TOP PANEL ASKS CENTRE TO TAKE UP NALCO LEASE

New Delhi: A parliamentary panel has expressed displeasure over delays in NALCO's expansion plans mainly due to failure to get leases for bauxite and coal mining in Odisha, and has asked the mines ministry to take up the matter at the highest level with the state government.

Investment to the tune of ₹6,500 crore for state-run NALCO third phase expansion has been put on hold due to difficulties in acquiring mining leases for Pottangi bauxite deposit in Odisha with reserves of 75 million tonnes and Ulkad-E coal block.

"The committee are constrained to observe that no significant progress has been made ... Early development of above projects is significant in view of ongoing expansion plan of the company. The Centre should take up this matter at highest level with the government of Odisha," the committee said. The committee in its report, tabled in the Lok Sabha, also directed the aluminium maker to "come up with compensation packages and proper implementation of rehabilitation and resettlement policy." — PTI
Zinc, lead markets in surplus

Pressure on prices through 2012

The surplus was mainly the result of enhanced production in China, India, Mexico and Russia.

G. Chandra Sekhar
Mumbai, Dec. 19
Barring occasional bouts of spurt, international zinc and lead prices have been under downward pressure since the beginning of this year. The market fundamentals are weak because of surplus resulting from excess of expected production over consumption.

A year ago, on the LME, zinc was trading at about $2,500 a tonne and as recently as a month ago at $2,000/l. On December 14, LME cash quote was $1,911/l.

Confirming the state of market surplus for zinc, the International Lead and Zinc Study Group (ILZSG) in its latest data (October 2011) said global supply of refined zinc metal exceeded demand by 3,08,000 tonnes over the period January-October 2011. The total reported inventory levels increased by 2,70,000 tonnes during the period.

At 10.68 million tonnes (mt), global zinc mine production was 6.6 higher in the first 10 months of this year, ILZSG pointed out adding this was mainly the consequence of enhanced production in China, India, Kazakhstan, Mexico and the Russian Federation that more than balanced a significant decrease in Peru.

TRENDS IN CHINA
Similarly, a 2.1 per cent increase in refined zinc metal output to 10.82 mt was primarily due to higher production in China, India, the Republic of Korea and Peru. On metal usage, the study group pointed out an increase of 1.3 per cent to 10.51 mt during January-October 2011 following an increase in European demand and Chinese usage, while demand in the US fell 11 per cent. The world zinc market is likely to stay in surplus in 2012 also. Trends in China’s property construction have an important bearing on zinc demand.

There is widespread belief that tight credit will translate to slowing growth rate in China’s property investment. Additionally, Europe continues to be a region of grave concern with an industrial recession looking nearly imminent.

So, overall, world zinc prices continue to remain vulnerable to further downturn in macro sentiment. It is however unclear if there would be supply responses that may stem the price slide.

LEAD PRICES
Market prices have been under pressure for several months now. LME cash was $2,069/l on December 14 versus price of $2,400/l a year ago. Lead is extensively used in batteries, mainly automobile batteries.

The world market for refined lead showed a surplus of 1,59,000 tonnes over the first 10 months of this year, as per data compiled by ILZSG. Reported stock levels increased by 2,32,000 tonnes during the period.

World lead mine output increased by 8.7 per cent to 3.73 mt principally due to higher output in China, India, Ireland and the Russian Federation which more than offset decline in Australia, Peru and the US. As for refined lead metal production, an increase of 6.8 per cent to nearly 8.50 mt was accounted for by China, India, Germany and the US. China and the US have led in refined lead metal consumption so far with 11 per cent and 10 per cent respectively taking global metal usage to 8.34 mt so far.

In 2012 too, the world market for lead is likely to be in a state of surplus. This means, lead prices have extremely limited upside potential. A modest pick-up in battery production in China and preparation for the winter replacement season in Europe and the US outweigh economic concerns, analysts have remarked.
Investing in Afghan mines

The SAIL-led consortium, which has won the bid for Hajigak iron ore mines in Afghanistan, would invest around $11 billion in developing the project over the next eight to 10 years. The consortium has proposed to set up a 6 million tonne per annum steel plant in two phases of 3 million tpa each, a 1,000 MW power plant and a road-rail link of about 200 km from the mines to the plant site, besides developing the required infrastructure. The consortium comprises public sector companies led by SAIL, NMDC and RINL, whereas the private sector players include JSW Steel, JSW Ispat, Jindal Steel & Power and Monnet Ispat & Energy.
Eldorado to buy European Goldfields for $2.4 billion

European Goldfields said it had agreed to be bought by Eldorado Gold for about C$2.5 billion ($2.4 billion). The deal represents a 40.4% premium based on both companies' closing share prices on Toronto's main stock index as of December 5, the last trading day before European Goldfields said it had received preliminary approaches from third parties. European Goldfields shareholders will be offered 0.85 Eldorado share and C$0.0001 in cash for each European Goldfields share they own.
आयुर्विज्ञान मंत्री ने बेंच प्रसाद से मुलाकात की।

जिन्हें जननीयक बेंच में सहभागिता बढ़ाने के उद्देश्य से जैक्स मुनाफ्त मंत्री बेंच प्रसाद द्वारा भारत के दौरे पर आए आस्ट्रेलिया के कैय्जर और निगम सेवा मंत्री शिखर गंगोक्त ने कहा कि भारत में हेल्सेल में 80 प्रतिशत वोकिंग कोलों आस्ट्रेलिया से समाप्त हो चुका है। इस निस्तार से आस्ट्रेलिया भारत के वित्त और व्यवसाय के स्तर का एक उद्धरण सहभागी है। भारत में आस्ट्रेलियन निवेश से भारतीय कंपनियों को आस्ट्रेलिया में खेती के अवसरों में भाग लेने की अवधि है।