

विद्युत परियोजनाओं की बड़े पैमाने पर मंजूरी पर उठे सवाल

केंद्रीय पर्यावरण एवं वन मंत्रालय ने 2,10,000 मेगावाट ताप विद्युत क्षमता की मंजूरी दी

भाषा सिंह

नई दिल्ली। देश में बिजली उत्पादन की जितनी क्षमता है उससे सात गुना ज्यादा क्षमता की परियोजनाओं को हरी झंडी दी गई। 11वीं पंचवर्षीय योजना ने 50 हजार मेगावाट ताप विद्युत क्षमता और 12वीं पंचवर्षीय योजना ने 100,000 मेगावाट का लक्ष्य रखा है, जबकि अगस्त 2011 तक केंद्रीय पर्यावरण एवं वन मंत्रालय ने 2,10,000 मेगावाट ताप विद्युत क्षमता की मंजूरी दी। यानी 2017 तक जितनी क्षमता प्रस्तावित है उससे 60 हजार मेगावाट ज्यादा की मंजूरी मिल चुकी है। इतनी तेजी से जिन परियोजनाओं के लिए मंजूरी दी जा रही है उस पर जमीनी अमल का हाल बदतर है। अभी तक ताप विद्युत क्षमता में महज 32,394 मेगावाट का ही इजाफा हुआ है।

यही हाल कोयले के खनन, स्टील और सीमेंट से संबंधित परियोजनाओं को दी गई मंजूरी का है। हर क्षेत्र में मंजूरी की रफ्तार जितनी क्षमता की जरूरत है उससे

■ 2017 तक जितनी क्षमता प्रस्तावित है उससे 60 हजार मेगावाट ज्यादा की मंजूरी मिल चुकी है

कई गुणा ज्यादा है। ऐसे में आखिर क्यों ये हंगामा मचाया जा रहा है कि पर्यावरण की मंजूरी से अड़चन के चलते देश को कोयला, बिजली, सीमेंट आदि के खनन में विकास नहीं हो रहा।

इस सच को उजागर करने वाले आंकड़ों को पेश करने वाली रिपोर्ट जारी करते हुए सेंटर फॉर साइंस एंड एनवायरमेंट (सीएसई) ने केंद्र सरकार से मांग की है कि तुरंत प्रभाव से मंजूरी पर रोक लगाने की मांग की है। सीएसई की सुनीता नारायण ने गुरुवार को कहा कि हैरानी इस बात की है कि पिछले पांच सालों में बेतहाशा मंजूरीयां दी गई हैं, जो एक तरह से बेलगाम हैं, फिर भी देश भर में यह झूठा प्रचार किया गया कि पर्यावरण मंजूरी से विकास रुका है। यह सरासर भ्रामक बात है। पर्यावरण

एवं वन मंत्रालय की मंजूरीयों में और वन भूमि का हस्तांतरण खनन, सिंचाई की परियोजनाओं को सबसे ज्यादा हिस्सा है, स्कूल, पानी आदि के लिए न्यूनतम किया गया। 11वीं पंचवर्षीय योजना में वन जमीन का जो कुल हस्तांतरण किया गया उसमें से खनन परियोजनाओं के लिए 24.4 फीसदी, सिंचाई की बड़ी परियोजनाओं के लिए 13.1 फीसदी की गई, जबकि सामाजिक सेवा, पुनर्वास आदि योजनाओं के लिए महज 1.7 फीसदी किया गया। सबसे ज्यादा कोयले की खनन परियोजनाओं को लेकर हंगामा पिछले कुछ सालों से बना हुआ है। यह बताया जा रहा है कि पर्यावरण मंजूरी की अड़चनों से कोयले की कमी हो गई है जबकि हकीकत यह है कि पिछले पांच सालों में पर्यावरण मंत्रालय की तरफ से जितनी मंजूरी मिली है, वह मौजूदा क्षमता को दोगुनी करने वाली है। सीएसई के चंद्रभूषण का कहना है कि जितने बड़े पैमाने पर मंजूरी दी जा रही हैं वह गंभीर चिंता का विषय है और इस पर तुरंत रोक लगनी चाहिए।

नजरिया

नदी किनारे खनन में हैं खतरे बहुत

रेत और पत्थरों के लिए नदियों का खनन पर्यावरण को भारी
नुकसान पहुंचा रहा है।

भारत डोगरा
सामाजिक कार्यकर्ता



नदियां हमें जल तथा जीवन देती हैं और एक पूरी संस्कृति भी। लेकिन समस्या यह है कि हम इससे कहीं ज्यादा चाहते हैं और इसी से कई परेशानियां खड़ी होती हैं। उदाहरण जानना हो, तो गंगा के किनारे चल रहे स्टोन क्रशर्स को देखिए। उत्तराखंड उच्च न्यायालय भी इन खतरों के प्रति आगाह कर चुका है, लेकिन किसी के कानों पर जूं नहीं रेंग रही है। इसी मसले को लेकर हरिद्वार में स्वामी निगमानंद ने अनशन किया था और जान दे दी थी। वैसे यह मसला सिर्फ गंगा का नहीं है, अन्य नदियों के साथ भी यही व्यवहार हो रहा है। यमुना किनारे के खनन से उत्तर प्रदेश में कुछ स्थानों पर बाढ़ की समस्या भी बढ़ी है। बुंदेलखंड की नदियों में खनन ने भारी तबाही मचाई है।

नदी किनारे का खनन पर्यावरण के लिए विशेष रूप से संवेदनशील होता है। यदि नदी किनारे के पत्थरों को भारी मशीनों से निकाल लिया जाए, तो नदी गहरी हो जाती है और आसपास के गांवों का भू-जल उसकी ओर आ जाता है, जिससे गांवों के कुएं और हैंडपंप सूखने लगते हैं। साथ ही नदी के पानी की कटान क्षमता बढ़ने लगती है, जिससे आसपास के खेतों, वनों आदि की भूमि का कटाव तेज हो जाता है। इन पत्थरों को तोड़ने, गिट्टी बनाने के क्रशर आसपास के गांवों में लगने से जो धूल उत्पन्न होती है, उससे सिलिकोसिस, दमा व टीबी जैसी बीमारियां बढ़ती हैं। खेत, बाग-बगीचे

उजड़ते हैं। आसपास के अनेक गांव तो कई बार इसी से तबाह हो जाते हैं।

नदियों के किनारे खनन सिर्फ पत्थरों का ही नहीं होता, बड़े पैमाने पर नदी की रेत भी निकाली जाती है। नदी के आसपास की रेत में प्रायः वर्षा के जल को धरती में संजोने की अद्भुत क्षमता होती है और इस रेत के बड़े पैमाने पर खनन से भू-जल संग्रहण क्षमता कम हो जाती है। फलस्वरूप, नदियां जल्दी सूख जाती हैं। वर्षा के दिनों में जल आसपास के इलाके में बाढ़ के रूप में फैलने लगता है। खनन के लिए जो ट्रक व मशीनें आती हैं, उनके कारण जो गड्ढेनुमा रास्ते बन जाते हैं, वे बाढ़ के पानी को आसपास के क्षेत्र में और तेजी से पहुंचाते हैं। गड्ढों में जमा पानी में मच्छर वगैरह पलते हैं और मलेरिया, डेंगू जैसी बीमारियों का खतरा बढ़ता है।

नदी किनारे के खनन को पूरी तरह रोक पाना शायद अभी संभव नहीं हो, लेकिन इसके लिए एक स्पष्ट नीति तो अपनानी ही होगी। लोग अगर अपने छोटे-मोटे कामों के लिए रेत या पत्थर आदि ले जाते हैं, तो इससे बहुत फर्क शायद न पड़े, लेकिन दिक्कत तब आती है, जब इस काम को भारी पैमाने पर किया जाता है और इसके लिए भारी मशीनरी, बड़े ट्रकों आदि का इस्तेमाल होता है। इनके इस्तेमाल पर रोक से ही बहुत हद तक कामयाबी हासिल की जा सकती है।

(ये लेखक के अपने विचार हैं)

एनएमडीसी ने किया 92 करोड़ रुपये का सौदा

नई दिल्ली। सरकारी क्षेत्र की एनएमडीसी ने ऑस्ट्रेलिया स्थित लीगेसी आयरन ओर की 50 फीसदी हिस्सेदारी अधिग्रहीत करने का समझौता किया है। यह सौदा करीब 1.9 करोड़ ऑस्ट्रेलियाई डॉलर का है। एनएमडीसी पहली बार किसी विदेशी कंपनी का अधिग्रहण कर रही है।



National Aluminium Co. Ltd. (NALCO) bagged PSE Excellence Award 2011 for corporate social responsibility and responsiveness in Maharatna and Navratna category. B. L. Bagra, CMD, NALCO received the award from Bhaskar Chatterjee, Secretary, Department of Public Enterprises during the summit on 'India Public Sector Agenda at 2020' in New Delhi.

NMDC to buy 50% in Aussie firm

BLACK GOLD ₹92.2-cr deal to be approved in November



■ NMDC's deal is its first-ever overseas acquisition

HT Correspondent

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NEW DELHI: India's largest iron ore miner National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) said on Thursday that Australia's Legacy Iron Ore has accepted its bid for a 50% stake in what would be the first-overseas iron ore mine acquisition by an Indian public sector firm.

"We are in the last stage of our first overseas acquisition and they (Legacy) have already accepted our bid," said Rana Som, chairman, NMDC. "Now it is only a matter of their shareholders approving the sale. We are also in the final stages of acquiring assets in the US and Russia."

Legacy Iron Ore, which is listed in the Australian Stock Exchange, put the valuation of the deal at A\$ 18.9 (₹92.2 crore) for a 50% stake in the firm. It is likely to be approved in November. The Australian firm based in Perth holds prospective iron ore tenements in both the central Yilgarn and Pilbara areas of Western Australia.

NMDC's success notwithstanding, public sector undertakings (PSUs) have a poor track record of acquiring mineral assets. A consortium of steel, mining and power companies, International Coal Ventures Ltd (ICVL), which was formed two years ago specifically for this purpose has

little to show by way of achievements.

"Many private firms from India such as Aditya Birla, Lanco, GVK have done very well at picking up properties here," said Ivor Roberts, executive director, department of mines and petroleum, government of Western Australia.

"We have seen a lot of interest from public sector firms as well but they have shown a relative lack of risk taking abilities and also are not able to match the high valuation. Chinese PSUs have been more proactive," he said.

The region is one of the most productive and diversified mineral and petroleum regions in the world, with more than 50 mineral and petroleum products being produced in commercial quantities worth around \$63 billion annually.

Mining was the main contributor to its economy in 2009-10, valued at \$51.0 billion.

"In the last couple of years, prices of coking coal have been so high that the valuation of all properties has gone up," said C S Verma, chairman, ICVL and Steel Authority of India Ltd. "Under the current conditions it is not feasible to buy assets as the expectations from sellers is very high. But still we are in an advanced stage in 3-4 cases and by the end of this financial year we will have something to show for our efforts."

STEEL MINISTRY SEEKS HIGHER EXPORT DUTY ON IRON ORE

HT Correspondent

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NEW DELHI: The ministry of steel on Thursday said it has written to the finance ministry seeking an increase in an export duty on iron ore from 20% to 30% to conserve mineral resources for the steel sector.

"We have written to the finance ministry to increase the export duty as it is necessary to conserve our mineral resources," said Beni Prasad Verma, steel minister. "We have sought an increase in duty on both fines and lumps. So far we have not received a response from the finance ministry."

Verma also said that the ministry is formulating a new steel policy and will look at a comprehensive policy framework for all issues related to the sector. The policy will be ready by the end of this year.

"There are 4 sub-groups working on various aspects of the industry," said PK Misra, secretary, steel ministry. "They will submit their reports by the middle of the next month after which work will start on the formulating the final policy. The need for a new policy was felt as the old policy estimated a demand growth of 7.0% during the last decade while, the actual growth was higher at around 9.5%. The new policy would take a broader and updated view."

RUPEE DEPRECIATION IMPACT ON COMMODITIES

BENEFITS OF FALL IN GLOBAL PRICES NULLIFIED

DILIP KUMAR JHA
Mumbai, 22 September

The rupee's depreciation has nullified the benefit of the ongoing fall in global commodities' prices for India Inc. Especially so with dollar-denominated commodities like gold, silver, copper and vegetable oils. They continue to remain costlier in India, despite a drastic decline in the prices of these commodities globally.

The Indian currency has depreciated by 8.28 per cent so far this month to hit a new year's low and closed at 49.58 against the dollar today, as global risk aversion prompted investors to move into safer assets like debt.

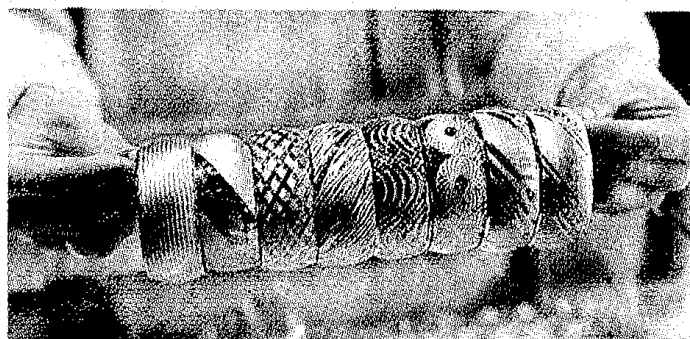
The greenback climbed to a seven-month high against major global currencies after the US Federal Reserve

flagged "significant downside risks" to the US economy, but stopped short of bold monetary easing.

"India is set to get no benefit of the fall in commodities' prices which started a few days ago. Those who import commodities like crude oil, vegetable oil, etc, will have to pay more for imports. Inflation in these sectors is bound to increase," said Madan Sabnavis, chief economist, Care Ratings.

Gold prices in India did fall, though, following a similar trend in global markets. Still, the fall was limited. The intensity of fall in the global commodity was capped because of the depreciating rupee, said Naveen Mathur, associate director, Angel Broking.

In the London spot market, gold has fallen 7.96 per cent since the beginning of this month, to trade at \$1,733 an oz



ERODING GAINS

Price change of major commodities

Commodity	September 2	September 22	Change (%)
Gold (\$/oz)	1,882.88	1,733.0	-7.96
Gold (₹/10g)	27,610.0	28,030.0	1.52
Silver (\$/oz)	43.25	36.85	-14.79
Silver (₹/kg)	64,670.0	63,405.0	-1.95
₹/\$	45.79	49.58	-8.28
Copper (\$/tonne)	9,050.5	7,790.5	-14.0
Copper (₹/kg)	495.0	478.0	-3.34

early this afternoon, as compared to \$1,882.88 on September 2. Indian consumers missed this benefit due to the rupee's

behaviour. In fact, gold in rupee terms rose 1.52 per cent to close today at ₹28,030 per 10g, as compared to ₹27,610 per 10g

at the beginning of this month.

"There will be no impact on overall demand, as jewellers hedge their position at the price booked by consumers. Since the festive season is on, the demand is likely to rise by at least 15 per cent in volume and 40-45 per cent in value terms. But, yes, for the same quantity, consumers will have to pay more," said Rajesh Mehta, chairman of India's leading gold jewellery exporter, Rajesh Exports.

Similarly, the price of silver has declined this month from \$43.25 an oz to \$36.85 an oz, a fall of 14.8 per cent. The decline was moderated in rupee terms to close at ₹63,405 a kg here today, from ₹64,670 a kg on September 2.

Copper wire bar in Mumbai closed at ₹478 a kg today, a decline of 3.3 per cent, as compared to ₹495 a kg at the be-

ginning of this month. In the same period, however, on the benchmark London Metal Exchange (LME), it recorded a decline of nearly 14 per cent to settle today at \$7,790.50 a tonne from \$9,050.5 a tonne. For

some global commodities, we will have to pay more, which may result in higher inflation," said D K Joshi, an economist with Crisil, the rating agency.

Reuters adds: US crude futures fell

sharply on Thursday as weak economic signals added to the increasing worries about slowing economic growth and a stronger dollar pressured dollar-denominated oil prices. On the New York Mercantile Exchange, November crude fell \$4.08, or 4.9 per cent, to \$81.84 a barrel. ICE Brent November crude fell \$4.14 to \$106.22 a barrel by 1238 GMT, having traded from \$105.87 to \$109.50.

**THANKS TO THE
RUPEE PLUNGE,
fall in the prices of
dollar-denominated
products abroad
cannot yield much
benefits here**



CEC SEEKS CBI PROBE

ILLEGAL MINING IN NMDC'S BELLARY LEASE AREA UNDER SCANNER

MAHESH KULKARNI
Bangalore, 22 September

The Central Empowered Committee (CEC) has recommended an investigation by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) into alleged illegal activities in Bellary district of Karnataka where Associated Mining Company (AMC) and NMDC Ltd hold mining leases.

The CEC gave its latest report to the Supreme Court today. According to the report, the joint team appointed by the apex court to conduct a survey and demarcate the boundaries, has found massive illegal mining by third parties within the lease area of NMDC Ltd. The company had voluntarily suspended mining activities in the area in September 2009.

The Supreme Court will hear the matter tomorrow. In relation to another lease of NMDC Ltd, the joint team

found an overburden dump outside the sanctioned lease area. The tailings dam, built before October 25, 1980, was being used for non-forestry purposes without obtaining approval under the Forest Conservation Act, 1980.

"It continued mining operations in the forest area after

expiry of its sanctioned lease period on November 3, 2008, whereas the approval under the FC Act was granted by the state government only on August 25, 2011," the CEC said.

The CEC is, however, of the view that NMDC Ltd be allowed to continue mining as it is in the interest of the steel in-

dustry, which is facing raw material shortages. It said the operations will have to be strictly monitored and iron ore produced from these two mining leases will be sold only through e-auction by the monitoring committee, which will disburse 80 per cent of the sale proceeds to NMDC Ltd.

The e-auction of iron ore pertaining to these two mining leases was not likely to cause any financial loss to the company. On the contrary, it may result in the realisation of better sale price and consequently additional revenues of not less than a few hundreds of crores of rupees, said the report.

The CEC said AMC, owned by former tourism minister of Karnataka G Janardhan Reddy and his wife, Laxmi Aruna, had allegedly got an expired lease extended. It also extracted one million tonnes ore from just about 10.12 hectares, more than the quantity mentioned in the transit permits. The joint team found illegalities in respect of the said mining lease by way of the illegal grant of renewal of mining lease; the existing locations of the boundary pillars being completely different from the sanctioned lease sketch. The CEC is firmly of the view that CBI should investigate the alleged illegalities in the area.

NMDC to buy 50% stake in Legacy for A\$18.89 mn

BS REPORTER
Hyderabad, 22 September

STATE-OWNED NMDC Limited has moved closer to acquiring 50 per cent stake in Australian mining firm Legacy Iron Ore for A\$18.89 million. This will be the first of its long shopping list of similar acquisitions lined up for Australia.

In a filing to the Australian Securities Exchange

(ASX), Legacy Iron Ore said: "The board has now agreed to a proposal from NMDC, which involves NMDC subscribing for approximately A\$18.89 in equity for 50 per cent of Legacy." Legacy holds a mining lease in an area with 616 million tonnes of iron ore, according to preliminary estimates.

Interestingly, the deal amount is way below the previous projection of A\$32-40

million (₹150-200 crore) estimated by the industry.

The value indicated will be for a minimum allocation of approximately 238 million shares, with the final number of shares to be issued and the deemed subscription price being subject to the total shares on issue at the time NMDC and Legacy execute the formal subscription agreement, said the filing.

NMDC to buy 50% in Oz firm

press trust of india

NEW DELHI, 22 SEPT: State-owned iron ore miner NMDC today struck a deal to acquire a 50 per cent stake in Australian exploration firm Legacy Iron Ore for Australian \$18.89 million (about Rs 92 crore) marking its first-ever overseas acquisition.

With this acquisition, NMDC joins the club of Adani Group, GVK and Lanco Infratech, who have acquired natural resource assets in Australia.

Last week, GVK group had said it had entered into a deal with Hancock Coal to acquire latter's assets for \$1.26 billion.

"It may look small, but in a very very humbled way, we have made a beginning in Australia. This is going to be our launching platform there," NMDC chairman Mr Rana Som told reporters here.

"Management control is going to be with us, we are going there precisely as a strategic partner. With our mining skill and investment ability, we have been able to really acquire it at a very very minimum price," he added.

The announcement was made today after Legacy's board approved the bid of NMDC and recommended it to the company shareholders.

In a filing to the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX), Legacy Iron said: "The board has now agreed to a proposal from NMDC, which involves NMDC subscribing for approximately Australian \$18.89 million (approximately Rs 92.21 crore, at an exchange rate of Rs 48.81 per Australian \$) in equity for 50 per cent of Legacy". "The proposal is subject to Legacy shareholders' approval, as well as other legal and regulatory approvals," it said.

Raja again: Gave green nod to 169 mines in Goa

Snehal Rebello and Ketaki Ghogre

✉ letters@hindustantimes.com

PANAJI (GOA): Former telecom minister, A Raja, who is now in Tihar jail in the 2G spectrum case, had given environmental clearances for 169 mines in Goa during his five-year stint as union environment minister.

Documents accessed by HT reveal that these clearances were given to private companies between May 2004 and May 2009 by the ministry of environment and forests (MoEF) to extract about 60 million tonnes of iron ore annually.

Many of the environment impact assessment (EIA) studies on the basis of which the MoEF gave these clearances have proved to be inaccurate, not reflecting the actual position on the ground, HT has learnt.

For instance, EIA reports submitted by a mining firm at Sancordem did not even mention river Ragado, which flows for 7 km through the village. Similarly, clearances were granted despite mining companies bit submitting information on biodiversity or the accurate distance of their mines from water bodies and wildlife sanctuaries.

"Raja's tenure as environment minister was the beginning of the phase of growth of mineral exploitation and of new proj-

RULES VIOLATED

- ✱ A Raja gave environment clearances to 169 mines in Goa between May 2004 and May 2009 when he was the union environment minister

- ✱ Private companies allowed to annually extract around 60 million tonnes of iron ore

- ✱ The go-aheads were based on inaccurate environment impact assessment reports

- ✱ 25% of the ore extracted in Goa mined without environment clearances, says state PAC chairman Manohar Parrikar

- ✱ Illegal mining has cost the state at least ₹3,000 crore. Some estimates peg the figure at ₹10,000 crore

ects. But it's also the biggest shame on India's environment history because of bad processes and corruption," said Sunita Narain, director, Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), New Delhi, who has studied illegal mining in Goa.

On Thursday, the CSE released a report on environmental clearances given for various projects between 2007 and 2011. The report said 35 clearances were given to mining projects in Goa during this period.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

RAJA GAVE GREEN NOD...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

After Jairam Ramesh took over the environment ministry from Raja in June 2009, a moratorium was imposed on new mining projects in February 2010.

The Goa assembly's public accounts committee (PAC), which is probing the illegal mining scam in the state, is also reported to be looking into possible environmental violations. PAC chairman Manohar Parrikar told HT that 25% of the iron ore extracted in the state had been mined without environmental clearances.

On Thursday, HT had reported how illegal mining has cost the state at least R3,000 crore, though the figure could be as high as R10,000 crore.

Claude Alvares, who heads non-governmental organisation Goa Foundation that is spearheading the anti-mining campaign, said, "Raja's tenure coincided with the Chinese boom in 2005 (when that country started buying even low-grade ore with iron content as low as 52%). Under Raja, an environmental clearance became the easiest document to get."

At least three mines given clearances during Raja's tenure were allowed to operate within just 200 metres of the Salaulim reservoir that provides water to nearly half of Goa's population.

Also, in one year alone, between 2007 and 2008, the union ministry granted clearances to 17 mines within the Netravali Wildlife Sanctuary in Sanguem taluka. This was done even though a Supreme Court order of 2000 said that no mine would be allowed to operate inside wildlife sanctuaries. None of the 17 mines is operational now as the matter is before the Supreme Court.

NMDC to acquire 50% in Australian iron ore mine

STATE-OWNED iron ore miner NMDC Ltd has reached an agreement to purchase a 50 per cent stake in Australia-based Legacy Iron Ore as cornerstone investor for nearly A\$19 million, which will mark the PSU's first-ever overseas acquisition.

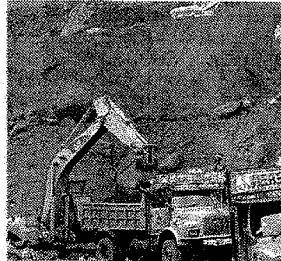
In a filing to the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX), Legacy Iron said, "The board has now agreed to a proposal from NMDC, which involves NMDC subscribing for approximately A\$18.89 million (approximately ₹92.21 crore, at an exchange rate of ₹48.81 per A\$1) in equity for 50 per cent of Legacy. The proposal is subject

This is NMDC's first overseas buy

to Legacy shareholders' approval as well as other legal and regulatory approvals, the filing said.

NMDC director (finance) S. Thiagarajan said this is an initial investment and further investment will depend on project requirements.

The Legacy filing added that the A\$18.89 million will be for a minimum allocation of approximately 238 million shares, with the final number of shares to be issued and the deemed subscription price being subject to the total shares on issue at the time NMDC and Legacy execute the formal subscription agreement.



NEW HORIZON:
An iron ore mine.

After the announcement, shares of Legacy tanked by 23.68 per cent to 0.145 cents apiece on the ASX and trading of its shares has been halted.

This will be the first foreign buy for NMDC, which has been scouting for natural resources in countries like Russia, US, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Canada and South Africa, among others.

"We are delighted to have secured India's NMDC Ltd as a cornerstone investor in Legacy. It is NMDC's first investment outside of India and after conducting extensive due diligence on Legacy, NMDC have concluded that we are the ideal entry point for them into the Australian iron ore and resource sector," Legacy chief executive officer (CEO) Sharon Heng said.

She added, "NMDC is not only providing Legacy with funding through the placement but their presence on the register will create additional opportunities for Legacy, such as the acquisition and divestment of various projects." PTI

एनएमडीसी का लिगेसी सौदा पक्का

प्रेट्र • नई दिल्ली/हैदराबाद

सार्वजनिक उपक्रम नेशनल मिनरल डेवलपमेंट कॉर्पोरेशन लिमिटेड (एनएमडीसी) ऑस्ट्रेलिया-स्थित लिगेसी आयरन ओर की 50 फीसदी हिस्सेदारी खरीदने संबंधित करार तक पहुंच गई है। यह सौदा करीब 1.9 करोड़ ऑस्ट्रेलियाई डॉलर में होगा। ऑस्ट्रेलियन सिक्युरिटीज एक्सचेंज (एसएक्स) को दी एक जानकारी में लिगेसी आयरन ने कहा कि कंपनी बोर्ड एनएमडीसी के प्रस्ताव पर राजी हो गई है। इसके तहत एनएमडीसी 1.88 करोड़ ऑस्ट्रेलियाई डॉलर (करीब 92.21 करोड़ रुपये) में लिगेसी आयरन ओर की 50 फीसदी इक्विटी हिस्सेदारी खरीदेगी।

लिगेसी के मुताबिक एनएमडीसी 48.81 रुपये प्रति ऑस्ट्रेलियाई डॉलर की एक्सचेंज दर पर यह सौदा कर रही है। हालांकि इस सौदे को अभी लिगेसी के शेयरधारकों के अनुमोदन की जरूरत होगी। साथ ही, इसे कानूनी व नियामक संबंधी अनुमोदन की दरकार भी होगी। इस बारे में एनएमडीसी के वित्त निदेशक एस. त्यागराजन ने कहा कि मौजूदा निवेश शुरुआती चरण के आधार पर है। बाद में परियोजना की जरूरतों के मुताबिक इसमें और निवेश किया जा सकता है।

सौदे का सार

करीब 92.21 करोड़ रुपये में हुआ है यह एनएमडीसी-लिगेसी सौदा

एनएमडीसी को मिलेगी लिगेसी के 2.8 करोड़ इक्विटी शेयर

लिगेसी में एनएमडीसी की होगी 50 फीसदी इक्विटी हिस्सेदारी

सौदे को अभी लिगेसी के शेयरधारकों व नियामक संबंधी मंजूरी मिलना बाकी

देश के बाहर एनएमडीसी का यह पहला अधिग्रहण संबंधी सौदा



उद्गार

लिगेसी में एनएमडीसी का मौजूदा निवेश शुरुआती चरण के आधार पर है। बाद में परियोजना की जरूरतों के मुताबिक इसमें और निवेश किया जा सकता है।

-एस. त्यागराजन, वित्त निदेशक, एनएमडीसी

देश के बाहर एनएमडीसी का यह पहला अधिग्रहण है। अपने बयान में लिगेसी ने यह भी कहा है कि 1.88 करोड़ ऑस्ट्रेलियाई डॉलर की यह रकम कम से कम 2.8 करोड़ शेयरों के लिए है। इस रकम पर शेयरों की अंतिम संख्या एनएमडीसी तथा लिगेसी के बीच औपचारिक समझौता होते वक्त शेयरों के भाव के आधार पर तय होगा। सौदे के बारे में लिगेसी आयरन

ओर की सीईओ शैरोन हेंग ने कहा कि हम एनएमडीसी को लिगेसी में बेहद महत्वपूर्ण निवेशक के तौर पर पाकर बेहद प्रसन्न हैं।

शैरोन के मुताबिक एनएमडीसी ने लिगेसी के बारे में पर्याप्त खानबीन करने के बाद यह फैसला लिया है कि ऑस्ट्रेलियाई लौह अयस्क तथा संसाधन क्षेत्र में प्रवेश के लिए लिगेसी को प्रवेश-द्वार के तौर पर उपयोग करें।

कोयला नियामक अगले साल से

नई दिल्ली, जागरण ब्यूरो : कोयला क्षेत्र का नियामक चालू वित्त वर्ष 2011-12 के अंत तक काम करने लगेगा। इस बारे में केंद्र सरकार की तरफ से कुछ राज्यों की आपत्तियों को दूर करने की कोशिश जारी है। यह जानकारी कोयला मंत्री श्रीप्रकाश जायसवाल ने मुंबई में ढांचागत क्षेत्र के नियमन पर दक्षिण एशियाई देशों के सम्मेलन को संबोधित करते हुए दी। जायसवाल ने कहा कि सरकार बिजली क्षेत्र को पर्याप्त कोयला उपलब्ध कराने के लिए हरसंभव प्रयास कर रही है।

कोयला मंत्रालय ने पिछले वर्ष ही कोयला क्षेत्र में नियामक के गठन का विधेयक तैयार कर लिया था। इस पर अभी राज्यों के साथ विचार-विमर्श हो रहा है। कुछ राज्यों ने प्रस्तावित विधेयक के कुछ प्रावधानों का विरोध किया है कि यह उनके अधिकार क्षेत्र में अनावश्यक तौर पर हस्तक्षेप करेगा। कोयला नियामक न सिर्फ

कोयला मंत्री बोलें

- कोयला नियामक गठन विधेयक पर हो रहा है राज्यों के साथ विचार-विमर्श
- कोयला नियामक खानों के आवंटन के साथ कंपनियों के प्रदर्शन पर भी रखेगा नजर



कोयला खानों के आवंटन से लेकर इनकी कीमत तय करने का काम करेगा, बल्कि कंपनियों के प्रदर्शन पर भी नजर रखेगा। यह बाजार में सरकारी व निजी कंपनियों को एक समान अवसर प्रदान करने की कोशिश भी करेगा। कोयला मंत्री जायसवाल इस विधेयक का विरोध करने वाले राज्यों के साथ लगातार विचार-विमर्श करके उन्हें समझाने की कोशिश कर रहे हैं।

जायसवाल ने अपने भाषण में कहा कि

दक्षिण एशियाई देशों के बीच ऊर्जा क्षेत्र में सहयोग बढ़ाने की काफी संभावनाएं हैं। भारत, पाकिस्तान, बांग्लादेश में कोयला और लिग्नाइट का काफी बड़ा भंडार है। इन देशों के बीच तकनीकी सहयोग के लिए काफी अवसर पैदा किए जा सकते हैं। भारत में 276 अरब टन का कोयला भंडार है, जिसमें 110 अरब टन सत्यापित हो चुका है। इनका 70 फीसदी बिजली क्षेत्र में इस्तेमाल होता है।

NMDC dips toes in Australian waters

The size of NMDC Ltd's acquisition may seem unimpressive, paying Australian \$19 million (₹95 crore) for a 50% stake in **Legacy Iron Ore Ltd**, when it has ₹17,000 crore sloshing around in its bank account.

The significance of this acquisition is that it's the state-owned miner's first overseas acquisition. Keeping it small also makes it easier to close the deal for a state-owned company, rather than a high-profile billion-dollar acquisition, which will invite greater scrutiny and delays.

A statement from Legacy says that NMDC found in it an ideal entry point for the Australian market. The current fund infusion is the beginning and Legacy may also acquire new mineral projects, helped by NMDC's presence and financial muscle.

Legacy's current projects are at the initial stages and the most important one, the Mt Bevan iron ore project, will reach only the pre-feasibility stage after Legacy spends A\$3.5 million to get a 60% participating interest. Thus,

it is likely to be years before investors can start factoring this acquisition in NMDC's valuation.

The situation could change if Legacy acquires some operational mining assets. Thus, NMDC's existing operations will continue to drive its performance and valuation. Iron ore companies are benefiting from rising international ore prices, chiefly because of China's sustained growth in steel production.

But domestic ore output has been hit by a ban on mining in Karnataka's three iron ore-rich districts. NMDC is in the privileged position of being the only unit allowed to mine in the state, putting it on a better footing compared with other miners.

It should thus outperform them; whether it does will become evident in its September quarter results. The company's share price has risen by 16% in about a month as a result, but fell on Thursday by 5.6%, which may have less to do with the acquisition and more with the broad fall in equities.

RAVI ANANTHANARAYANAN

Goa mines under scanner

BY RUCHIRA SINGH
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NEW DELHI

Miners in Goa are bracing for state action against rule breakers that may involve mine closures, the head of an iron ore trade body said on Thursday. This follows the drive against illegal mining that led to a ban in Karnataka.

"There is talk that those who have not got the no-objection certificates from the chief wildlife warden might be served notices," said S. Sridhar, executive director of the Goa Mineral Ore Exporters' Association. "But nobody in the industry has got any notification so far. Maybe it has not reached them."

Sridhar did not say how many mines could be in the dock, but the state has been investigating miners as has been done in Orissa and Karnataka.

Goa produces about 45 million tonnes (mt) of iron ore, mostly powdery, low-grade iron ore fines, but has a significant role in the foreign market as most of it gets exported to China.

Any bar on mining in Goa could see iron ore prices rising overseas, which will be mirrored in the Indian market as well and that could hurt steel companies in the country.

A PTI report on Thursday said over 400 iron ore traders in Goa have come under the scanner after a preliminary inquiry by the Central government-appointed Shah Commission pointed to large-scale illegal mining in the state.

NMDC to pay A\$18.89 mn for 50% stake in Legacy

BY RUCHIRA SINGH
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NEW DELHI

NMDC Ltd is to pay 18.89 million Australian dollars (around ₹90 crore) for a 50% stake in Australia's **Legacy Iron Ore Ltd**, the latter announced on Thursday, in what will help the Indian miner start its first iron ore venture overseas.

"The offer is designed to provide NMDC with an interest in Legacy," Legacy said on its website. "The offer presents an opportunity to provide the company with substantial funding and working capital to continue to develop its various projects."

NMDC, which did not say whether it will raise funds to pay for the stake, mines less than 25 million tonnes (mt) of iron ore a year but wants to step it up to 40 mt by 2014-15 for which it needs to look for overseas assets as it is difficult to set up new mines in India.

The company is looking at the US and Africa for new mines and is close to taking a decision to buy a substantial stake in Greystone Mineracao do Brasil in Bahia in Brazil.

On Wednesday, NMDC chairman and managing director Rana Som had said the final formalities for the Australian deal are expected to be sealed quickly. "After we formally become majority stakeholders, we can put our money in exploration," Som had said. "It will take a couple of years before production can start."

Western Australia-based Legacy, an exploration firm focused on iron ore and gold, was listed on the Australian Securities Exchange on 8 July 2008. Since then, it has had a number of iron ore, manganese and gold discoveries that are now undergoing drilling and resource definition.

MORE TROUBLE

Reddy may face CBI probe for Karnataka mining operations

SC-appointed panel seeks probe separate from case in AP, backs NMDC being allowed to continue mining

By NIKHIL KANEKAL
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NEW DELHI

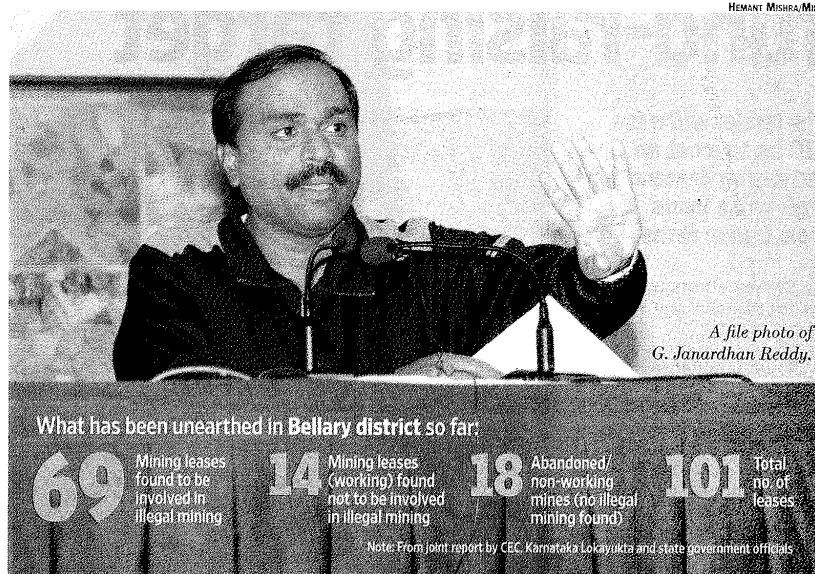
A Supreme Court-appointed committee has asked for a criminal investigation into G. Janardhan Reddy's mining activities in Karnataka, separate from the case against him in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh.

Reddy, former tourism and infrastructure minister in the Bharatiya Janata Party government in Karnataka, is already in custody after the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) found evidence of his involvement in illegal mining in six leases in Andhra Pradesh through his Obulapuram Mining Co.

In an unprecedented move, the central empowered committee (CEC) on Thursday recommended to the Supreme Court to direct a CBI probe into Reddy's mining activities in Karnataka.

This is the first time the CEC has gone beyond environmental concerns into the criminality of illegal mining and its ancillary activities.

The CEC claims Associated



Mining Co. (AMC), was mining more than what was possible from its mining lease area in 2009-10 and that Reddy transferred the lease into his control in 2009 using "dubious means". The CEC has asked for a CBI probe into AMC's operations as well.

E-auction of iron ore

Pursuant to a recent Supreme Court order a monitoring committee has started an online auction of 25 million

tonnes (mt) of iron ore stocks in Karnataka through state-owned trading company MSTC Ltd at ₹3,400 per mt.

The sale is expected to fetch the state exchequer ₹340 per mt in royalty. The court has directed the state to use a part of this royalty to rehabilitate areas damaged by illegal mining.

In 2010-11, Karnataka earned ₹434.76 crore in royalty from the sale of about 33.75 mt of iron ore, at ₹129 per mt.

The CEC has also recom-

mended that state-owned NMDC Ltd be allowed to continue mining at its two large leases in Karnataka to ensure a steady supply of iron ore for domestic steel makers. This ore will also be sold through e-auctions by MSTC and the monitoring committee.

"Keeping in view the public interest including the requirement of iron ore and associated industries, the complexities of the situation prevailing in the district Bellary and consid-

ering the matter in its totality the CEC is of the view that the balance of convenience may lie in M/s NMDC Ltd being allowed to continue the mining operations" in its two leases, the CEC said in its report.

Resuming mining

The CEC said mining operations in Bellary, Chitradurga and Tumkur districts may be allowed to resume, but only after a macro environmental impact assessment and a reclamation and rehabilitation plan are submitted by the Indian Council of Forest Research and Education.

The CEC has found leases owned by NMDC, Mysore Minerals Ltd and SMIOR Ltd are not involved in illegal mining and they might be allowed to resume operations at the earliest.

The committee has classified illegally mined leases into two categories—lease areas that can be rehabilitated and lease areas that have borne "substantial illegal mining".

In the first category, the CEC recommends these lease areas can become operational after they are suitably rehabilitated and a scientific mining plan comes into place; for the second category, the CEC makes the same recommendation but goes a step further to say the leases must be cancelled and the owners pay penalties.

A joint team comprising the CEC, Karnataka government and Lokayukta officials is scheduled to complete work relating to the "field survey and the finalization of the sketches" of Bellary, Tumkur and Chitradurga by 15 November.

The Supreme Court's forest bench will take up the CEC's latest report at a hearing on Friday afternoon.

CSE says green clearances not working

Press Information Bureau

New Delhi, Sept 22: India Inc may have complained about the slow pace at which green clearances are awarded but the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) on Thursday questioned this claim. It said that on the contrary, the environment ministry gave out an unprecedented number of clearances in the last five years.

The study found that 181 coal mines, 287 thermal power plants, 200 coal-based thermal power plants, 188 steel plants and 106 cement units were accorded clearance. Incidentally, the 11th Five-Year Plan projects a target of 50,000 mw of additional thermal power capacity, while the 12th Plan asks for 100,000 mw.

The centre analysed the environment and forest clearances granted by the Indian government in the period of the 11th Five Year Plan – from 2007 till August 2011 in thermal power, hydropower, cement, iron and steel and mining sectors.

In the past five years, till August 2011, the union ministry of environment and forests (MoEF) has granted environmental clearance to an astounding 2,10,000 mw of thermal power capacity – in other words, 60,000 mw more than what has been proposed till 2017. Worse, the capacity actually added is a mere 32,394 mw, the study said.

“Environmental regulations are seen as impeding growth, but where is the impediment? We are finding that despite all the browbeating, almost every project is getting cleared with frightening consistency, making a complete mockery of our regulatory systems,” said Sunita Narain, CSE director general while releasing the study.

The centre analysed the environment and forest clearances granted by the government in the period of the 11th Five Year Plan – from 2007 till August 2011 in thermal power, hydropower, cement, iron and steel and mining sectors. It noted that in one single year – 2009 – as much as 87,893.67 ha of forest land was granted clearance.

Narain added that the process of forest and environment clearances is not working as the ministry is giving too many clearances and no forest assessment is being done before granting the green nod.

Further, of the 22,264 cases granted forest clearance, only 12,225 were monitored (90 % of which were in only two states) and 5,091 of these were found to be non-compliant.

Coal for Essar Energy's Mahan project

The Madhya Pradesh government has allocated coal to Essar Energy's 1,200 megawatt (Mw) Mahan power project. Essar Energy and DB Mining Power have been jointly allotted 40 per cent of coal from the Amelia block, which will be operated by the Madhya Pradesh State Mining Corporation. The allocation from Amelia will give Mahan a second source of fuel, in addition to its existing Mahan coal block.

BS REPORTER

Reddy's Firm Violated All Norms in Bellary: SC Panel

Central Empowered Committee for extending CBI probe against Reddy to Bellary

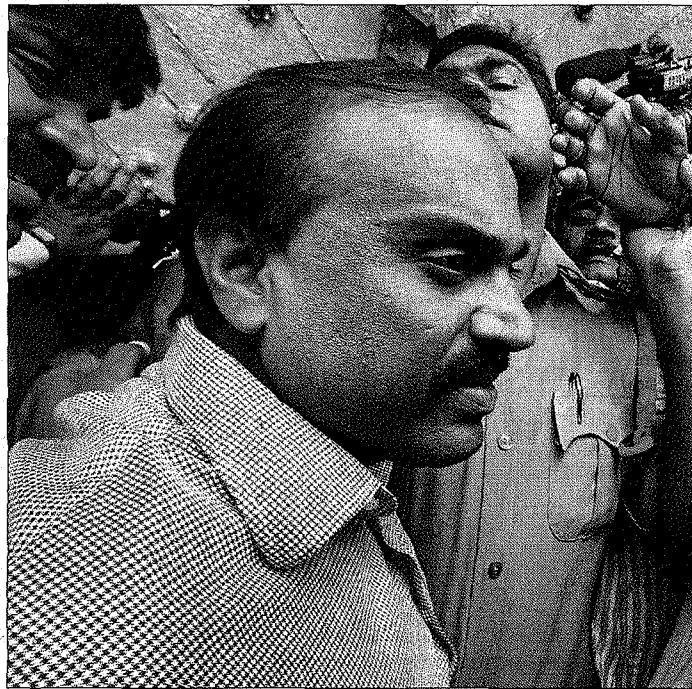
PP THIMMAYA
BANGALORE

The Central Empowered Committee of the Supreme Court has recommended extension of the ongoing CBI probe against G Janardhana Reddy in Andhra Pradesh to Bellary district of Karnataka in light of blatant illegal mining perpetuated by one of his firms.

CEC, the forest bench of the Supreme Court which has been investigating the extent of illegality in iron ore mining in Karnataka, in its report dated September 21, 2011, has found that the Associated Mining Company (AMC) owned by Reddy had violated all norms and regulation while carrying out its activities in Bellary.

In its report submitted to the Supreme Court, it has stated, "the CEC is firmly of the view that CBI, which is presently carrying out the investigation regarding illegal mining from the mining leases in Bellary Reserved Forest falling in Ananthpur district in Andhra Pradesh and associated issues, may be asked to investigate and take appropriate follow up action in respect of illegalities pertaining to the mining leases of AMC."

AMC, which is effectively owned by Reddy has found to be violating all kinds of regulations. CEC, in its report has found serious illegalities relating to (a) by way of illegal



IN CUSTODY: Gali Janardhana Reddy

grant of renewal of mining lease, (b) the existing locations of the boundary pillars being completely different from the sanctioned lease sketch and (c) quantity of iron ore shown to have been produced and dispatched from the mining lease

being far in excess of quantity that could have been physically produced and dispatched from such a small area of mining lease.

For example, AMC which had a mining lease of 10.12 hectares has shown a production of one million

CBI Opposes Bail Pleas of Reddys

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
HYDERABAD

CBI on Thursday opposed the bail pleas of former Karnataka minister Gali Janardhana Reddy and his brother-in-law B V Srinivas Reddy, arrested in connection with alleged illegal mining activities, at a special court here contending that the duo carried out "illegal" mining by creating forged documents and through conspiracy. The agency, probing "illegal" mining and irregularities in allotment of mining leases to AMC, had arrested Janardhana Reddy and AMC MD Srinivas Reddy on September 5 from Bellary in Karnataka and brought them to Hyderabad the same day.

tonne of iron in 2009-10. "Considering the small size of the lease areas, it is not possible to attain such a high-level of production of iron ore," CEC said.

The strong suspicion is that the transport permits from the above mentioned lease was used to illegally ferry iron ore from other locations. Even the ownership of AMC taken over by Reddy was under highly dubious circumstances, the report has said.

Hancock mine projects: Strategic investors keen to dig in

GVK CFO says will tap foreign banks for debt

Our Bureau

Hyderabad, Sept. 22

The GVK Group today said that several strategic investors have approached the company to take part in the development of the Hancock mines, which will require investment of \$10 billion over three years.

The Hyderabad-based diversified group on Friday last announced the deal to acquire Hancock mine assets for \$1.26 billion.

"This is the biggest project of the GVK group requiring Rs 60,000 crore.

"The investors engaged in

coal mining are keen to take part as strategic partners.

"This also includes interest from an Indonesian mine developer," said Mr Issac A. George, Chief Financial Officer and Director, GVK Industries Ltd.

STAKE DIVESTMENT

Speaking to newsmen on the sidelines of Suminfra 2011, Mr George said the company managed to outbid companies from China, the US and India.

Ms Georgina Rienhart of Hancock was comfortable dealing with us, he added.

Snapshot

The GVK Group acquired Hancock's mine assets for \$1.26 billion last week
Funds for the acquisition tied up with Indian banks
The group also plans to approach Australian and other foreign banks for debt

"An independent company is handling this deal as GVK PIL is not into commodity business. We have two mines with 79 per cent stake and one with 100 per cent stake. There is flexibility to divest

and hold up to 51 per cent to remain majority stakeholder," he said.

"The funds (about \$1.26 billion) for the acquisition have already been tied up from Indian banks. It is only project finance that is required to be closed in 18 months. We will be able to do it as there is a tremendous amount of investor interest both financial and strategic," he said.

FOREIGN BANKS

GVK expects to tap Australian and other international banks for debt as Indian

banks would not like to take non-recourse finance risks overseas.

But European and Australian banks are open to fund debt requirement, he felt.

Typically, such projects are funded with debt-equity ratio of 70:30.

So of the \$6 billion required, \$1.8 billion would come from equity through strategic and financial investors and about \$4.2 billion would be debt.

Effectively, about \$2.8 billion would be raised. The project cost would be pruned to \$7 billion.

NMDC to buy 50% of Legacy Iron Ore for A\$18.89 million

State-owned NMDC has reached an agreement to purchase a 50% stake in Australia-based Legacy Iron Ore as cornerstone investor for nearly A\$19 million, which will mark the PSU's first-ever overseas acquisition. In a filing to the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX), Legacy Iron said, "The board has now agreed to a proposal from NMDC, which involves NMDC subscribing for approximately A\$18.89 million (approximately ₹92.21 crore) in equity for 50% of Legacy." "The proposal is subject to Legacy shareholders' approval, as well as other legal and regulatory approvals," the filing said. When contacted, NMDC director (finance) S Thiagarajan said this is an initial investment and further investment will depend on project requirements. The Legacy filing added that "the A\$18.89 million will be for a minimum allocation of approximately 238 million shares, with the final number of shares to be issued and the deemed subscription price being subject to the total shares on issue at the time NMDC and Legacy execute the formal subscription agreement."

e-auction of ore falls below target

BANGALORE: The monitoring committee in charge of selling 25 million metric tonnes (MTs) of iron ore in Bellary, Chitradurga and Tumkur through e-auctioning has managed to sell only about 0.272 million MT of ore in the first week.

The e-auctioning process which began on September 14, apparently had 18 to 20 companies participating in it. Out of the 0.39 million MT of ore exposed, only about 0.272 million MT of ore was sold. The committee has decided to hold the auction once every 15 days, as opposed to the earlier plan of weekly auctions.

APCCF member Dipak Sharma said conducting auction once in seven days was posing a problem. "The sale proceedings and the formalities involved are consuming a lot of time. Hence we decided to hold the e-auction once in 15 days. The first batch of ore sold is below the target, but we are exposing about one million MT of ore in the next auction," he added. Sharma however said that the date for the next auctioning was yet to be fixed.

The auctioning is being conducted through www.mstcecommerce.com.

Govt to follow SC rule on green in mining areas

BANGALORE: Chief Minister D V Sadananda Gowda on Wednesday said development was necessary but it cannot not be at the cost of society and environment.

Addressing a gathering at Jnana Jyothi Auditorium on the occasion of Foundation Day of the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB), Gowda said investments in the State were good, but they should strike a balance between environmental issues and development.

Referring to mining in Bellary, Gowda said the government was seriously considering the Supreme Court directions regarding environmental conservation in the mining zones of the State.

On the environmental issues in Bangalore, he said the government's priorities were providing clean drinking water to citizens, constructing stormwater drains, and solid waste management.

"The government is committed to providing underground

drains in every part of the city and ensure the sewage treatment plants function properly. It will also streamline solid waste management to avoid adverse effect on environment," Gowda said.

He, however, sought the citizens' participation for a clean Bangalore. "Saving Bangalore is everyone's responsibility. People's role is essential for the success of any government scheme," he said.

The chief minister assured Transport Minister R Ashoka, who was also present at the function, that he would seriously consider the transport department's long-pending de-

mand for subsidy on ethanol.

Hailing the industrial units that bagged the KSPCB awards for taking environment-friendly measures, Gowda asked them to inspire others to emulate them.

Oil lobby

Minister Ashoka said the government was running about 1,500 of its 21,000 buses on ethanol-blended diesel. The government is moving towards an alternative fuel, but there are many challenges hindering the move, he added.

"We are not getting permission for using alternative fuel. If that happens, it will benefit

farmers and the people in general. But the powerful oil lobby is at work. The Middle East is dependent on oil money and it doesn't want any such measure initiated," he said.

He said the government was interested in battery-run buses, cars and other vehicles, but proper research was not encouraged.

On environmental issues pertaining to mining, Ashoka said: "We cannot use up iron ore, simply because it belongs to us. We have to conserve it for the future generations too. We have to restrain from committing excesses on Nature."

DH News Service

NMDC to buy stake in Legacy Iron Ore

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: Marking its first ever PSU acquisition, state-run NMDC on Thursday announced the 50 per cent stake purchase in Australia-based Legacy Iron Ore as cornerstone investor for nearly 19 million Australian dollar.

In a filing to the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX), Legacy Iron said: "The board has now agreed to a proposal from NMDC, which involves NMDC subscribing for about 18.89 million Australian dollar (about Rs.92.21 crore, at an exchange rate of Rs.48.81 per Australian dollar) in equity for 50 per cent of Legacy. The proposal is subject to Legacy shareholders' approval, as well as other legal and regulatory approvals," the filing said.

The deal will be first foreign acquisition for NMDC, which has been scouting for natural resources abroad in countries such as Russia, the U.S., Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Canada and South Africa.

The proposed investment by NMDC takes into account all the current assets of Legacy, while providing an additional investment for the ongoing completion of Legacy's earn in to the Mount Bevan joint venture. The Australian miner also informed the Australian Securities Exchange that NMDC had the right to nominate the majority of directors to the Legacy board.

SAIL thrust on capacity addition

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: Stating that the Indian steel industry is poised for greater growth, Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) said it would lay thrust on capacity addition and had outlined Rs.14,337-crore expenditure for the current financial year. Orders worth Rs.54,000 crore have been placed under the modernisation and expansion programme.

Speaking to reporters after the annual meeting, SAIL Chairman C. S. Verma said cumulative orders worth Rs.54,000 crore had already been placed under SAIL's ongoing modernisation and expansion plan to realise hot metal production capacity of 23.5 million tonnes by 2012-13. While capital expenditure of Rs.11,280 crore was incurred during 2010-11, an outlay of Rs.14,337 crore has been planned for the current year. After having completed Salem Steel Plant's modernisation and expansion, several projects in all the five integrated steel plants of SAIL are under various stages



C. S. Verma

of completion. Mr. Verma said major new facilities due to be commissioned during 2011-12 included blast furnace at Rourkela, which would be the country's largest, a 5 lakh tonne per annum wire rod mill at Burnpur, a 1.2 million tonne per annum (mtpa) cold rolling mill at Bokaro and 7-metre-tall coke oven batteries at Rourkela and IISCO Steel plants.

Mr. Verma said the company was determined to meet its enhanced requirement of iron ore from captive sources, by augmenting production from existing mines and by developing new mines at Rowghat in Chhattisgarh and

Chiria in Jharkhand. "To utilise low-grade iron ore, dumped fines and slimes, SAIL plans to set up beneficiation and pelletisation facilities, including a 10 mtpa beneficiation and 4 mtpa pelletisation plant at the company's Gua iron ore mines," he said. Mr. Verma said besides developing existing coal blocks, SAIL was making efforts for fresh allocation of coking coal and thermal coal blocks.

The company's MoU with the Government of Central Kalimantan in Indonesia was among its various efforts towards sourcing raw materials from abroad, Mr. Verma added. To meet future challenges, Mr. Verma said SAIL was working on a long-term strategic plan 'Lakshya 2020' "which will steer the company towards meeting its strategic objectives of achieving profitability through growth and customer satisfaction".

SAIL has also set up a working group to draw up plans for setting up a 5.6 mtpa steel plant, 1.15 mtpa urea plant and 1,000 MW power plant.

Steel min seeks hike in export duty on ore

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 22

WITH an aim towards curbing iron ore exports, the steel ministry has formally written to the finance ministry to enhance the ad valorem export duty on the mineral to 30 per cent from 20 per cent currently. The proposal, if accepted, will be an additional blow to the mining sector, whose exports have dipped by nearly 20 per cent.

"I have written to the finance minister suggesting that the export duty on iron ore should be hiked to 30 per cent to ensure the mineral's availability for our steel industry. Unrestrained exports could jeopardise the long term interests of our steel companies" steel minister Beni Prasad Verma said after a meeting with Kerala chief minister Oommen Chandy.

Chandy discussed the possibility of a venture between SAIL and Kerala government-run Steel Complex to set up a 65,000 tonne rolling mill for TMT bars.

NMDC to buy 50% of Oz firm

New Delhi, Sept. 22: State-owned NMDC has reached an agreement to purchase a 50 per cent stake in the Australian based Legacy Iron Ore as cornerstone investor for nearly 19 million Australian dollars, which will mark the PSU's first-ever overseas acquisition.

In a filing to the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX), Legacy Iron said, "The board has now agreed to a proposal from NMDC, which involves NMDC subscribing for approximately 18.89 million Australian dollars (approximately ₹92.21 crore, at an exchange rate of ₹48.81 per AUD) in equity for 50 per cent of Legacy."

"The proposal is subject to Legacy 'shareholders' approval, as well as other legal and regulatory approvals," the filing said.

When contacted, NMDC director (finance), Mr S. Thiagarajan said this is an

initial investment and further investment will depend on project requirements.

The Legacy filing added that "the AUD 18.89 million will be for a minimum allocation of approximately 238 million shares, with the final number of shares to be issued and the deemed subscription price being subject to the total shares on issue at the time NMDC and Legacy execute the formal subscription agreement."

Meanwhile, after the announcement, shares of Legacy tanked by 23.68 per cent to 0.145 cents apiece on the ASX and trading of its shares has been halted.

The deal will be first foreign acquisition for NMDC, which has been scouting for natural resources abroad in countries like Russia, US, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Canada and South Africa, among other countries.

— PTI

ORISSA: GOVT IS COOPERATING WITH SHAH COMMISSION

AGE CORRESPONDENT
BHUBANESWAR, SEPT.22

The Orissa government on Thursday said it was transparent on mineral extraction and trading and denied the Opposition charge of non-cooperation to probe by the Justice M.B. Shah Commission into the irregularities in the mines sector. "The state government is extending all cooperation to the M.B. Shah Commission of Inquiry set up by Centre to probe into mining irregularities in different states. We have replied to several queries of the Commission in the past. The final bunch of replies will be submitted by September 30," the minister said.

अवैध खनन जांच मामले में व्यापारियों पर निगाह

पणजी, 22 सितंबर (भाषा)। केंद्र सरकार की ओर से नियुक्त शाह आयोग के गोवा में बड़े पैमाने पर अवैध खनन की तरफ इशारा किए जाने के बाद राज्य के करीब 400 लौह अयस्क व्यापारियों पर नजर रखी जा रही है। राज्य के खनन और भूगर्भ विभाग ने सम्मन जारी कर अपने यहां पंजीकृत इन सभी व्यापारियों को अयस्क को हासिल करने के स्रोत को सत्यापित करने के लिए कहा है।

खनन और भूगर्भ के निदेशक अरविंद लोलिंकर हर व्यवसायी की व्यक्तिगत रूप से जांच कर रहे हैं। इन व्यवसायियों को अपने कुल व्यापार के विवरण के साथ उपस्थित रहने के लिए कहा गया है। सूत्रों ने बताया कि खनन विभाग के साथ पंजीकृत करीब 405 व्यवसायियों को गोवा खनिज अवैध भंडारण, परिवहन और व्यापार कानून 2004 तहत नोटिस जारी किया गया है।

न्यायमूर्ति एमबी शाह राज्य में अवैध लौह अयस्क व्यापार की जांच कर रहे आयोग की अध्यक्षता कर रहे हैं। इस जांच के बाद आठ

खानों को बंद करने का आदेश दिया गया है। सरकारी सूत्रों ने बताया कि जांच के दौरान खनन विभाग की किरकिरी हुई थी जिसके पास निर्यात के समुचित आंकड़ों नहीं थे।

खनन विभाग के एक वरिष्ठ अधिकारी ने कहा कि निर्यात में बड़ा योगदान देने वाले छोटे व्यापारी मुख्य कड़ी हैं जो अवैध खनन का खुलासा कर सकते हैं। एक वरिष्ठ अधिकारी ने कहा, हम उनसे पूछ रहे हैं कि अयस्क का स्रोत क्या है और क्या इसकी रायल्टी दी गई है या नहीं। यदि हम पाते हैं कि अयस्क को बिना रायल्टी दिए या अवैध ढंग से निकाला गया है तो अपराध करने वालों के खिलाफ कार्रवाई की जाएगी।

खनन विभाग के निदेशक ने इस मुद्दे पर टिप्पणी करने से इनकार कर दिया और कहा कि व्यापारियों की जांच जारी है और एक बार प्रक्रिया की समाप्ति के बाद मामले पर विचार विमर्श किया जाएगा। इस बीच विभाग के सूत्रों ने कहा कि मुख्य चिंता उन व्यापारियों को लेकर है जो सरकार के साथ पंजीकृत नहीं हैं।

SC panel wants monitored CBI probe

SHIVAKUMAR G. MALAGI
BELLARY, SEPT. 22

The Supreme Court appointed Central Empowered Committee has recommended a court-monitored investigation by the CBI into illegal mining in Bellary.

M.K. Jiwrajka, member secretary, Central Empowered Committee said in its interim report submitted to

the Supreme court on September 21, that it firmly believed the CBI which is investigating illegal mining in the Bellary Reserve Forests in Ananthapur, Andhra Pradesh, should be asked to investigate illegalities pertaining to mining leases of the Associated Mining Company (AMC) in Sandur, and the illegal mining done in the field. ML No: 1111, leased by the

ILLEGAL MINING

National Mineral Development Corporation, by "third parties," an alleged reference to former minister Janardhan Reddy and one of his legal advisors. The CEC said 16.20 hectares leased by AMC in Sandur was transferred to Mr Janardhan Reddy and his wife Lakshmi Aruna on

August 1, 2009.

"This appears to have been done by dubious means to ensure the retirement of all the existing partners," the report said.

It explained that a CBI probe was necessary because the existing location of the boundary pillars of the mining lease was completely different from the sanctioned lease sketch, the quantity of iron ore

shown to have been produced and dispatched from it was far in excess of the quantity that could have been physically produced and dispatched from such a small area and because the Karnataka Lokayukta had made scathing observations regarding the series of illegalities allegedly committed by the AMC and the undue favour shown to it by government officials.

अमोनियम नाइट्रेट पर बैन क्यों नहीं : कोर्ट

पीटीआई ॥ जयपुर : विस्फोटक बनाने में काम आने वाले केमिकल अमोनियम नाइट्रेट के खुले बाजार में बिकने पर अब तक पाबंदी न लगने पर राजस्थान हाई कोर्ट ने केंद्र सरकार से जवाब मांगा है। वाणिज्य, खनन, कानून और गृह मंत्रालयों के अधिकारियों से 26 सितंबर को अदालत में पेश होकर सरकार का पक्ष रखने को कहा गया है। कोर्ट ने कहा कि अमोनियम नाइट्रेट बेचने का लाइसेंस पाने वाले कुछ विक्रेता कुछ असामाजिक तत्वों को बेचकर लाइसेंस नियमों का उल्लंघन करते हैं। अदालत ने कहा कि ऐसे लाइसेंसों की संख्या पर कंट्रोल होना चाहिए।

Hind Copper to start work at 4 mines by Dec

Promit Mukherjee • MUMBAI

Hindustan Copper Ltd, the only miner of the metal in India, will start expansion work at its four mines by the end of this calendar year, taking the total number of mines under development, including greenfield, to six.

The additional production from these mines is expected to reflect on the topline and bottomline of the company in the next three years.

A huge gap of approximately 97 million tonne (mt) between demand and production of copper ore in India, any capacity addition gets a ready market, which augurs well for Hindustan Copper.

In fiscal 2011 India's refined copper capacity was around one mt, requiring approximately 100 mt of copper ore (assuming a copper content of 1%), according to the company's annual report.

This was against a domestic copper ore production of 3.6 mt.

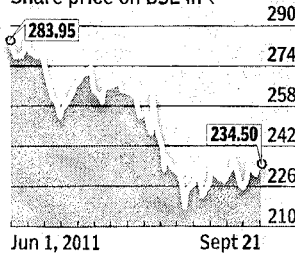
Shakeel Ahmed, chairman and managing director of Hindustan Copper, said while work on two of its mines, both located in Khetri, is under progress, awards for another four will be given soon to the selected engineering, procurement and construction contractors.

"Financial bids have been received and the evaluation process is over. A final approval is expected to be given by the Board in its next meeting in October," he said.

Under its mine expansion plan, Hindustan Copper would increase its copper concentrate ore production capacity from 3.6

► Hindustan Copper

Share price on BSE in ₹



mtpa to 12.4 mtpa by 2015-16 at an investment of ₹3,677 crore over the same period.

The company has a total eight mines in Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and Rajasthan. The company is expanding Malanjkhand, Khetri, Kolihan and Surda mines; re-opening Rakha and Kendadih mines and developing new mines—Banwas and Chapri-Sidheswar. Out of these, work at Khetri and Banwas has already started.

Ahmed said the outlook for London Metal Exchange copper prices is buoyant for the next 3-6 months and the company expects to post a robust performance in the current year and next year as well.

Ramesh Iyer, vice president, product development, National Commodity Exchange, said there is no immediate trigger for copper prices to come down.

"We see a strong support at ₹400 per kilogramme level and at least for the next three months no surprises are expected. While it will not scale the highs of December and January, but will hold around the same level which is a good sign," he said.