Margins hit, Birla Corp to go to SC against mining ban

Kolkata, June 29: Birla Corporation, the flagship firm of the M.P. Birla Group, will move the Supreme Court to fight the mining ban imposed by Rajasthan High Court, which has severely impacted margins.

At the 13th annual general meeting of the company on Thursday, chairman Harsh Luthra said the company had taken a hit of Rs 120 crore after mining was banned around the Chittorgarh fort since last August. For the quarter ended March, net profit was down 8.5% to Rs 457.6 crore against Rs 496 crore in the same period last fiscal. For fiscal 2011-12, the company’s net profit on a consolidated basis declined by over 35% to Rs 419.44 crore, though net sales were up 5.8% to Rs 2,340.87 crore.

“We have suffered because of the order. We will take legal steps to protect ourselves. We have been mining in the area for 40 years and the Indian Bureau of Mines has surveyed the area and given a report that there has been no adverse impact on the Chittorgarh fort due to the mining operations,” Luthra said.

Shareholders raised questions during the meeting and demanded a vote on whether Luthra should continue as director in the backdrop of the Birla-Luthra legal row over property rights which is yet to be settled.

Luthra let shareholders air their grievances and then said that the Company Law Board and courts had cleared his appointment.

“We are here for the good of Birla Corporation. Many people with vested interests have come to the annual meet with a coloured vision. Despite all the constraints, our net sales have gone up,” he told the shareholders.

Luthra said margins will be under pressure for the next three-four quarters. At the Chanderia plant, the company produces 1.3 million tonnes of cement, but can expand to 2.7 million tonnes. But the ban forced the company to import limestone from outside, thus impacting margins, Luthra said.

The chairman said it has got prospecting licences for a coal mine and a limestone mine in Ethiopia, but declined to give details.
India backs Afghanistan’s pitch for foreign investment

AANISH KULKA
New Delhi, 28 June

The slick cityscape graphic playing on the screens — depicting tall buildings and the wind on a grass-lined canal and broad, orderly roads, lined by glass and steel buildings — was a world away from the grim, gritty reality of Kabul today. But this was the future envisaged by the Afghan government today at the Delhi Investment Summit on Afghanistan, in the first concerted attempt to lure foreign investors to that country.

For a decade now, starting from the 2002 ‘Tokyo Donors’ Conference held in the wake of the Taliban’s ouster from Kabul, the international community has passed the hat around for the expenses of running a country with practically no source of income. Next month, the hat will be passed around again at Tokyo to meet the commitments of last month’s NATO conference in Chicago, where the international community pledged its support for another decade.

After 2024, Afghanistan might well have to pay its own bills. To get its economy rolling, Kabul is flaunting its natural resources, its hardworking people, and a strategic geography that makes it a land bridge between south and central Asia.

India is playing an anchor role in supporting Kabul’s outreach. New Delhi policymakers worry that the drawdown of NATO forces by 2014 would leave, in the words of Foreign Minister S.M. Krishna today, “a political or security vacuum that will be filled by extremists once again.”

New Delhi believes only a robust economy and accelerated job creation can stave off serious instability, even civil war. Said Krishna, while inaugurating today’s summit: “Let the grey suits of company executives take the place of olive green or desert brown fatigues of soldiers; and CEOs the place of generals.”

But there was clear apprehension among the approximately 150 Indian, 85 Afghan, and 70 foreign companies and organisations at the summit, that Afghanistan’s troubled security landscape was hardly congenial for business investments. Each of the four senior Afghan ministers who spoke tried to allay those fears, arguing a minimum level of security already existed, which would greatly improve once the domestic economy picked up steam.

“I would like to assure you that most parts of Afghanistan are stable and secure. Almost everywhere, the level of security is very high above that which is needed for economic development to occur. We are well underway towards creating a virtuous cycle in which growth strengthens stability and the increased security leads to further growth,” said Anwar-ul-Haq Ahady, the Afghan minister for commerce and industry.

Said foreign minister Zalmay Rassoul: “While it is true there are certain areas in Afghanistan where the security situation is not ideal, we should remember these areas represent a small part of the country.”

Besides security, Afghan ministers talked up Afghanistan’s business climate, where Kabul has created a “liberal, legal regulatory regime.” Investors would benefit from a financial investment law based on “international best practices,” the lowest tax rates in the region, 100 per cent foreign ownership of companies and cheap and plentiful labour.

However, corruption remains an investor’s concern. Afghanistan has consistently scored low on the World Bank’s ‘Doing Business Indicator’ (DBI). It is also at No 2 in the corruption index of Transparency International.

India has provided Kabul with $2 billion in development aid, making it Afghanistan’s biggest regional donor. Private sector investment, however, has been low at just $2.5 billion, of which only 16 per cent has been in the job-creating manufacturing sector. This is set to change. Last year, a seven-company, SAII-led consortium, named Albeco (Afghan Iron and Steel Consortium) won a contract to develop Afghanistan’s Hajigak iron ore deposits. This is expected to generate $12-14 billion worth of investment, including the setting up of a steel plant, a coal-fired power plant and hundreds of kilometres of railway lines.

The extraction of minerals is a key element of Afghanistan’s plan for self-sufficiency. Minister for Mines Wahidullah Shahrami said that revenues from mining would comprise 45 per cent of Afghanistan’s GDP by 2025.

Besides mining, Afghan officials made a plug for investment in the sectors of power transmission, hydroelectric power generation, infrastructure development, agri-based industry, education and healthcare.

According to the World Bank, Afghanistan’s economy will grow at 4.9 per cent annually between now and 2025. This could increase to almost seven per cent with enhanced progress in agriculture and resources.

Indian foreign ministry officials say the outcome of the Delhi Investment Summit would play a role in the outcome of the Tokyo Donors’ Conference on July 8, where Kabul will present an economic roadmap, entitled ‘Path to Self Reliance’.
We have rolled out 8 projects to quadruple mine capacity in 5 years

Mining and exploration have been identified as the key thrust areas for growth of Hindustan Copper Ltd, says chairman and managing director SHAKEEL AHMED. In an interview with Sudheer Pal Singh, Ahmed talks about the state-run company’s stake sale and expansion plans.

Do you think current market conditions are ripe for the launch of the follow-on public issue of Hindustan Copper? Yes, the market has to live with the uncertain economic outlook, and the company doesn’t see any justification in delaying the issue.

How much money would the government be able to raise through the issue? Would it also involve issue of fresh equity by the company? How much capital the government would raise is dependent on the price of the issue, which will be decided by EGM (empowered group of ministers) just before the opening of the issue. It’s not possible to comment on it at this stage. No fresh equity will be raised. The company has already advised the department of disinvestment and the ministry of mines that it does not require fresh equity for funding its expansion programme.

What is Hindustan Copper’s capex plan for the current financial year, and which are the major areas where the money would be spent? For 2012-13, the capital expenditure plan of the company is ₹41 crore. The major areas will be mine expansion and mine development.

What is the borrowing and cash reserve position of Hindustan Copper at present? At present, the company is debt-free. The cash reserve position is around ₹700 crore.

What are the areas identified by the company as potential growth opportunities in the short to medium term? Also, what are the likely risks associated with growth plans, going forward?

Mining and exploration have been identified as the key thrust areas for growth of the company. Mining operations have consistently generated profits for Hindustan Copper, compared to the refining business. The profitability of the company is driven primarily by mining operations and is the maximum value creator in the value chain.

As part of this strategy, the company plans to focus on detailed exploration of existing mines and new deposits, aggressively expand and consolidate its mining business and acquire new deposits within the country as well as other geographies. Major risks associated with the growth plans are delay in getting environment clearance and shortage of talent for project execution.

What are the steps, if any, taken by the company to add to the shareholder value? Also, what are the reasons for the delay in the launch of the issue?

As mentioned earlier, the company has plans to maximise shareholder value through mine expansion, which is the highest value creator. The company has rolled out eight projects to quadruple its mine capacity from 3.4 million tonnes (mt) per annum to 12.4 mt of ore with an investment of ₹5,435 crore over the next five years.
Hindustan Copper: Pricing is key to success of its FPO

Based on current valuations, experts say the stock is expensive and the planned offer will have to be priced at a discount.
Poor demand, iron ore supply problems hit steel billet market

Manufacturers cut prices, but may not be allowed to do so for long as iron ore availability shrinks

SADANANDA MOHAPATRA
Bhubaneswar, 28 June

Poor demand from producers of long steel and raw material supply problems have choked the steel billet market in the past couple of months. Many manufacturers have either regulated production or cut prices on a bleak demand scenario.

“The reason for the price fall is simple. There is no demand for finished products in the market and it is affecting billet prices. In the past month, we had to reduce prices by ₹1,000-1,500 per tonne,” said Rajendra Sachdeva, owner of Ghaziabad-based billet maker Shivam Steel.

Billet prices currently rule at ₹35,000-36,000 per tonne, depending on grade and size. It is a semi-finished, long steel product, mainly sold by smaller steel plants to larger ones for producing steel meant for construction. Construction activities in the country have received a setback due to muted earnings growth and high interest rates.

“There is no demand for intermediate steel products and industrial production is not encouraging. There is no demand for sponge iron, too, as most steel companies have curbed production,” said the marketing official of a state-based billet producer. Buyers have also restricted billet buying due to the current monsoon season, when construction activity normally dissipates, he added. Spot prices of iron ore fines in the international markets came down by three to four per cent recently on poor demand. In Odisha, the largest producer of iron ore in India, prices are expected to fall in the July-September quarter, industry officials said.

However, steel industry sources said the price fall in billets was temporary, as the constraints in iron ore availability would not allow producers to reduce prices below a point.

“In Odisha, most of the state-owned and private mines are shut due to lack of statutory clearances, thereby creating shortage in raw material supply. As a result, intermediate steel producers have cut production,” said P L Kandol, president of the All Odisha Steel Federation.

From the latest available data, India’s industrial production in April grew by only 0.1 per cent due to a fall in capital goods and manufacturing output. Capital goods output declined 16.3 per cent against growth of 6.6 per cent in the same month last year. The manufacturing sector grew by just 0.1 per cent, much lower than the 5.7 per cent in April 2011.

The prices of billets, semi-finished, long steel products, mainly sold by smaller steel plants to larger ones for producing steel meant for construction, are now at ₹35,000-36,000 per tonne, depending upon grade and size. PHOTO: BLOOMBERG
Tata Power keen on coal mines in S Africa, Indonesia

MUMBAI: Leading private utility Tata Power has said to ensure future fuel supply, it will continue to look for coal mines abroad, as the domestic supply shortage has been impacting its operations. "We are already scouting for coal mines overseas. We are looking at Indonesia and South Africa for acquiring coal mines," Tata Power executive director for Operations S Padmanabhan said on Thursday.
Govt may take auction route to dilute 10% stake in HCL

PTI NEW DELHI

The Government is likely to take the auction route for selling 10 per cent of its stake in Hindustan Coalfield, company's CMD Shashikant said on Thursday.

"There will be 10 per cent stake sale by the Government in one tranche. The Department of Disinvestment will decide the date. The disinvestment is likely to be done through the auction route, though there has to be a final view," he told reporters at the Delhi Investment Summit on Afghanistan here.

The Government used the auction route for the first time in ONGC stake sale to institutional buyers. Market regulator SEBI introduced the route last February to facilitate promoters to offload holdings in listed companies.
हिंद कॉपर का विनिवेश नीलामी के जरिए!

प्रेक्षा नाम सिक्की

हिंदुस्तान कॉपर में अभी 10 परिस्थिति उपबंधीय के विनिवेश के लिए सरकार नीलामी प्रक्रिया अपना सकती है। हिंद कॉपर के चैम्बर के मैनेजर अकांश शर्मा के अनुसार आज की रात बाद में यह कॉपर अगले कुछ महीनों में अभी तक के विनिवेश में अंश हो सकता है। अकांश शर्मा के मैनेजर ने बताया कि कॉपर ने अभी तक नीलामी में अंतिम स्तर के पास पहुँचा है।

शर्मा ने कहा कि इसका कारण प्रस्ताव में तथा पांव में अभी तक अन्य नीलामी के पास पहुँचा है। कॉपर ने अभी तक में राजदूत में अंतिम स्तर के पास पहुँचा है।

प्रेक्षा कहा कि इसका कारण कॉपर ने अभी तक में राजदूत की बात की है कि कॉपर ने अभी तक में राजदूत की बात की है। अकांश ने कहा कि कॉपर ने अभी तक में राजदूत की बात की है।

ग्रामीण अभ्यासी

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Mining: Goa govt reviews files cleared in 10 years

PTI ■ Panaji
To weed out illegal mining activity from the state, Goa government has told the high court they are reviewing all files cleared by the state mines and geology department spanning over a decade.
Neyveli Lignite CMD Ansari to step down

RS REPORTER ■ Chennai
A R Ansari, chairman and managing director of Neyveli Lignite Corporation, will step down on June 30. B Suresh Mohan, director (mines) will take over as the new CMD.
EVEN as the Prime Minister pitches for infrastructure investments, the Union environment ministry is planning to reduce the area available for mining and other infrastructure projects. Official sources told Financial Express the ministry would soon earmark “inviolable areas” which would apply to all developmental and infrastructural projects, besides subsuming nine coalfields in Orissa, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh, which were earlier termed “no go” areas.

So the new norms will be much more prohibitive than the earlier regime. “The go, no go classification will be subsumed in the definition of the inviolate areas. In addition, there will be 7-8 criteria defining inviolate areas, including protected area status, crop diversity, biodiversity richness and the number of species found. Further, the norms will be for the entire country and cover all types of mining and other projects,” said a senior environment ministry official.

The go, no go classification, which relied solely on forest cover, was jointly done by the ministries of coal and environment. A group of ministers (GoM) on coal is now debating the issue after Planning Commission member BK Chaturvedi suggested its withdrawal as it has no legal sanctity.

Continued on Page 2
‘No-go’ back...

The go-no-go classification affected nine major coal fields namely Talcher, IB Valley, Mandiagarm, Sohagpur, Wardha, Singrauli, North Karampura, West Bokaro and Hasdeo and the 602 coal blocks located in these coalfields.

The inviolate areas will not be restricted to national parks, tiger reserves and wildlife sanctuaries and other protected areas but will also include other areas endowed with dense forest cover or rich biodiversity. A committee under environment secretary T Chatterjee will submit final recommendations for these inviolate areas soon. The environment ministry had earlier proposed biodiversity indexing for these areas including animals, insects, herbs, shrubs and reptiles besides the forest cover.

The ministry has also considered a fresh exercise to strictly demarcate some of the areas as “no-go” for coal mining besides looking at the projects on a case-by-case basis.

The go-no-go classification had adversely impacted coal production as these blocks hold 600 million tonnes reserves with a potential to generate 1,90,000 MW of electricity.
Hindustan Zinc to invest Rs 2,000 cr in Rajasthan mines
Contracts awarded to South African, Chinese firms

Suresh P. Iyengar
Mumbai, June 28
Hindustan Zinc plans to invest about Rs 2,016 crore ($360 million) to improve mining operations at its Rampura Agucha and Sindesar Khurd (SK) zinc mines in Rajasthan.

The contracts have been awarded to South Africa-based Shaft Sinkers and two Chinese companies NFC (China Nonferrous Metal Industry's Foreign Engineering & Construction Co Ltd) and CCNSC (China Coal & Construction Co Ltd).

Mr Akhilesh Joshi, Chief Executive Officer, Hindustan Zinc, said the money required for the project will be funded through internal accruals.

UNDERGROUND MINING
The Vedanta Group company had cash and cash equivalents of about Rs 18,000 crore as of March 31, 2012. The projects are scheduled to be completed in 2017. Mining at Rampura Agucha is being done from the open pit. This can be in operation till 372 metres below the surface.

But the mineral reserves and resources below the open pit operating level are to be extracted by suitable underground mining methods, explained a company spokes-person. The company zoned in on a vertical hoisting shaft with crushing system after a detailed haulage assessment.

It was found that this method would be most economical to handle underground ore. The hoisting shaft will also act as a ventilation intake to bring fresh air to the mine production area, he said.

The shaft will reach a depth of 950 metres and will be 7.5 metres in width.

There will be two silos — one for storing ore and one for waste rock. The world's largest zinc mining mine, in Rampura Agucha, has proven reserves 110.4 million tonnes (mt).

About 6.15 mtpa of ore is currently extracted from the mine.

CONTRACT TO NFC
Mining at the silver content-rich SK mine has gone up from 0.3 mtpa to two mtpa in last six years. It has reserve of 81.3 mt.

The shaft at this mine will be 7.5 metre wide and about 1050 metres deep.

NFC has been awarded the $111-million contract which includes engineering contract of $5 million for five years.

The company produced 240 tonnes of silver in FY12. The country's largest silver producer, Hindustan Zinc hopes to rank among top 10 silver producers when its output increases to 500 tonnes by FY14.

It has set up a silver refinery of 518 tonnes per annum to process the silver extracted from this mine.

Suresh@thehindu.co.in
Hindalco Ind
(Buy)

CMP: Rs 115.30
Target: Rs 159

Hindalco’s consolidated net sales and EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation) came in line with our expectation. However, net profit came higher than expectation largely due to higher other income and lower tax rate. Post 50 per cent correction in past three months due to ongoing credit crisis in western world, the company is now trading at P/E of 7.9x FY13E earnings while on EV/EBITDA basis it is trading at 6.5x for FY13E respectively. The valuation looks comfortable at this level. However, delays in expansion projects and cost overrun may hurt the company.

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Zinc rebounds on stocks data

Reuters
London, June 28
Copper spun wheels at largely unchanged levels on Thursday after three days of gains, as investors waited to see whether a European Union summit would succeed in tackling the region's debt crisis.
Galvanising metal zinc jumped 2.5 per cent in official trading to $1,800 a tonne, bouncing back after six days of losses that shaved 7.6 per cent off the price.
The move also came as LME data showed 113,925 tonnes of net inventory cancellations. LME zinc stocks have surged 31 per cent this year to 995,425 tonnes.
Benchmark three month copper at the London Metal Exchange rose 0.07 per cent to trade at $7,410 a tonne in official rings after earlier rising as high as $7,449.50 in Asian trade and dipping into the red in early European activity.
Aluminium was also virtually flat, but other metals were firmer, still feeling the glow of stronger than expected US economic data on Wednesday.
In China, the most-active October copper contract on the Shanghai Futures Exchange gained 0.9 per cent to close at 54,200 yuan ($8,500) a tonne.
In London, three month aluminium inch ed up by 50 cents to $1,872.5 a tonne in official rings, after Shanghai aluminium futures rebounded by 2 percent.
Tin gained 0.53 per cent to $18,800 a tonne while battery material lead added 1.36 per cent to $1,784 and nickel was untraded in the official ring, but was bid at $16,425, a rise of 1.08 per cent.
Coal India gets NTPC’s de-allocated coal mines

Press Trust of India
New Delhi, June 28

The Coal Ministry has given three de-allocated mines, including two of NTPC to CIL, asking it to appoint mine developers to begin production from these blocks at the earliest.

The Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) recently asked the Coal Ministry to fast-track the process of taking back captive blocks from companies which have not developed them within the stipulated time, and giving them to Coal India Ltd (CIL).

Recently, show-cause notices were also issued to 58 allottees, including BP Power, Tata Power, JSW for delaying production from the blocks. The country is facing acute coal shortage and moves are afoot to ensure the production is enhanced.

“The Coal Ministry has given three de-allocated mines a couple of days ago to CIL. It has also asked the PSUs to appoint mine developer operator (MDO) to expedite the development of these blocks,” a top official in the Ministry told PTI.
OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS

The three mines given to CIL are NTPC’s Brahmini and Chichro Patsimal coal blocks in Jharkhand and West Bengal Power Development Corporation’s (WBPDCL) East of Damagoria (Kalyaneshwari) coal mine, the official said.

In May last year, the Coal Ministry had de-allocated Brahmini and Chichro Patsimal coal blocks. Both the blocks were allocated in January 2006 to be jointly operated by a 50:50 NTPC-CIL joint venture.

The Coal Ministry, in the letter last year, had stated that it is “of the view that the allocatee company (NTPC) is not serious about development of coal blocks and (the Government) has, therefore, decided to de-allocate Brahmini and Chichro Patsimal coal blocks allocated to NTPC.”

The Damagoria block was allocated to WBPDCL, which later surrendered the mine to Coal India, citing difficulty in developing it.
SAIL-led team may sign $10 b investment pact

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: SAIL-led consortium is likely to sign an investment pact with the Afghanistan Government by next month-end, entailing an investment of about $10 billion to develop steel as well as thermal power plants and necessary infrastructure.

Speaking on the sidelines of the CII organised Afghanistan investment summit here, country’s Mines Minister Wahidullah Shahrai told journalists that right now the deal was in the final stage of negotiations. “We are hopeful that we will sign the formal investment agreement by the end of July,” he added.

The Afghan Iron & Steel Consortium had emerged as the preferred bidder for mining exploration rights at three iron ore mines at Haji-gak, having an estimated reserve of 1.7 billion tonnes. SAIL has the maximum of 20 per cent equity stake in it, while NMDC and RINL hold 18 per cent each.

Among private players, JSW and JSPL hold 16 per cent each, while JSW Ispat and Monnet Ispat & Energy hold 8 per cent each and 4 per cent stake, respectively.

Afghanistan has promised to ensure supply of coking coal for the proposed steel plant.

“Everything has been included in the negotiation. Any raw material that will be required for making steel, including coking coal would be given to them,” he said.
Life’s not a beach here

Improper waste disposal in Malanjkhand’s copper mines is affecting farmland, water bodies and the health of people and livestock

Mahim Pratap Singh

Acres and acres of pristine white sand spread around turquoise waters, on a hill surrounded by lush greenery—one could be forgiven to think these words describe a beautiful stroll in some island nation. They don’t.

This actually, is a description of the waste dump at the Malanjkhand mining project in Birna block.

The Malanjkhand Copper Project (MCP) of Hindustan Copper Limited (HCL) accounts for 70 per cent of the country’s copper reserves, making it the single largest copper deposit in India.

Location

The project lies within the Birsa and Damoh forest division, Bilaspur district, which is a 180 km south of Jabalpur. The total area covered by the project is 115.225 hectares, while the waste dump is spread over 100.29 hectares. Neighbours of the dump lie forest villages inhabited by the protected Baiga and Gond tribes.

Currently extracting two million tonnes of copper ore from an open-pit mine, the MCP will soon be digging an underground mine which will expand the extraction to five million tonnes.

The project, therefore, is crucial to the country’s copper requirements.

For the tribals living in surrounding villages, however, this open-pit project is a mine of problems.

While about 500 people from these villages are employed as contractual labour in the project, these Schedule-V villages pay a heavy environmental price in order for the project to run successfully. The MCP’s waste dump site is a vast spread of extremely fine white sand—mining tailings — and a reservoir of highly acidic, biologically poisoned waste. Whenever there is a strong wind, the sand rises into a dust storm and deposits itself on the villages downhill.

Residents of Chhindli Tola and Borkheda, two such villages visited by this correspondent, claimed they had to live under the suffocating influence of this dust storm every day.

Standing at the dump site for half an hour, this correspondent saw the sand rise up into a thick storm and remain suspended over the villages downhill on two occasions. The six workers at the dump site had absolutely no protective gear to shield themselves.

When it rains and the sand settles down, the dust storms cease. However, the loose sand and the acidic water are carried down to the farm lands and water bodies in these villages and deposited there.

This caused acidification of farm lands and water bodies, said Rakesh Singh Marawi, former sarpanch, Chhindli Tola.

“Besides skin itching and laboured breathing due to the dust, other skin diseases caused by the water are slowly becoming common,” he said.

Cattle health is a major problem here. The cattle drink water that runs down from the waste dump into the ponds, causing several diseases and even kills them at times,” Shyam Singh (45) of Borkheda village has white spots all over his body, evidence that there is acidic water in his system.

The MCP officials have arranged for medical vans to visit the affected villages every month but the villagers say the vans just come for formality by distributing free drugs and hardly follow up on treatment.

The Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act 1999 confers wide ranging powers to the gram sarthaks over issues of mining, livelihood and environment. However, the villages around the Malanjkhand project do not benefit from these as the project falls under the Malanjkhand Nagarpanchayat, an urban self-government body not covered under PESA.

Everybody understands it is an important project for the country’s development. But does development have to come at the cost of the environment and of the tribal populations in this region?” asks Sanjeev Ukle, former president, Malanjhank Nagarpalika.

“The company’s waste recycling plant is non-functional and all the waste eventually goes into the Bhanjar that flows through the Kumba Tiger Reserve,” says Mr Ukle, who plans to run for the State Assembly elections next year.

Problems caused by the MCP will be a major part of his election agenda, he says.

What officials say

While project officials don’t agree with the villagers complaints, they do admit that waste disposal is an issue.

“Even we want to dispose of the sand, it has limited use and so not many people are interested in buying it,” says O.M. Tiwari, Deputy General Manager, MCP.

“The manganese ore India Ltd (MOIL) project in nearby Utera had agreed to use it to fill their mines, but the State government wanted a royalty of Rs 54 for transportation of this sand, making it economically unviable for anybody. Compared to this, royalty in Rajasthan is Rs 10," he said.

Last year, after the tribes sat on a strike at the company gate, forcing the project to shut down for more than a month, the MCP officials agreed to distribute water purifiers to all affected households.

“The purifiers could only remove the dust particles from the water but it still remained acidic. So we returned them to the company,” said Ramesh Dhurve of Chhindli Tola.

According to project officials, environmental pollution and health hazards are highly exaggerated and the villagers are actually unhappy for totally different reasons.

“All of them just want jobs in the project. When the project started, 90 per cent of affected families were provided employment but have all accepted voluntary retirement in return for a lump sum of money. Now the younger generation feels they have been left out and so they have been blaming the project for everything," said Mr Tiwari.

The project authorities have commissioned the Nagpur-based National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) for an environmental assessment. NEERI has collected samples but the report will be out only next year.
In spite of the recent downturn in mining industry, there is something to cheer about for miners and consumers with commissioning of few iron ore beneficiation plants in Bellary and Barbil, says Sabyasachi Mishra, MD Allmineral Asia Pvt Ltd

**FUTURE OF MINING**

**ALLMINERAL**

Bellary witnessed a redefined version of enriching iron ore on Jan 2’12 with the setting up of an 0.6 MTPA iron ore beneficiation plant for Janki Corp Ltd (JCL). The aforesaid 4-18 mm iron ore jigging plant, designed & commissioned by Allmineral Asia aims at feeding a high-grade iron ore concentrate to its existing sponge iron units. The beneficiation plant primarily comprising Allmineral’s globally proven equipment, i.e. 1 x all jig G 2500, 1 x Scrubber 156 M & other auxiliary equipment will allow JCL to support the preservation of an economically successful mining operation in the Bellary jurisdiction in future years as well as provide sustainable growth for existing & planned mining operation in the southern suburbs of India. The world’s 6th largest hematite belt, Ballar also included a prototype beneficiation unit in May’12 with two streams of 0.6 MTPA each for treating 5-10 mm & 10-40 mm for Kannurpet Singh Allhulwalia. Beyond doubt, these two setups along with Asia’s largest beneficiation unit for Jindal Steel & Power, all designed & commissioned by Allmineral will pave the way for good quality sized making for the mine owners & sponge iron unit owners & significantly improve its position in the existing Indian market.

Globally, after the successful & strategic installation of the pilot plant for Rio Tinto in Australia containing Allmineral’s core processing equipment types, it has secured contracts for 24 nos alljig & 14 nos alflux for FMG’s Christmas Creek’s Cloudshak & Soloman mine in two phases, the first of which is already in operation and the second one is expected to be operational by Dec’12. Additionally, the success story of Gausdonn G2 series, the world’s largest WHMS with capacities of up to 700 TPH now has a firm footing in India at Shri Bajrang Power & Iplant Ltd, Ralipur for its upcoming 2 MTPA IOBP. Allmineral Asia is doing the complete design & engineering along with 1,238 thousand t/h along with auxiliary equipment including liner hammers, belt conveyors, grinders, media dosing machines, special tools & spare parts is fully on track to be commissioned by Dec’13. In India, Centec India is well on its way to supply 3 nos Ball Mill — 1 x 4.5 M Dia x 8 M & 2 x 3.6 M Dia x 6.75 M & 1 no Scrubber 3.3 m x 10.0 for Bajrang Iplant’s Raipur unit. These ball mills expected to be executed by Oct’12 incorporate special sliding bearing design being imported from Austria. Centec is also executing an order for 2 nos pelletizing disc for the 4 MTPA pellet unit for JSW Dabul. The pellet discs of 7.5 M Dia & 800 mm disc height will be supplied with drive motors & VFD. Centec is also executing an order for 2 nos disc pelletizers of 7.5 M Dia, 1 No Mixer 3.5 M Dia x 4.3 M, 1 No Ball Mill 4.3 M Dia x 8 M, 1 no Rod Mill 3.2 M Dia x 4.3 M & 1 no VRM 165” for its Pro Mineral set up at Basanpur, Odisha expected to be commissioned by Mar’13.

**HAZEMAG**

The new game changer in pit crushing, Hazemag India has zeroed in Rohit Ferro Tech for its Jajpur unit in Odisha for 2x100 TPH coal handling plant. The contract which is envisaged with two lines of crushing system with each line having primary crushing of feeder breaker, secondary crushing & screening systems with over 900 M of belt conveyor &ripper conveyor, Hazemag has got its 1st Indian reference for supply of 1 no-100 TPH Stacker cum Reclaimer for Pro Mineral Pvt Ltd, Basanpur. The complete set & engineering for this unit will be done by Saurmag who is renowned internationally for its references in the field of bulk material handling plant, stockyard technology, material processing technology, leading systems, conveyor as well as harbour technology.
अदेश खनन पर पिछले एक दशक की फाइलों को संग्रहालय रही ग्रोवा सरकार

पंजीक, 28 जून (भाषा). ग्रोवा सरकार अदेश खनन गतिविधियों का पता लगाने के लिए खनन के तहत पिछले एक दशक में राष्ट्र खनन और पूर्ण विभाग के पास की गई सभी फाइलों को समीक्षा कर रही है। खनन और पूर्ण विभाग के निदेशक प्रस्तावना आयोग ने बांटी हुई नोटिस के साथ एक हलफाम्रू में कहा कि उन्होंने पिछले दस साल में विभाग की समानता को गई सभी फाइलों को समीक्षा के लिए करने उठाए हैं।

मुख्यमंत्री मनीहर परिकर विभाग की पिछली अदेश खनन के तहत अदेश समिति में जुटे हैं। वे पिछले दस साल में अनुमोदित की गई अनन्य फाइलों की समीक्षा करते हैं। परिकर सरकार ने पहले ही खनन विभाग के तहत अदेश विभाग का निदेशक को खनन विभाग में ग्रामीणों के लिए निवेदन देकर। वे उन्हें संबंधित कर दिया है। खनन और पूर्ण विभाग निदेशक ने एक नीति और सरकारी संस्थाओं को खनन फॉर्मेन्स के फॉर्म खनन क्षेत्र में व्यापक अनिश्चितताओं के संबंध में यथायोग्यता उचितादेशिक पर हलफाम्रू में जोड़ी हैं।
AFGHAN MINES: STERLITE, JSPL EVOKE INTEREST

New Delhi: Sterlite Industries, Jindal Steel and Power and Monnet Ispat and Energy have evinced interest in joining hands with four PSUs, including Hindustan Copper (HCL), to form a special purpose vehicle to bid for gold and copper mines in Afghanistan.

"Three parties are exploring opportunities to participate with us, so that one bid from India as a country is placed. We have not yet taken a final decision (on their inclusion). We will be taking it shortly," HCL chairman and managing director Shykeel Ahmed said at the Delhi Investment Summit on Afghanistan.

The three companies — Sterlite Industries, Jindal Steel and Power and Monnet Ispat and Energy — would possibly form a joint venture, if included, with four state-run firms — HCL, Nalco, MRCL and Steel Authority of India Ltd (SAIL), he said.

— PTI
Birla Corp loss at ₹120 crore on ban

Kolkata: The ban imposed in August last year on mining limestone at Birla Corp. Ltd's Chanderia mine has cost the company ₹120 crore so far, chairman Harshvardhan Lodha told shareholders at the company's annual general meeting in Kolkata on Thursday. The Jodhpur high court passed an order in August restricting the firm and other cement makers from mining within 10 km of the Chittorgarh fort, a protected monument. MANISH BASU