Kolar Gold Fields’ digging ways to regain its lost glitter

Ministry of Mines plans to rope in NALCO to reap again

NEW DELHI: The famed fields of Kolar may re-appear gold if Union Ministry of Mines’s plan to revive the defunct Bharat Gold Mines Limited (BGML) by roping in the cash-rich National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO) works out.

The Kolar Gold Fields (KGF), situated 100 kms from Bangalore, is the second deepest mine in the world and has mined gold for over 121 years.

It was closed in 2001 after being found unviable due to low gold yield and increasing cost of production. The BGML, which was mining gold in KGF till closure, was producing just over 10 grams of gold per one tonne ore and was even unable to pay wages of workers.

The Centre's new plan to revive the gold mine is in tandem with the findings of parliamentary standing committees, constituted in 1994, 1997 and 2000, that at least 30 lakh tonnes of gold still lie unexploited in the KGF.

According to estimates, the mine could be tapped to yield 15 tonne of gold annually for the next 20 years.

Windfall

"With the availability of latest technology and prices of gold skyrocketing, even if we get 5 gram of gold per tonne of ore, it can be considered a windfall. Hence it is worth starting the company,” sources in the Union Ministry of Mines said.

The Karnataka High Court had also, while hearing a petition on the BGML’s closure, once suggested that the Centre should look for the mine’s possible revival.

Besides, basic infrastructure is still alive with the BGML having huge assets including 12,000 acres of land in the area. This was going waste, and as per a recent Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report, 502.48 acres of BGML's land valued at Rs 26.27 crore have been encroached upon.

Based on all these, the Ministry is preparing a detailed proposal to be presented before a committee of secretaries headed by Union Cabinet Secretary K M Chandrashekar.

"Once the committee vets it, the mines ministry will place the same before the Union Cabinet for a final decision," Ministry sources told Deccan Herald.

The plan is to pull in navratna company NALCO to revive the gold mine.

"As the NALCO has rich experience in mining activities and has a capital of Rs 4000 crore, it can play a major role in rejuvenating KGF," sources added.

DH News Service
FM for compensation of mines displaced

By Mail Today Bureau in New Delhi

FINANCE minister Pranab Mukherjee on Friday said the solution to India’s socio-economic problems does not lie in stopping mining projects but in properly compensating people who are displaced. “The answer does not lie in the companies stopping mining activities. The answer lies in providing alternatives to those displaced — in what form we can compensate them and make them beneficiaries of economic development,” Mukherjee said while addressing a coal summit.

“The issue of compensating those displaced is the challenge and we are addressing that issue,” the finance minister said.

Currently, a group of ministers (GoM), headed by Mukherjee himself, is considering a new mining legislation, which proposes that mining companies share 26 per cent of their net profit with locals displaced by their projects.

The ministry of mines is giving final touches to the proposal and the GoM is expected to meet soon to clear the final draft of the Bill, which is likely to be tabled in Parliament during the winter session.

However, there are some differences among the ministers as well on certain issues. Coal minister Sriprakash Jaiswal on Friday opposed steel minister Virbhadra Singh’s suggestion for giving some concessions to public sector undertakings (PSUs) in the proposed law for 20 per cent profit-sharing with people displaced by mining projects.

Jaiswal came out in favour of a level playing field for PSUs and private players under the profit-sharing regime.

He added that there is no proposal before the GoM to give concessions to PSUs.

The case for strong legislation to protect the rights of local tribals has got further strengthened after Rahul Gandhi’s visit to Niyamgiri in support of their cause.

The proposal of Anil Aggarwal-run Vedanta Resources to start mining in the Niyamgiri hill was rejected by the environment ministry amid strong protests from local tribals who consider the hill an abode of their gods.

Vedanta Resources flagship firm Sterlite Industries had entered into a pact with Orissa Mining Corporation (OMC), which had received licence in 2004 for bauxite mining to feed its aluminium project in Orissa.

The government has now decided to ensure this is a backdoor entry by the private firm to get into mining on the back of a state government undertaking.

Mineral development minister B.K. Handique has said the government would not allow private companies to form joint ventures with public sector companies merely to gain backdoor entry into mining projects.
परियोजनाओं को बंद करना विश्वापितों
की समस्या का हल नहीं- प्रणाब

लगभग, 24 अक्टूबर (भाषा)। जन्मन
परियोजनाओं को लेकर चल रहे विशेष के
बीच सरकार ने कहा है कि परियोजनाओं के
कारण विस्थापित जनगणों को उनकी साथी
परियोजनाओं के लिए वैकल्पिक स्रोत पहुँच करारे जाने
चाहिए, क्योंकि उनकी समस्या का हल
परियोजनाओं को बंद करने में नहीं है।

विषय मंत्री प्रबंध मुख्य ने यहां
कोयला सम्मेलन में कहा कि समस्या का
समाधान इसके बाद नहीं है कि कंपनियां खाना
गतिविधियां बंद कर दें, जबकि समस्या का हल
इसके बाद है कि विस्थापितों को वैकल्पिक सुविधाओं
पहुँच करारे जाए। इसलिए वहां भी हमें
खुशी होगा कि उनकी कंपनी के रूप से
साधत की और कंपनी भी उन्हें आर्थिक
विस्तार का फायदा पहुँचाए जा सकता है।

मुख्य ने यह बयान ऐसे समय में आया
जब खाना उनकी अध्यक्षता में गतिविधि खाना
परियोजनाओं से होने वाले
मुनाफे के एक हिस्से की परियोजनाओं के
विस्थापितों को वित्त जाने के प्रलय पर विचार
कर रहा है। मुख्य ने कहा- 'हम इस मुद्दे
पर गौर कर रहे हैं। मंत्री समूह ने प्रस्ताव रखा
है कि जन्मन परियोजनाओं से होने वाले युद्ध
मुनाफे में से 26 फीसद हिस्सा परियोजनाओं
विस्थापितों और अन्य प्रभावित स्थानीय
जनजीवन को दिखाया जाए। हालांकि
उन्होंने जाना और कुछ अन्य हिस्से से इस
प्रश्न को आलोचना भी की गई है।

इस चीज खाना मंजूर ने कहा कि इस
बारे में उनका अंतिम मस्तिष्क मंत्री समूह
की सहभागिताओं का अनुश्रुप होगा। खाना संचाल
एस. विलम कुमार इससे पहले कह चुके हैं
कि मंत्री समूह के चीफ हुए विचार-विमर्श के
आधार पर हमें खाना विशेषक का अंतिम
प्रारूप बैठक किया जा रहा है जिसे मंत्री
समूह को बैठक में रखा जाएगा और फिर
इसके बाद इस मंजूरी के लिए निर्माण मंडल के
समक्ष रखा जाएगा। खाना विशेषक के अंतिम
 msecएस्ट, दोनों को देखने के लिए मंत्री समूह को
बैठक अलग होगी।

भारतीय भूमि अधिग्रहण में विवेचन
और देश के विभिन्न अंगों और इसके अंग्रेजी
आर्थिक विवेचन और पाकिस्तान की बड़ी-बड़ी
इस्लाम परियोजनाओं में पंच साल से भी
ज्यादा की देश हो चुकी है। इस
परियोजनाओं में 1.5 लाख करोड़ का
निवेश हो रहा है। विषय मंत्री ने कोयला
कंपनियों से भी कहा है कि ये कोई विवेचन
सुविधाओं में विवेचन करें, ताकि आगे तल
कर उन्हें इससे अधिक आय आये।
सार्वजनिक व निजी कंपनियों के लिए समान रूप के: जायसवाल

नई दिल्ली, 24 सितंबर (भाषा)। कौल मंडल सीमान्त कार्यालय जायसवाल ने सुकूरार को कहा कि प्रशासन ने कोई खाता नहीं देना विधेयक में लाभ का 26 फीसद परियोजना प्रभावित क्षेत्र के सामाजिक विकास पर खर्च करने की अन्वेषणा के मामले में सार्वजनिक कंपनियों (पीएमसी) को रिश्वत देने को कोई प्रताप नहीं है। मंडल ने इस मामले में सार्वजनिक और निजी कंपनियों के लिए समान अवसर का प्रयोग किया है।

लाभ हिरोशीमा प्रणाली में पीएमसी और निजी कंपनियों को समान अवसर के सबक लाभ जायसवाल ने कहा- निश्चित रूप से, ऐसा होगा चाहिए। उन्होंने कहा कि पीएमसी की लाभ हिस्सेदारी प्रणाली में रिश्वत देने को कोई प्रताप (मंज़िरी समुह के समक्ष) नहीं है। उल्लेखनीय है कि इस्तामंज़िरी वीरभद्र सिंह ने पैल और एनएमडीसी जैसी सार्वजनिक कंपनियों को लाभ हिस्सेदारी प्रणाली से विशेष फुट देने की मांग को थी।

कौल इंडिया लिमिटेड के अध्यक्ष पांडुरंगार ने जायसवाल के विचारों से सहमत जताते हुए कहा कि कंपनी लाभ हिस्सेदारी में किसी तरह की रिश्वत की मांग नहीं कर रही है। वहीं रेल और टेक स्टील ने इस तरह की हिस्सेदारी की प्रणाली में भूमिका निभाते हुए की और काम चलाते हैं।

उससे राजशाही ने लाभ के साथ छुट्टी देने के लिए सार्वजनिक कंपनियों को अलग कर के रूप में परिवर्तित किया है जबकि बिन्दुड़ स्टील एंड पापर प्रतिबंधित कार्य हिस्सेदारी को करार के लिए निर्देश दिया। प्रशासन के सबक विधेयक के मुताबिक ज्ञान कंपनियों को अपने लाभ का 26 फीसद हिस्सा प्रभावित स्थानीय लोगों के विकास पर खर्च करना अनिवार्य होगा।
Stopping mining projects no solution to help displaced: FM

Finance minister Pranab Mukherjee shakes hands with CIL chairman P S Bhattacharyya as MoS for coal Sripriakash Jaiswal (left) looks on at the inauguration of the 3rd Coal Summit 2010 in New Delhi on Friday.

AT a time when a GoM is considering a proposal to give 26 per cent profit of mining projects to tribals, finance minister Pranab Mukherjee today said though people being displaced due to mining activities should be made beneficiary in economic development, solution does not lie in completely stopping such projects.

“Answer does not lie in completely stopping the mining activities. The answer lies in providing alternatives to those who will be displaced, those who will suffer, in what form we can compensate them and make them the beneficiary of the economic development. That is the challenge and we are addressing that issue,” the finance minister said at a Coal Summit here.

The issue of mining has snowballed into a raging controversy ever since the environment ministry rejected the earlier clearances given to Vedanta’s Rs 70,000-crore bauxite mining project in Niyamgiri Hills of Orissa on the grounds of violating green and tribal norms. Moreover, the issue also got a political colour after Rahul Gandhi, general secretary of the Congress, backed the tribals’ cause in Niyamgiri hills, which is home to Dongria Kondhi tribe.

The government is already in the process of framing a new mining legislation for displaced. A Group of Ministers (GoM), for the purpose, headed by Mukherjee, has proposed, among other things, that companies should share 26 per cent of their profit from mining with those displaced.

The mines ministry is preparing the final draft of the bill and the GoM is expected to meet soon for clearing it. During the summit, Mukherjee also asked coal companies to make investment in coal washing to realise better returns in the long run.

“In our medium term plan we should emphasise on coal washing. The moment we supply washed coal to the end users, I think we can charge little more... therefore more investment in this aspect will be paying in the long term,” he said.

Referring to environmental challenges, the finance minister said world over there is an increasing demand of going for clean energy and developed countries will have to bear in mind that, “they owe a responsibility to the Third World because for over 200 years the responsibility of adversely affecting the climate is not the contribution of developing countries but substantially it is the contribution of the developed countries”.

He added that India has to meet the compelling demand of providing electricity, which, even after 63 years of independence, has been denied to almost 300 million people. “That aspect is also to be kept in view and it cannot be simply ignored,” he said.
परियोजना बंद करने से नहीं होगा
विश्वास समस्या का समाधान
प्रभावित लोगों को वैकल्पिक सुविधाएं मुहैया कराई जाएगी: प्रणव

नई दिल्ली (प्रजेर्सिय)। खाना परियोजनाओं को लेकर पाल रहे विश्वय के बीच सरकार ने कहा है कि परियोजनाओं के कारण विश्वय लोगों को उनकी जीवनस्तरों के लिए वैकल्पिक सहयोग उपलब्ध कराने चाहिए ये कहने से सरकार का विवादित परियोजनाओं को बंद करने से नहीं है।

विश्वय मंत्री प्रणव मुखर्जी ने यह आयोजित समारोह समेत नहीं कि कष्टीयों का श्रद्धालु करने का बाहर है, विश्वय सरकार ने यहां नहीं कि समय में विस्तारित होते हैं कि विश्वय लोगों की समस्याओं का वितरण है यह विवादित वैकल्पिक सुविधाएं उपलब्ध कराएं जाए। यह बाहर है कि उनकी लोगों तर्क से अर्थशास्त्रीय का संबंध है और रिपोर्ट देने से उनके विश्वय विवाद में साथी की रुपरेखा का संबंध है। विश्वय लोगों का यह विवाद ऐसे समय में सामने आया है जब जब उनकी आयोजित में गायत्री एक नयी समूह खाना परियोजनाओं के लिए पीड़ितों को दिखाने के प्रस्ताव पर निर्भर कर रहा है।

मंत्री सम्मेलन में प्रवक्ता रहा है कि खाना परियोजनाओं से होने के बाद श्रद्धालु
Different views on profit-sharing

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: Sharp differences over the proposed 26 per cent profit-sharing by mining companies with local population in the draft Mining Bill came to the fore on Friday when Coal Minister Sriprakash Jaiswal rebutted Steel Minister Virbhadra Singh’s plea to exempt public sector undertakings from the ambit of the proposed law.

Speaking at the Coal Summit here, Mr. Jaiswal said he strongly believed that PSUs and private players should get a level playing field under the profit-sharing regime.

The Coal Minister, speaking in contrast to Mr. Singh, said there is no proposal before the GoM to give concessions to PSUs in this regard. Differences also emerged among PSUs with Coal India chief Partha S. Bhattacharyya supporting the proposed policy initiative while Steel Authority of India Chairman C. S. Verma had sought exemption from this regime whenever it was implemented.

Mr. Singh had spoken about giving special concession to the PSUs stating they deserve differential treatment, as they have been continuously committed to fulfilling their social responsibility obligation. The Tatas have also criticised the proposal and asked the government not to charge ‘profit-sharing’ as a separate tax, saying that social obligation is part of the operating cost of the company. The proposal has been termed discriminatory by Jindal Steel and Power, which is led by industrialist-turned-Congress MP Naveen Jindal. The firm has termed the proposed 26 per profit-sharing as too high.
Mining projects: solution lies in compensating displaced people

Group of Ministers to clear the new draft Mining Bill

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: Stopping of mining projects is not the right solution and it is important to adequately compensate people and make them beneficiaries of economic development, Union Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee said here on Friday at a coal summit.

Mr. Mukherjee said the solution did not lie in stopping mining projects but in properly compensating people who were displaced. “Answer does not lie in the companies stopping mining activities. Answer lies in providing alternatives to those displaced. We have to see in what form we can compensate them and make them beneficiaries of economic development,” he remarked.

Mr. Mukherjee’s comments gain significance in the backdrop of the recent decision of the Environment Ministry rejecting earlier clearances to Vedanta’s Rs.7,000-crore bauxite mining project in Orissa, citing violation of green and tribal norms. The Ministry has also halted the land acquisition process of Korean steel giant Posco’s Rs.54,000-crore steel project in the State citing similar violations.

The Vedanta group was in pact with the Orissa Mining Corporation in the last six years to mine bauxite from the State’s Niyamgiri hills, the abode of Dongria Kondh tribe, to feed its aluminium project. AICC General Secretary Rahul Gandhi has also backed the cause of tribals in the Niyamgiri hills.

While companies are asked to invest in coal washing, a Group of Ministers, headed by Mr. Mukherjee, is considering a new draft Mining Bill which, among other things, proposes to make companies share 26 per cent of their profit from mining with those displaced. “The issue of compensating those displaced is the challenge and we are addressing that issue. The GoM will meet shortly to clear the draft Bill,” the Finance Minister said.

The profit-sharing proposal has been questioned by the industry on the ground that 26 per cent is too high and is not practical.

Greenfield steel projects of ArcelorMittal and Posco, worth about Rs.1.5 lakh crore, have been delayed for about five years due to tribal protests against land acquisition in Orissa and Jharkhand.

Mr. Mukherjee asked coal companies to make investment in coal washing to realise better returns in the long run.
The Asian Age, Delhi  
Saturday, 25th September 2010, Page: 16  

Width: 12.52 cms Height: 17.56 cms, Ref: pmin.2010-09-25.43.94

Stopping mining isn’t solution, says Pranab

New Delhi, Sept. 24: In the midst of a debate over development vis-a-vis environment protection, the Union finance minister, Mr Pranab Mukherjee, on Friday said that the solution does not lie in stopping mining projects but in properly compensating people who are displaced.

"The answer does not lie in the companies stopping mining activities. The answer lies in providing alternatives to those displaced... in what form we can compensate them and make them beneficiaries of economic development,” the Union finance minister, Mr Pranab Mukherjee, told a Coal Summit here.

Mr Mukherjee’s comments came within a month of the environment ministry rejecting earlier clearances to Vedanta’s Rs 7,000-crore bauxite mining project in Orissa citing violation of green and tribal norms.

The ministry had also halted the land acquisition process for Posco’s Rs 54,000-crore steel project in the state citing similar violations.

The Vedanta Group was in a pact with Orissa Mining Corporation since for the past six years to mine bauxite from the state’s Niyamgiri hills, which is the abode of the Dongria Kondh tribe, to feed its aluminium project in the state.

The Congress general secretary, Mr Rahul Gandhi, has also backed the tribal’s cause in Orissa’s Niyamgiri hills.

Currently, a group of ministers (GoM), headed by Mr Mukherjee himself, is considering a new mining legislation which, among other things, proposes that companies share 26 per cent of their profit from mining with those displaced.

The issue, however, has also pitted steel and coal ministries against each other after PSUs sought concession from the rule.

The coal minister, Mr Sriprakash Jaiswal, said there has to be a level playing field for PSUs and private players under the profit-sharing regime.

Mr Jaiswal’s Cabinet colleague and the steel minister, Mr Virbhadra Singh, however, argued for differential treatment for PSUs as they have been committed to fulfilling their social obligation. — PTI
STOPPING MINING PROJECTS WILL NOT HELP DISPLACED PEOPLE: FM

Coal ministry opposes concessions for PSUs in profit sharing

Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee today said people displaced due to mining projects should be provided alternative sources of livelihood in addition to adequate compensation. “The solution does not lie in companies stopping mining activities. It lies in providing alternative sources of livelihood to those displaced. We have to ensure that we compensate them and make them beneficiaries of economic development,” he said at the Coal Summit 2010 here.

On the possibility of public sector undertakings (PSUs) getting any concession in the profit-sharing regime, to be introduced by the new mining Bill, Coal Minister Sriprakash Jaiswal, who was also present at the summit, said: “There is no proposal being considered by the Group of Ministers (GoM) to treat PSUs separately. We will have to offer level playing field to both the private and public sector companies.”

A 10-member GoM, headed by Mukherjee, is currently finalising the draft Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Bill, which is likely to make it mandatory for mining companies to share 26 per cent of their profits with the tribal population affected by the projects.

Recently, Steel Minister Virbhadra Singh, who is also a part of the GoM, had sought “special consideration” for PSUs like Steel Authority of India Ltd (SAIL) and mining major NMDC in the profit-sharing provision.

The new legislation will also have provisions to check the rampant illegal mining in the country and is likely to be introduced in the coming winter session of Parliament.

Coal India Ltd, the state-owned coal miner, shares Jaiswal’s views on profit sharing. “We support the policy on distributive justice for the local populace affected by mining projects,” Chairman Partha S Bhattacharya, who was also present, said. “We are not seeking any concession in profit sharing,” he added.

Domestic corporate entities have expressed discontent over the government’s profit-sharing proposal to benefit locals. Tatas, which run the private sector giant Tata Steel, had recently stated that the government should not charge the profit shared as separate tax, as social obligation forms a part of the company’s operating cost.

Jaiswal also said the delays in obtaining forest clearances by mining companies were a major constraint in increasing production from captive coal blocks. The Union environment ministry had recently announced an indicative categorisation of the country’s coal bearing regions as “go” and “no-go” areas, specifying regions where mining could be permitted only after stringent forest clearances were obtained.
HC questions Centre’s inaction on illegal mining

BS REPORTER
Bangalore, 24 September 2010

The Karnataka High Court today questioned the central government as to why it had not taken suo motu action to check illegal mining in the state under the relevant Act.

A Bench of the high court headed by Chief Justice I.S. Khehar sought a reply from the Centre’s counsel as to why the government did not act under Section 30 of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, as it claims the state government has no powers to ban export of iron ore.

The Bench was hearing a petition filed by nine mining companies against the ban on the export of iron ore by the Karnataka government.

“This is an extensive litigation and we want to know in detail the responses from all parties involved,” said Justice Khehar.

Under Section 30 of the MMDR Act, the central government may, on its own motion or on application made within the prescribed time by an aggrieved party, revise any order made by a state government or other authority in exercise of the powers conferred on it by or under the Act (with respect to any mineral other than a minor mineral).

The judge asked the Central government to give its reply by October 1, before adjourning the hearing.

The Bench, also comprising Justice Abdul Nazir, had directed the state government to amend the Karnataka Mineral (Regulation of Transport) Rules, 2008, by incorporating the agreed procedures arrived on September 15, between mining companies and the state government.
NEW DELHI: Amid tribals protesting against some mining projects, Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee said people being displaced should be provided alternative sources of livelihood, besides adequate compensation, but the solution does not lie in stopping projects.

"The answer does not lie in the companies stopping mining activities," Mukherjee said at the Coal Summit here on Friday.

"The answer lies in providing alternatives to those displaced... in what form we can compensate them and make them beneficiary of economic development."
Stopping mining projects no solution for displaced: FM

NEW DELHI, 24 SEPTEMBER: In the midst of debate over development vis-a-vis environment protection, finance minister Mr Pranab Mukherjee today said the solution did not lie in stopping mining projects but in properly compensating the people who are displaced.

"Answer does not lie in the companies stopping mining activities. Answer lies in providing alternatives to those displaced... in what form we can compensate them and make them beneficiaries of economic development," finance minister Mr Pranab Mukherjee told a coal summit here.

Mr Mukherjee's comments came within a month of environment ministry rejecting earlier clearances to Vedanta's Rs 7,000-crore bauxite mining project in Orissa citing violation of green and tribal norms.

The ministry has also halted land acquisition process for Poseco's Rs 54,000-crore steel project in the state citing similar violations.

Vedanta group was in pact with Orissa Mining Corporation since past six years to mine bauxite from state's Niyamgiri hills, which is abode of Dongria Kondh tribe, to feed its aluminium project in the state.

Congress general secretary Mr Rahul Gandhi has also backed the tribals cause in Orissa's Niyamgiri hills.

Currently, a group of ministers (GoM), headed by Mr Mukherjee himself, is considering a new mining legislation, which, among other things, proposes that companies share 26 per cent of their profit from mining with those displaced.

"That (the issue of compensating those displaced) is the challenge and we are addressing that issue," the finance minister said.

Meanwhile, differences within the government came to the fore today with coal minister Mr Sriprakash Jaiswal brushing aside the steel ministry's suggestion for giving concessions to PSUs in the proposed law for 26 per cent profit sharing with people displaced by mining projects. There are differences between two of the PSUs concerned—Coal India and SAIL —as well on the issue.

"Definitely, it should be there," Mr Jaiswal said, when asked whether there should be a level-playing field for PSUs and private players under the profit-sharing regime.

He added that there was no proposal before the group of ministers to give concessions to PSUs. pti
अब खानें आवश्यक नहीं, नीलाम होंगी

जलद आएगी नई खानन नीति, अवैध खानन रोकने के लिए भरतपुर और अलवर में खाने के दिविलेस कार्यालय

राजस्थान में अब महानर मिलास की खाने आवश्यक नहीं होगी, जबकि उन्हें नीलाम किया जाएगा। अवैध खानन रोकने के लिए सरकार ने नीलाम नीति लागू की है। इस नीति के अंतर्गत खानन का कोई साथी नहीं देना होगा और खानन नीति के अंतर्गत खानन रोकने के लिए जिला मंडलों में नीलाम कार्यालय बनाए जाएंगे।

哪怕न मिलास में क्या? : मेहदी पहर, मार्केट, ग्रेनाइट, कोटा स्टोन, बजरी आदि।

अब तक बांटी गई क्लास : अब तक मजबूती और अवैध अपने पार करने के लिए नीलाम नीति के अंतर्गत रोकने के लिए प्रतिपक्ष अपने पार करने के लिए नीलाम नीति के अंतर्गत रोकने के लिए प्रतिपक्ष अपने पार करने के लिए प्रतिपक्ष अपने पार करने के लिए प्रतिपक्ष अपने पार करने के लिए प्रतिपक्ष अपने पार करने के लिए प्रतिपक्ष अपने पार करने के लिए प्रतिपक्ष अपने पार करने के लिए प्रतिपक्ष अपने पार करने के लिए प्रतिपक्ष अपने पार करने के लिए प्रतिपक्ष अपने पार करने के लिए प्रतिपक्ष अपने पार करने के लिए प्रतिपक्ष अपने पार करने के लिए प्रतिपक्ष अपने पार करने के लिए प्रतिपक्ष अपने पार करने के लिए प्रतिपक्ष अपने पार करने के लिए प्रतिपक्ष अपने पार करने के लिए
Quarry workers’ deathly future cast in stone
Miners At Rajasthan’s Illegal Marble & Sandstone Mines Are Destined To Die A Painful Death

Rituraj Tiwari
JAIPUR

SITTING outside the clinic of respiratory diseases specialist Dr SN Jagota in Bhiwara town, 300 km from Rajasthan’s capital Jaipur, Mangwana Ram tried fighting back a fresh bout of dry, chesty cough. But realising it was a futile effort, he slowly yielded to it, as usual. The spells of cough had become deep and painful.

Dr Jagota knows the fate of his patient, and he says medicines provide Ram only short-term relief. If you are down with acute silicosis of the kind Ram suffers from, you are destined to die “a slow but sure death”, he says, watching with a deadpan expression the long queue of patients outside.

Death has lost its sting in parts of Rajasthan. In neighbouring Shriji Ka Kheeda, which falls in Bhiwara district, more than 70 people from 60 families have died in the past decade of silicosis caused by inhalation of dust containing free crystalline silica. Out there, they call it, not without a tinge of sarcasm, the village of widows. Their men were all mine workers employed in illegal stone quarries that have mushroomed over the past 10 years across the state thanks to record demand for sandstone, marble and other stones as people across the country built homes, offices and malls at a faster clip than before in an economy that grew at an average of nearly 7% during the period.

Besides being home to the largest reserves of high-quality sandstone, granite and limestone, Rajasthan accounts for nearly 95% of the marble produced in the country, which is among the world’s largest producers of such stones.
No relief from central schemes

ACCORDING to Jaipur-based apex stone industry organisation Centre for Development of Stones, Rajasthan is the largest producer of dimensioned stones in the country. The state produces 5 crore tonnes a year. The annual production of marble is around 1.5 crore tonnes while that of sandstone and granite is 1.25 crore tonnes each. Stone production in the state grew by more than 100% to around 5 crore tonnes in 2009-10 from 2.15 crore tonnes in 2001-02 as demand, domestic and overseas, accelerated.

For Ram and his ilk, though employed in one of the state's biggest industries, its illegal status means the central government's plans to offer compensation and healthcare plans to those affected by mining won't cover them. The Congress-led UPA government, drawing inspiration from Nehru family scion Rahul Gandhi's passion for egalitarian politics, looks to bring in an ordinance which, among other proposals, mandates that corporates set aside 26% of their annual profits from each mining project for local people displaced by such ventures. The Rajasthan administration's efforts to get owners of legal mines to offer health insurance cover for people they employ have produced no results.

Despite stone mining's links to several occupational diseases such as pneumoconiosis, silicosis, tuberculosis, asbestosis and asthma, abject poverty keeps driving villagers in many parts of the state to illegal mining. Says Panna Lal of Badi Sadri village in Chittorgarh district: "Penury is more horrid than death. I don't want to see my children crying loud for a piece of roti. Mining will take my life one day, but poverty will kill my children today."

Adds SM Mohnot, chairman of Jodhpur-based NGO Mine Labour Protection Campaign: "These unskilled people work as bonded labourers and become 'traditional mine workers' as their children also take up this profession when they grow up."

"They are then subjected to intoxication in the form of opium and liquor so that they can't quit the place. It's easy to get into a mining job than to leave it," he says.

Elsewhere in the state, at Makrana in Nagaur district, famous for the white marble used to build the Taj Mahal, stone mining is killing life in more ways than one. The marble slurry dumped in the area is wreaking havoc on soil fertility, penetrating the soil surface and uprooting vegetation. The situation is even worse in Badli, Rohila Kalan, Biswawar, Keru, Lordi Dejara, Pabu Magra, Badla Cotecha and Balesar villages of Jodhpur where stone slurry has polluted local drinking water supplies by seeping into ground water.

"People in these areas suffer from chronic stomach ailments. They are more prone to liver and kidney failures besides the usual lung diseases," says Dr Alok Mathur, a gastroenterologist based in Jaipur.

For mine workers looking to quit for jobs elsewhere, central job schemes are of no help. As the majority work away from home, they can't avail the benefits of the ambitious 100-day employment guarantee scheme. The state's stone mining industry is said to employ more than 2 million workers. It has more than 27,500 licensed mines and quarries while the number of illegal ones is estimated to be more than 15,000.

According to Mohnot, a large stretch of the mineral-rich area of the state falls under so-called ecological zone, which can't be leased for mining, but 'influential' people get around the law. He says the rise in demand for dimensional stones on the back of a construction boom have fuelled the illegal mining activities. He adds that even in leased mines, all safety norms are violated nonchalantly, putting at risk the lives of mine workers. "So much so that leaseholders of mines themselves indulge in illegal mining. They encroach on areas around their leased pits and exploit these illegally. This way they get an extra stretch of exploitable mining area without paying royalty and rent," says Mohnot.

Unregulated, illegal mines don't even provide basic facilities such as toilets and drinking water. Safety measures are unheard of in these places. Up to ten miners work in a 150×150 sq ft pit at one time. "At least three deaths occur every day in the state from work-related illnesses like silicosis and tuberculosis. They can't afford to treat these deadly diseases with the Rs 120 they get after 12-13 hours of work," adds Mohnot. There is no official confirmation on these numbers. "There are several health hazards related to mining. But we don't have a particular data on such deaths," says OP Gupta, director of state public health.

Rajasthan mines and petroleum principal secretary Govind Sharma says the government is trying to improve the work conditions and healthcare of these workers. "Mine workers are exposed to several occupational diseases irrespective of whether the mining is legal or illegal. It's far more grave in illegal ones. We can't do much about it except conducting special medical camps for these workers and provide them free treatment," he says. That is easier said than done. By the time free treatment reaches people like Mangwana Ram, it is often too late.
माहिंग पर मुखर्जी ने की बैलेंटेड एप्रॉच की वकालत

नई दिल्ली: वित्त मंत्री प्रणव मुखर्जी ने माहिंग की बजाय आर्थिकयों के विभागित होने के मुद्दे पर बैलेंटेड एप्रॉच अपनाने की वकालत की है। मुखर्जी ने कहा है कि आर्थिकयों इस्तावों को पूरी तरह से रेक देना इस समस्या का हल नहीं है। उन्होंने कहा कि विभागित होने को निकल पुरूष करना जारी है। यद्यपि ऐसे ही मुद्दों को जानकृति देने और इस्तावों के आर्थिक विवेचन का वर्णन करना होगा, वो हर सच्चाई के रूप में चुनकर है कि इस्तावों दे होने वाले मुद्दों का 25 प्रतिशत हिस्सा विभागित होने को दिया जाना चाहिए।
GoM okays revenue share plan for mines

Neeraj Thakur NEW DELHI

The Group of Ministers (GoM) looking at mining regulation is learnt to have accepted the mining ministry’s direct revenue stream (DRS) proposal, “to put purchasing power in the hands of the affected people”.

The idea of DRS is expected to ensure “regular and reasonably predictable amount” in the hands of the tribals so that they can take independent decisions while planning their future economic investment and expenditure.

The DRS formula was worked out after the mining ministry expressed concerns on the model of distribution of mining companies’ profits.

Under the formula, mining firms will share 26% profits or the previous year’s royalty paid, whichever is higher, with the locally affected people.

The funds will be managed by the District Mineral Foundation, which will ensure equitable distribution within the district as per the scheme of entitlements to be devised by the state governments.

The surplus money collected by the foundation can be used for community infrastructure creation, the ministry proposed.

In a presentation made to the GoM ahead of the September 17 meeting, the mining ministry said “pure equity based schemes, linking affected population to the mine, may lead to widespread disparities in compensation even within one district and may lead to unintended social and other consequences.” The GoM has to meet again in the coming weeks to finalise the details of the draft that will go to the Cabinet and be then tabled in Parliament, perhaps in the winter session.

© Mining Bill overlooks some promises, Page 13
Rlys’ haulage rate hike may be reviewed

Ministry looking into the matter after container train operators revolted against recent increase in charges

Ashutosh Kumar
NEW DELHI

With container train operators revolting against the recent hike in haulage charges by the Union railway ministry, the decision is likely to be reviewed.

The ministry, last week, raised the haulage charge on containerised movement of cement, iron and petroleum products ranging between 170-200%.

Confirming this, a senior ministry official said, “We are looking into the matter. We have got representation from the container operators in the country.”

The new commodity-specific rates were to be introduced for a six month period, from October to March 2011. The ministry also offered a 10% introductory discount on the scheme - a move which has failed to appease container operators.

Container operators have already been banned from transporting coal and minerals that are the bulk commodities that the Railways transports and earns maximum revenue thereof.

For container transport, operators pay haulage, which accounts for more than 70% of the operational cost.

The scheme, based on distance and carrying capacity of the containers, will hurt commodities such as cement and stone. Transport of petroleum products will also become costlier.

In case of transport of 20 foot equivalent unit (FEU) container carrying cement and stone over 1,500 km, the operators will have to shell out at least 40% more than the current amount. Similarly, iron and steel haulage would cost 70% more, while petroleum product transport cost will almost double.

In case of 40 FEU, however, the jump in haulage rate is proportionately higher. Cement and stone, in this case, will go up by 125%, iron and steel by 170% and petroleum products by 200%.

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Mining Bill overlooks some promises, say steel cos

Draft regulation does not contain provision for allotment of captive iron ore and coking coal mines for capacity planned before 2006

Promit Mukherjee

Steel sector capacities of more than 30 million tonnes that are either commissioned or under various stages of construction may not get captive mines under the draft mining Bill.

According to the steel industry players, the central government had promised that every company that planned to set up a steel manufacturing unit before 2006 would be allotted captive iron ore and coking coal mines.

However, the recently cleared draft mining Bill, which will replace the Mines and Mineral Development and Regulation Act, 1957, does not talk about this provision at all.

Sheshagiri Rao, director-finance at country’s second-biggest steel manufacturer, JSW Steel, said, “Almost 25-30 million tonnes per annum of steel capacity that has come up in the country has been on the basis of promised captive capacity. But now there is no mention of it in the draft mining Bill.”

He said allotment of the captive mines was recommended in 2004 and later accepted in the Huda Committee recommendations on mining policy in 2006.

On basis of this, the steel companies had committed crores of rupees in steel manufacturing capacity.

Besides that, Rao said there are several provisions which are ambiguous and create confusion among the steel companies.

One of the recommendations is that the government would now auction coal mines to companies looking at setting up power plants, cement plants or steel plants and would discontinue the process of allotment.

While the move was applauded by industry analysts and companies, the Bill has now proposed that mines for which applications for allotment are already pending will not be notified for auctioning process.

“Although the auctioning move is good and will bring in competitiveness, the problem is that almost all mines with proven reserves have pending applications. Therefore, no mines are actually left to be put up for auction,” he said.

He said the draft Bill also suggests that mining of bulk minerals, too, will not be notified for auctioning.

“This will affect the interests of steel and aluminium companies as iron ore and bauxite come under the category of bulk minerals,” he said.

Recently, steel companies and the steel ministry expressed their concern on one of the major proposals of the Bill which asks mining companies to share 26% of their profits with the people affected by their projects.

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आर्ड्सीएल विस्फोटक प्रकरण

बिना लाइसेंस वालों
को 872 टन विस्फोटक बेचा

सीआईडी (सीडी) की
जांच में खुलासा

नवजीत पाटेल@ धौलपुर

राजस्थान एक्सप्लोजियन एंड कैमिकल लिमिटेड (आर्ड्सीएल) ने करीब 872 टन विस्फोटक ऐसे लोगों को दे दिया, जिनके पास लाइसेंस नहीं था।

लाइसेंसियों के अलावा, आर्ड्सीएल ने 872 टन विस्फोटक ऐसे लोगों को दे दिया, जिनके पास लाइसेंस नहीं था।

सीआईडी (सीडी) के जाँच में खुलासा है कि, आर्ड्सीएल ने करीब 872 टन विस्फोटक ऐसे लोगों को दे दिया, जिनके पास लाइसेंस नहीं था।

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बिना लाइसेंस...।

इन दोनों ने वायदे के अनुसार नगर एवं सागर के लिये महज़बुट के द्वारा एक घोषणा के लिए आवेदन किया। उन्होंने इसके बावजूद इन लोगों ने भी कंट्रोलर एक्स्ट्रासीय विभाग जयपुर में लाइसेंस के लिए आवेदन किया। जहां एक घोषणा नहीं होने के कारण आवेदन काफी हो गया। इसमें उन्होंने आईसीएल तक पहुँचाने के लिए आईसीएल से फ्रीमेक्ट ले लिया।

बीच में ही गवर्मेंट विभाग के साथ समाप्त नहीं है। जब भी आईसीएल ने तद्नांगुली विभाग दोहरा अधिकारी और विभाग चीफ अधिकारी में फ्रीमेक्ट के पास नहीं है। दोनों के विभाग निर्माण के पास भी ही गवर्मेंट विभाग नहीं है। इसके नीचे निम्नकरण का दावा में ही गवर्मेंट विभाग का। इसमें आईसीएल के अस्तित्त्व की भी गवर्मेंट विभाग नहीं। सीईआईएल ने आईसीएल के अधिकारी के विभाग की गवर्मेंट विभाग के पास करने पर उनके फ्रीमेक्ट विभाग दोहरा नहीं है।
Mineral Resource Management

By Toki Blah

Is this really how the Government views the mineral resources of the state? The use of the word “exploited” needs to be examined, especially in view of the historical context of India. At best it is a term often used to express the capitalist panderings to market forces and damn the consequences. Unfortunately such a mindset forgets that it’s the local population that too often has to bear the consequences. It’s basically what has been happening in Meghalaya for the last 60 years vis-a-vis “exploitation” of our mineral wealth.

If the draft Policy is aimed at halting the evils of the past, the mindset that has made possible such evils must also be eliminated. State Government can no longer approach the mining of our mineral resources from an “I know it all and national goals are also our goals”. This is no longer applicable. Let us learn from what is happening in other parts of the country especially in other Tribal areas of India. Chattisgarh and Jharkhand are learning comparable points from where bearings on how to proceed on the matter can be culled. The community is a basic stakeholder on all development aspects. The interest of the community can no longer be represented by elected representatives. They have betrayed confidence and trust once too often. The interest of the community can no longer be linked to the benefit of an elite few at the cost of less fortunate others. If Meghalaya is embarking on a mineral management course for the future, such an exercise must be based on equity for all stakeholders, rich and poor alike, otherwise it will fail.

This is Part I, Para 1, titled Mission. Obviously it refers to the Mission Statement of the draft Policy which again is intriguing. The mission is not Vision. A question naturally pops up, “Where does the draft Mineral Policy take the state and its people 10, 20, 50 or 100 years down the line?”

Or is this not important?

What vision do we have in relation to ordinary minerals and so-called strategic minerals? If the Policy is to proceed with a focused mission, then how does it interact with an obviously flawed Meghalaya Industrial Policy? It has been the complacency of many that the Industrial Policy of Meghalaya has only helped in spawning unfriendly mineral based industries. Unfriendly in the sense that these industries be they located at Bymihot or in Jamia hills have not benefited local communities. Community mineral resources, be they quartz, limestone or forests have been sold for a song, with only labourers jobs reserved for the locals. Is this how our resources are to be managed? The only people who have benefited are carpet baggers who have grasped the paltry sales of Single Window Agency Chairperson. Will the draft Mineral Policy check this trend or will it simply turn the tide of exploitation into a flood?

The above relevant question is being asked not because there is any desire or intention to torpedo a good and noble intention. We need to come up with a Policy on how to manage our natural resources. No doubt on this score. Doubts arise because of the fact that the proposed Mineral Policy appears to be a knee jerk reaction and a stand alone intervention. It has no realistic relationship with other complementary Policies. Is it not the fault of the draft Mineral Policy. The fault is the absence of an overarching Development Policy for Meghalaya. A holistic Development Policy will guide and interlink departmental initiatives to one another. But then a holistic Development Policy will also curb all acts of political Nepotism and Despotism. It will hurt the system of Political Patronage in development. It will not do. It is foolish to think of a Vision Statement under such circumstances.

The above Para also speaks of “the need to fo- cus on mineral based industries with due regard to environment”. The term ‘environ- ment’ seems to mean different things to different people, but for most it simply focuses on tree plantations. “I have planted a tree and done my bit for the environment”. So true of our politicians who have absolutely no clue what they are talking about. A typical case where a Chief Minister planting a sapling on environment day and going back to issue permits for 14 cement plants within a 100 sq km area! “Let not your left hand know what your right hand doeth” religiously observed but totally out of its Biblical connotations because being raised is that bereft of strict regulatory interventions, we simply pay lip service to environmental issues without any meaningful action towards emerging environmental and global warming and climate change. This becomes all the more critical when the draft Policy gives recognition to the unique land tenurial systems prevalent in the state and community ownership over land and its resources.

The draft Policy also speaks of Regulations and Development of Human Resources. The suggestion is offered in this regard. As a regulatory measure towards social and scientific mining, why can’t the Policy bring in legislation on permits for mining? The community will retain its rights over the land and its mineral resources. No one will take away my rights over my land. Government however has the onus that this right is used for the benefit of all.

At present we have failed to distinguish between the right to own land and the Social cum Environmental responsibility that such a right bestows on the owner. I might have the right to own a vehicle but also need to exercise responsibility over how I use that vehicle. So a driving license is required. Similarly a mining NOC permit will be given to only those mine owners who have passed a strict and rigid environmental preparation test. Such a provision in the Mining Policy will go a long way in mitigating the looming environmental disaster from unregulated mining in Meghalaya and should form part of a forward looking vision in planning and development for the state.
Right decision
ONGC sees sense finally

After the big failure over its Niyamgiri mining licence, Vedanta may finally get some respite. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) protested against the sale of Cairn India’s shares to the Vedanta Group, probably at the government's behest, but finally appears to have backed down. Its chairman RS Sharma is on record saying his company took a conscious decision not to make a counter-bid for Cairn. After the news of the deal first came, the government’s view was that, as Cairn’s partner, ONGC had the right of first refusal as it were.

In addition, the government had argued that it was an Indian asset that was being sold and this was against the production sharing contract that the company had signed. This didn’t fly since the operating company, Cairn Energy India Pty, wasn’t changing hands, so the production sharing contract hadn’t been violated.

The story may not, though, be fully over yet since there is still the issue of royalties on the fields. Right now, estimates are ONGC will have to pay Rs 12,000 crore of royalty on behalf of Cairn until 2020—this will rise further if, as is likely, oil prices stay beyond $60. The official argument is that there is no reason why ONGC should continue to pay Cairn's royalties since the company has been sold for a huge profit. If the government does attempt to shift some of the royalty payments to Cairn-Vedanta, that will be unfortunate. For one, it’s not as if ONGC is paying the royalty just like that—ONGC got its stake in Cairn as a result of a government promise that it would pay the royalty and cesses on the finds. Second, if ONGC is to be relieved of the responsibility of paying the royalty and cesses, while benefiting from the appreciation of its share in Cairn, a similar treatment would have to be given to other oil/gas fields—many Indian firms also have ONGC/OIL as partners and they pay the royalty/cess. Now that the government has done the right thing by getting ONGC to back down on the counter-offer, the sensible thing would be to go all the way and to not disturb the royalty agreement either.
Power Ministry moves to save projects in ‘no-go’ mining zones

Mulls boundary adjustments, sites in ‘go’ areas

Our Bureau
New Delhi, Sept. 24

Amid plans to ring-fence nearly half the country's coal-bearing areas as no-mining zones, the Power Ministry is considering the option of accommodating affected blocks through boundary adjustment where permissible or moving proposed sites to the ‘go’ zones.

The Ministry of Environment and Forests had earlier classified certain coal blocks as ‘no-go’ zones — areas with dense forest cover where mining will not be allowed.

Existing blocks, where "substantive work" has been done by the developer on the ground, however, will not be affected by the new ‘no-go’ classification, Power Ministry officials said.

"The problem is mostly with the coal-fired power projects that have been lined up for the Twelfth Plan. We are working on the blocks that are slated to be affected under the new classification. Some blocks could be accommodated through boundary adjustment while others could be shifted from 'no-go' to 'go' zones," a senior Power Ministry official said.

**SUBMISSION OF BIDS**

As a result of the new environmental classification, the Power Ministry had further extended the date of submission of initial bids for a proposed Ultra Mega Power Project (UMPP) in Chhattisgarh, as the coal mines initially earmarked for the project fell under the "no-go" zones.

Coal block allocated for another UMPP planned in Orissa is also awaiting environmental clearance.

The Prime Minister's Office has for the past two months been mediating to find a solution on the issue of classification of coal mining belts into ‘go’ and ‘no-go’ areas, which saw the Ministries of Coal and Environment locking horns.

The Coal, Power and the Steel Ministries had separately petitioned the PMO for breaking the logjam, citing delays in projects under the new mining proposal.

A PMO-appointed panel looking at the issue, headed by Planning Commission Member, Mr B.K. Chaturvedi, is said to have suggested that the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) is the right forum to decide on the row among the Ministries over classification of coal-bearing areas and providing for alternative coal blocks to those affected by this new ‘no-go’ zones policy, officials said.

Deliberations on the issue were held by the PMO during the last two months and it was felt that in some areas companies have already made investments, especially those awarded the UMPP, and remedial measures needed to be taken in specific cases. For a company to get an alternative mining location, the panel had recommended that blocks falling in a ‘no-go’ zone should have been awarded before end of June 2010.

The nine coalfields that were analysed included North Karanpura and West Bokaro (Jharkhand), IB Valley (Orissa and Chhattisgarh) Singrauli (Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh), Talcher (Orissa), Wardha (Maharashtra), Mandirgarh and Hasdeo (Chhattisgarh) and Shoagpur (Madhya Pradesh).
Coal, steel ministries differ on leeway for PSUs in mining Bill

Steel minister Virbhadra Singh

Coal minister Sripракаш Jaiswal

Steel minister has put forward a demand for giving 'special consideration' to PSUs like SAIL and NDMC in the proposed law.

He says the PSUs deserve differential treatment for their commitment in fulfilling social responsibility, undertaken in different parts of India.

Coal minister has said there should be level-playing field for PSUs & private players in the proposed law for profit-sharing.

He says the profit-sharing plan, which is contained in the new mining Bill which requires parliamentary approval, would benefit those losing land to mines.

New Delhi, Sep 24: Differences within the government came to the fore on Friday with coal minister Sriprakash Jaiswal brushing aside the steel ministry’s suggestion for giving concessions to PSUs in the proposed law for 36% profit-sharing with people displaced by mining projects.

There are differences between two of the PSUs concerned—Coal India and SAIL—as well on the issue.

"Definitely, it should be there," Jaiswal said when asked whether there should be a level playing field for PSUs and private players under the profit-sharing regime. He added that there is no proposal before the group of ministers to give concessions to PSUs. A group of ministers headed by finance minister Pranab Mukherjee is considering a proposed new mining law which provides for sharing mining profits with affected people.

Jaiswal’s views are in contrast to steel minister Virbhadra Singh’s demand for giving a ‘special consideration’ to PSUs like SAIL and NDMC.

Singh said the PSUs deserve differential treatment, as they have been continuously committed to fulfilling their social responsibility obligation.

"Some special consideration has to be given to PSUs for the historical role (in social obligations) being undertaken in different parts of the country,” he had said earlier this week. Singh had supported the demand by the SAIL for differential treatment.

However, Coal India does not toe SAIL’s line. CIL chairman Partha S Bhattacharyya supported the proposed policy initiative for ‘distributive justice’ to the local people displaced or affected by mining projects. “We are not seeking any concession in profit-sharing,” Bhattacharyya said.
Stopping mining projects not a solution, says Pranab

New Delhi, Sep 24: Amid tribals protesting against some mining projects, the government on Friday said people being displaced should be provided alternative sources of livelihood, besides adequate compensation, but solution does not lie in stopping projects.

"Answer does not lie in the companies stopping mining activities. Answer lies in providing alternatives to those displaced... in what form we can compensate them and make them beneficiary of economic development," finance minister Pranab Mukherjee said. Mukherjee's comments come at a time when a GoM, headed by him, is deliberating upon a proposal to give tribals a part of profits in mining projects. The GoM has proposed that 26% of the net profit should go to the displaced tribals. However, the proposal has been criticised in certain quarters.
Q4 demand perks up aluminium

Reuters
London, Sept. 24

Copper and aluminium swung to new five-month highs on Friday, with prospects of seasonally strong fourth-quarter demand.

Benchmark copper on the London Metal Exchange was $7,910 a tonne in the open outcry trade, up from $7,885.

Aluminium was at $2,305 a tonne, having reached $2,311.75, a new five-month peak, earlier. Lead at $2,287 was up against $2,275. Zinc changed hands at $2,267. Nickel climbed to $22,875. Tin was at $23,725, having matched two-year highs at $23,800.
Notice to Bhushan Steel, GVK over coal blocks

NEW DELHI: The government on Friday said it has issued showcase notices to GVK Power and Bhushan Steel and Power for their failure to develop coal blocks awarded to them within the timeframe stipulated in the mining agreements. The notices, which say that both the companies have failed to adhere to commitments made to the government to develop their respective coal blocks, come as part of the coal ministry’s efforts to weed out “non-serious” companies that have procrastinated development of allocated captive blocks. Neither company was available for an official comment. On Wednesday, the government had issued showcase notices to three firms — Monnet Ispat, Chhattisgarh Mineral Development Corporation and Utkal Coal — for similar reasons.
Don’t quit mining, give options to tribals: FM

26% Profit-Sharing Rule Should Apply To Both PSUs and Private Cos: Jaiswal

FINANCE minister Pranab Mukherjee has favoured a balanced approach on the issue of displacement of tribals due to mining projects, saying that solution does not lie in stopping these projects altogether.

“Answer does not lie in the companies stopping mining activities. Answer lies in providing alternatives to those displaced... in what form we can compensate them and make them beneficiary of economic development,” Mr Mukherjee said at a coal summit on Friday.

Mr Mukherjee’s comments came within a month of environment ministry rejecting earlier clearances to Vedanta’s Rs 7,000 crore bauxite mining project in Orissa citing violation of green and tribal norms.

The ministry has also halted land acquisition process for Posco’s Rs 54,000 crore steel project in the state citing similar violations. A Group of Ministers (GoM), headed by the finance minister, is deliberating a proposal to give tribals a part of profits in mining projects.

“We are addressing this issue,” he said. The GoM has proposed that 26% of the net profit of mining projects should go to the displaced tribals and other affected locals but differences in the government remain.

Coal Minister Sriprakash Jaiswal on Friday said that the proposal on 26% profit sharing by mining companies should be applied to all public and private companies.

The steel ministry has favoured concessions for its PSU from the profit sharing proposal introduced in the draft Mines and Mineral (Development and Regulation) Bill.

Steel minister Virbhadra Singh has gone on record seeking special consideration for companies like SAIL and NMDC as they have been continuously committed to fulfilling their social responsibility obligation.

“Definitely, it should be there,” Mr Jaiswal said when asked whether there should be a level playing field for PSUs and private players under the profit-sharing regime. He added that there is no proposal before the Group of Ministers to give concessions to PSUs.

Coal India Ltd (CIL), which will soon tap the market with its maiden public offer, also supports sharing of profit with project affected people.

“We are not seeking any concession in profit-sharing,” Mr Bhattacharyya said.

On its proposed IPO, the CIL chairman said that the issue will remain open for high networth individuals (HNIs) and retail investors a day longer than institutional buyers. The miner’s 4-day public issue is expected to open on October 18.

This model (entire one day for retail and high networth individuals) helped several companies, which hit the market with their offers recently, attract more participation from the non-institutional investors.
SAIL chief for clarity on Mining Bill

AMID FURORE over 26 per cent profit-sharing with locals under the proposed new mining law and demands for relaxing the norms for PSUs, SAIL chairman, Mr. C. S. Verma, on Thursday said there is a need for “consensus building” in the industry on the draft legislation. “There is an immediate need for consensus building among stakeholders on key policy enablers like the proposed MMDR Act and R&R policy,” Mr Verma, who is also the chairman of CII’s National Committee on Steel, said. Mr Verma, asked the industry to present itself in “one voice” and stressed on the need to work with the government to boost growth of the steel sector.