that entire communities rely on. Some farmers complained that endless streams of overloaded ore trucks passing along narrow village roads had left their crops coated in thick layers of metallic dust, destroying them, and threatening economic ruin.

Yet, it is not the ministry of mines that has been castigated—it is the ministry of environment, and forests (MoEF) which has been singled out for criticism by HRW. It talks of crucial environmental impact assessment (EIA) reports being extremely inaccurate, deliberately falsified, or both. The most bizarre case cited is that of a mine in Maharashtra being cleared even though its EIA report contained large amounts of data taken verbatim from a similar report prepared for a bauxite mine in Russia.

The 2012 Mines and Minerals Development and Regulation (MMDR) Act, HRW asserts, may not eventually work since the draft legislation does not address many of the core problems described in the HRW report, and does not purport to either.

The law would require miners to share profits with impacted communities through special government mechanisms set up to manage the flow of funds to eligible people. If the new scheme works, it could dramatically improve conditions in mining-affected communities. But this statement comes with a warning. Since the issue is less about the capacity to monitor and more about accountability, the law’s success would depend on how rigorously and transparently the government oversees its implementation.
कॉफर के मूल्य में एक फीसदी बढ़त

लंदन के आखिरी दिन शुरुआत की लंदन मेटल एक्सचेंज में कॉफर के दाम को एक फीसदी बढ़ाए।

एक गलाम में तीन माह दूरी पर कॉफर बढ़कर 7,520 डॉलर प्रति टन हो गया। जबकि नियमित दर्जन के भाव 7,420 डॉलर प्रति टन रहे थे। कॉफर में गहराई को भी जेवी आई थी। इस तरह इस सतह कॉफर के दाम को उन्नी दोहरी फीसदी बढ़ गई।

प्रत्येकल हाई दर सतह के लुकायें नीतियों के बाद अगर यह पूरा पूरा किया जाए जीन की सिक्की उसमें से बाहर हो जाए तो ज्यादा का नीतीय मैत्री ने अपना रंग बदलने के लिए गोलवान न्यून रखी है।

इस संस्था में मेकिन्स से व्यापारी बढ़ने की उम्मीद बढ़ाई। इसी तरह हाई दर के कारण में यह भेंट मेटल के मूल्य में मजबूती दर्ज की गई।
पने की 2.1 टन खराब
बिकी ₹100 करोड़ में

जयपुर • पना खाना करने वाली कंपनी
जैम्योल्द्स ने जयपुर में खराब (रक्त) की नीलामी
प्रक्रिया को पूरा कर लिया है। कंपनी ने पांच दिन
अगली नीलामी में 2.10 टन पने की खराब को
तकरीबन 88 करोड़ रुपये में बेचा है। कंपनी
नीलामी के सफल कोचिंडलाउंग और कंपनी का
खुलासा सम्मान को करता है।

जयपुर देश में सबसे बड़ी पना माफी है।
इस्लाम खाना वर्ष 2009 में जैम्योल्द्स जयपुर
में पना की खराब की नीलामी कर रही है। जयपुर
के अलावा किंग्सपूर में भी कंपनी पने की खराब की
नीलामी करती है। जैम्योल्द्स पंजाब के केंद्रीय निगम
में फ्रांस के मुद्देशिक जयपुर
में अल्मोद नीलामी में जामिया की काम खाने
से निम्नांती पने की खराब के अलावा बाथर से
मिश्रण मुख्य गाजो को रखा गया था। काम के 
में कंपनी के राजा जामिया सस्कार की भी 25%
जीती हिस्सेदारी है। जयपुर में एक पने की कटिंग
म विलक्षण के बाद मिल्किंग बात है। ग्रामीणों
में भी इसका उपयोग होता है। (बूटी)
वेदांत अल्यूमिनियम ने लार्सन एंड डूबों द्वारा प्रबन्धित कंपनी रेकाल अल्यूमिनियम में 24.5 प्रतिशत हिस्सेदारी खरीद ली है। यह मूल्य 200.70 करोड़ रुपये में हुआ है।
रेकाल के पास उड़ीसा में बाल्स्माइट खनन के अधिकार हैं। यह अभिव्यक्ति चर्चायें तत्काल में जिया जाएगा।
जानकारी के मुद्दे में लार्सन एंड डूबों द्वारा उड़ीसा के सिर्जामाली व कुर्मामली से निकाला गया समूचा बाल्स्माइट रेकाल ने वेदांत अल्यूमिनियम को ही फिरोजाबाद जेलो खजानों में 25 ते 28 करोड़ टन बाल्स्माइट भंडार लेने का अनुमान लगाया जा रहा है।
Sponge iron units down shutters

Shortage of ore, high cost at e-auctions have forced small and medium companies in Karnataka to close operations

MAHESH KULKARNI
Bangalore, 15 June

Sponge iron manufacturing units and induction furnaces have come to a halt in Karnataka, parts of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, following severe shortage of iron ore and the high price at e-auctions.

"Manufacturers earlier bought ore at ₹1,200-1,500 per tonne, including all charges. Ever since, the e-auctions began, ore was sold at ₹2,700 a tonne, which the small and medium companies could not afford," said a sponge iron maker.

Barring three to four large units, which could afford to buy ore at e-auctions, the remaining 50-odd units have closed, leading to job loss of approximately 20,000. In Bellary district alone, there are about 50 units and the rest are spread in Koppal district.

The Supreme Court had ordered closure of mining in Karnataka with effect from July 29, 2011, after large-scale illegal mining was reported in the state.

This had had a cascading effect on the entire value chain. It not only caused closure of sponge iron units, but also resulted in shortage of raw material for many induction furnaces and electric arc furnaces that manufacture torsteel (bars used in construction) and billets. There are a lot of such units in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, dependent on sponge iron from units in Karnataka, Basant Poddar, vice-chairman, Federation of Indian Mineral Industries, south said.

"Typically, sponge iron units consume hard iron ore lumps or pellets as key raw material. Since mining was banned here, these units have no access to lumps. Whatever lumps were sold in the e-auctions were consumed by large steel mills and these units could not pay such a heavy price to buy them. Also, they cannot use soft lumps or iron ore fines and, hence, had to shut shop," he said.

Presently, only NMDC is producing iron ore and big steel mills like JSW Steel, Kalyani Steel and Sesa Goa, among others buy all the lumps.

There are 51 medium scale sponge iron units in Karnataka, with a combined production capacity of 12,600 tonnes per day (4.5 mt per annum). Karnataka-based sponge iron units contribute 20 per cent of the national production, at 22 mt per annum. The units also contribute about ₹3,000 crore to ₹5,000 crore a year to both state and national exchequer by way of several taxes.
Hong Kong Bourse Agrees to Acquire LME for £1.4 b

The deal underlines shift in manufacturing's centre of gravity to Asia

DENNY THOMAS & SUSAN THOMAS
HONG KONG | LONDON

The Hong Kong stock exchange agreed to pay £1.4 billion (£2.18 billion) to buy the 136-year-old London Metal Exchange, the world's biggest marketplace for industrial metals, underlining the shift in manufacturing's centre of gravity to Asia. The deal on Friday — still subject to approval by LME shareholders, who may well reject it — would give Asia's largest bourse a much-needed entry into a commodity trading platform and brings LME members closer to China, the world's biggest metals buyer.

Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing will finance the acquisition of the exchange, where total traded value was $15.4 trillion last year through its existing funds and with a $1.1 billion bank loan, it said in a statement. “This is a transformational milestone for Hong Kong,” HKEx chief executive Charles Li told a presentation for analysts.

HKEx beat US commodities exchange InterContinental Exchange in the final nail-biting stages of a contest that started last September with around 15 expressions of interest. At the LME, men in suits and a few women still use arcane hand signals to conduct open outcry trade in copper, aluminum, lead, nickel, tin and zinc around a circular floor in a bland-fronted building on Leadenhall Street, near the Bank of England. These traditions are prized as an accurate price discovery mechanism although business is also conducted electronically and over the telephone. “You have the biggest exchange, the biggest market and a lot of inefficiencies,” said Li, a former journalist and JPMorgan China banker, celebrating the win.

“We as HK exchange are trying to breach that (gap), especially today with China's accelerated capital (moves). We are in the best position to address those market inefficiencies and that translates to greater revenue.” The board of the LME was unanimous in its decision to endorse the Hong Kong bid, which will be put to a LME shareholder vote that is likely before the end of July. “ICE was a fantastic runner-up and they fought the good fight, but the love of all things eastern is what won it in the end,” LME board member Michael Overlander said. — Reuters
Copper gains in LME trade

Reuters
London/Shanghai, June 15
London copper climbed more than 1 per cent on Friday, on track for its first weekly rise in
seven, on expectations central banks will inject liquidity should the results of weekend
elections in Greece unleash havoc in financial markets.

Three-month copper on the
London Metal Exchange traded
up at $7,520 a tonne in offi
cial midday rings from a close
of $7,420. It is up for a second
straight day and headed for a
gain of around 2.5 per cent for
the week.
China's spot copper demand
has improved from previous
months but remains at low lev
els, traders said.
Copper has fallen by more
than 14 per cent from its 2012
peak of $8,765 touched in Feb
uary.
In other metals, soldering
metal tin was untraded in rings
but last bid at $19,500 a tonne
from $19,635, while zinc, used
in galvanizing, traded at $1,902
from $1,892.
Battery material lead traded
at $1,930 a tonne from $1,920,
while aluminium was last bid
at $1,951 from $1,954, having
earlier hit its lowest since July
2010 at $1,950. Stainless-steel
ingredient nickel traded at
$16,685 from $16,655.
Pending green clearances hold back 70 mt output for Coal India

31 cases pending with States, 19 with Environment Ministry

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Only two out of eight subsidiaries of Coal India – Northern Coalfields Ltd and North Eastern Coalfields – are left with no pending forestry and environmental approvals.

Siddhartha P Saiika
New Delhi, June 14

Nearly 69.635 million tonnes of Coal India Ltd’s output is stuck due to pending forestry and environmental clearances.

“A total of 50 cases of stage-II clearances are pending across six subsidiaries of Coal India. Out of these, 31 cases are pending with different State Governments and another 19 cases are stuck at Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF),” said a Coal Ministry official.

Projects getting delayed due to forest and environmental clearances were discussed at a high-level meeting chaired by the Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, recently.

“The Coal Minister, Mr Srijit Nalawat, has asked the Coal Secretary, Mr S.K. Srivastava, to take up each case with the States concerned and the Environment Ministry to hasten the pending clearances,” the official added.

Out of the pending approvals, the worst hit is South Eastern Coalfields Ltd (SECL) whose 30 forestry approvals are stuck. Of these, 15 are with State Governments and 12 are with the Environment Ministry, resulting in 46.26 million tonnes of coal not being mined.

Only two out of eight subsidiaries of Coal India – Northern Coalfields Ltd and North Eastern Coalfields – are left with no pending forestry and environmental approvals.

In the stage-I of forestry clearance, an in-principle agreement is signed between the Government and the miner for allotment of the mining area. Thereafter, in stage-II the land is formally handed over to the miner for exploitation after the company deposits its required fees and completes other formalities such as rehabilitation of households and plantation of equal number of trees displaced, among others.

Coal India targets to produce 464.10 million tonnes of coal in 2012-13. Last fiscal, it produced 436 million tonnes.

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Reuters

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भूगोलिक अध्ययन में मिली जानकारी

उत्तराखंद-हिमाचल में यूरेनियम का भंडार

देहरादून के वैज्ञानिकों को कौनसी रंग लाई तो बिजली और अन्य ऊर्जा संयंत्रों का कार्यकाल हद तक समाप्त हो जाएगा। उत्तराखंद के बायोलैब जनरल विश्व के रूप में हिमालय, नगरियाँ और विश्वविद्यालय में भी भूगोलिक अध्ययन के दौरान यूरेनियम मिलने की संभावना समझते हैं। इसके बाद ही वैज्ञानिकों ने यहां काम शुरू कर दिया है।

यूरेनियम का उपयोग ऊर्जा की दूरक से बेहद आम है। कैलियम परमाणु ऊर्जा ही नहीं ही बिजली विद्युत ऊर्जा की दूरक से भी। इसके महत्वपूर्ण बाल हैं वहां पार में इस दिशा में बहुत आम सब्सिलिंग होने वाले हैं।

भारत की गत के के यहां तक रहे कहने का एक ट्रांगुस यूरेनियम विद्युत पत्रिका की संभावना जादा है। हर चार वर्षों में देश के तरफ से यूरेनियम विद्युत के, महत्व निर्माण के लिए, यहां ब्रेक ब्रेक का प्रदर्शन किया जाता है। अन्तर्देश, आधुनिक, अन्य और कार्टेक के नाम ही इस दिशा में सबसे आगे है। उत्तराखंद और हिमाचल प्रदेश में यूरेनियम के साथ-साथ नगरियां में ग्रहण के रूप में उच्च सभापति की भी संभावना जाती जाती है। दोनों राज्यों के उच्च अंतर वर्षों में विश्व विद्यालय यहां इन्हें विद्युत पत्रिका में इनके महत्व के रूप में होने की एक समाप्ति आते हैं।