India tastes a big slice of Afghan pie

ARCHIS MOHAN

New Delhi, Nov. 28: The Hamid Karzai government today awarded an Indian consortium mining rights to develop three of the four blocks of Afghanistan’s huge Hajiagak iron ore deposits, signalling a greater role for Delhi in the war-torn country.

Till now, India has mainly focused its aid to Afghanistan in developing smaller infrastructure projects like culverts and roads.

Sources said the contract awarded to the Afghan Iron and Steel Consortium (AFISCO), led by state-run steel maker SAIL, had the potential to become the landlocked country’s single-biggest foreign investment project.

In a statement, Afghanistan’s ministry of mines said the development of the blocks was “expected to bring billions of dollars in mining investment and thousands of new jobs to Afghanistan”.

The statement said the companies had also “pledged substantial support for railway, power; and other infrastructure development within the country as well as major support for education and training programmes”.

The Hajiagak blocks, in the mountainous Bamyan province 130 km west of Kabul, are one of Asia’s largest iron ore deposits that are yet to be mined. According to a 1980 estimate, the blocks hold an estimated 1.3 billion tonnes of iron ore.

The contract came within a month after Delhi and Kabul signed a strategic partnership agreement on Indian investments in the Afghan mining sector. According to the announcement, the consortium has been awarded the rights to blocks B, C, and D, with block A going to Canadian firm Kilo Gold Company.

Sources said the Indian consortium—which also includes the National Mineral Development Corporation, Monnet Ispat and Energy Limited, Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited, JSW Steel Limited, Jindal Steel Power Limited, and JSW Ispat Steel Limited—could invest $6 billion in the mines, construct a steel plant and a railway network.

The development, unlikely to be welcomed in Islamabad which resents closer Delhi-Kabul ties, signals a much greater role for India in Afghanistan in the years to come, particularly after the scheduled departure of Nato forces by 2014.

However, it would also mean more Indians will have to be sent to Afghanistan at a time violence in the region has peaked.

Over the past couple of years, Delhi had looked to scale down its investments in Afghanistan because of terror attacks that targeted Indian interests. India has already pledged $2 billion in Afghan infrastructure and development projects, including erecting a new parliament building.
Commitment for Social Development Won India Mine Bid in Afghanistan

Afghan mines ministry awards rights to three ore blocks to SAIL-led consortium that includes NMDC and JSW Steel among others.

The Steel Authority of India-led consortium won the bid to mine Afghanistan’s largest iron ore deposit mainly because of its commitment to offer more jobs to local people and participate in social development programmes, a person familiar with the matter said.

The successful bid, steered by the state-owned steel maker, has significant geopolitical ramifications because India has been striving to counter China’s growing influence in the region, especially with the US scheduled to withdraw its troops from the war-ravaged country in 2014.

The person, who did not wish to be named, told ET that the seven-member group outbid three rivals after it promised to use iron ore from the 1.8 billion strong Hajigak deposits to build a steel plant and create jobs in the country devastated by long years of insurgency.

Afghanistan’s mines ministry on Monday awarded the rights to mine three ore blocks to the consortium that also includes India’s largest miner NMDC, steelmakers Rashtriya Ispat, JSW Steel, JSW Ispat, Jindal Steel & Power and Monnet Ispat Canada’s Kilo Goldmines, which had also pitched for the mines, was awarded one ore block.

“There were consortiums formed by India earlier also, but for the first time there was agreement among all members on who would negotiate with the Afghans,” said Sandeep Jajodia, managing director of Monnet Ispat, a member of the consortium. “It shows that if like-minded Indian companies come together, they can compete with China also.”

Heads of SAIL and NMDC met the Afghan mines minister to explain India’s capability and intent to launch social development schemes, the person who did not wish to be named, said.

“Indian companies have never projected their investment in Afghanistan solely for profit motive or for extracting resources for India’s benefit only,” said NMDC chairman Rana Som. “The bid was presented as an endeavour for mutual benefit to generate employment and social development in Afghanistan. Indian companies will also organise training to improve employability and eventual empowerment of the local people,” he said.

China, which has been very active in Afghanistan and had successfully bid for Aynak copper mines last year, stayed out of the bidding race for the 1.8 billion strong mine in Hajigak. The other bidders included companies, such as Iran’s Gol-e-Gohar Iron Ore and Behin Sanate Diba Co, a consortium of 10 Iranian companies, India’s Corporate Ispat Alloys and Acatos LLC.

India and China have been competing increasingly to own raw material assets across the world to feed their growing economies. China has mostly succeeded by pooling resources and skills among three or more large state-owned companies.
राजस्थान में कंपनियों को 10% खनिज बाहर ले जाने की इजाजत

विजेता भारत * अखबार

राजस्थान में स्टील व सीमेंट प्लांट लगाने वाली कंपनियों आवश्यक खनिजों के माहित्य पत्र में दिखाई गई जरूरत का रण परिस्थितियों या भौगोलिक विशेषता का आधार में पृष्ठ परिस्थितियों और अर्थव्यवस्था और लाभ स्तर टेस्टिंग के लिए प्रदेश के बाहर भेज सकनें।

राजस्थान सरकार ने इस संबंध में जाेरे परिषद में कहा कि जिन कंपनियों को यह अनुमति दी गई है, वे खनिजों को प्रदेश से बाहर भेज सकेंगे। ऐसा करने पर वे यह खनिजों को यह उपयोग कर सकेंगे। इसके अलावा सरकार ने भी लगाया पत्र में दिखाई दी गई जरूरत का रण परिस्थितियों या भौगोलिक विशेषता का आधार में पृष्ठ परिस्थितियों और अर्थव्यवस्था और लाभ स्तर के लिए प्रदेश के बाहर भेज सकनें।

राजस्थान में स्टील व सीमेंट प्लांट लगाने वाली कंपनियों में इतनी खनिज बाहर ले जाने की इजाजत है। वे इसके लिए रण परिस्थितियों या भौगोलिक विशेषता का आधार में पृष्ठ परिस्थितियों और अर्थव्यवस्था और लाभ स्तर के लिए प्रदेश के बाहर भेज सकेंगे।
भारत को लीह खनन के लिए तीन ब्लॉक मिले

काशुलु। अफगानिस्तान ने भारत को देश के बंडे लीह भंडार के लिए खनन अनुशंसक प्रदान किया है। खनन नीति मंडल के मिश्रण अनुसार अफगानिस्तान ने बताया कि अफगानिस्तान के राष्ट्रपति इमरान महरजी ने भारत संबंध के संबंध में मोशन लगाए गए भारतीय वास्तविक तथा निकट देशों की सात कंपनियों को दीवार की लीह अयान भंडार के चार में से तीन ब्लॉक प्रदान किए हैं। अभियान ब्लॉक के कंपनी की कंपनी की मोल्डिंग लिमिटेड को दिया गया है। मंडल के अध्यक्ष ज्योति दांदे ने इस निर्देश की पुष्टि की है। भारत ने अफगानिस्तान से अपनी साफ्टिक उपस्थिति बढ़ाने के उद्देश्य से साझेदारी के क्षेत्र की अपनी कंपनी टॉटल अनाररी एफ इंडिया लिमिटेड सेल तथा एनएक्सीडी लिमिटेड के नेतृत्व वाले क्षेत्र का समर्पण किया है।
खनन रोकना असंभव: खड़ौड़ी
लक्ष्य आपसी संख्याओं, अनुसंधान के मुद्दमों में खुले खट्टू के तल में खड़ौड़ी के बाकी नहीं कि मार्ग में खनन को पूरा तरह से नहीं रोका जा सकता।
जबकि ऐसी ही सीमित क्षेत्र को खनन भूल गया होता है। उन्होंने कहा कि नहीं और उजन की तरह तो संस्कृति जो जनन नीति बनाई गई है, उनके अनुसार ही खनन दिखाया जा चुका है। राष्ट्रीय की महत्वपूर्ण वार्षिक में विशेष लेखन पढ़े मुख्यमंत्री ने पत्रकारों से कहा कि बालक मुख्यमंत्री अपने पारंपरिक गांव में उन्होंने संस्कृति की मान्यता प्राप्त क्षेत्र को खनन उपलब्ध कर दिया था। उन्हें खनन के खतरे की नीति में है, जिससे अज्ञात के नागरिक जो खड़ौड़ी में है। 
माननीय देश के मुख्यमंत्री उनके एक गांव के लिए रोकना जो रोकना का संघ-सरकार है। उनके अनुसार है कि गांव में खनन को रोकने की बाहर मान्यता बनाने के प्रस्ताव लागू करने की संभावना है।
Balco stake

NEW DELHI, 29 NOV: An empowered group of ministers (EGoM) today decided to maintain status quo with regard to its remaining 49 per cent stake in aluminium maker Balco. Vedanta Group firm Sterlite Industries holds 51 per cent stake in Balco. According to sources, Vedanta chief Anil Agarwal had written a letter to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on 4 July regarding the government’s residual stake.
Govt to retain its stake in Balco for now

NEW DELHI: An Empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM) on Tuesday decided to maintain status quo with regard to its remaining 49 per cent stake in aluminium maker Balco. Vedanta Group firm Sterlite Industries holds 51 per cent stake in Balco.
Arrested IAS officer turns witness, leads mining trail to YSR

SREENIVAS JANAYALA
HYDERABAD, NOV 29

I AS OFFICER Y Srilakshmi, who was arrested in the Gali Janardhana Reddy illegal mining case on Monday, has agreed to become a witness in the case.

Accused of favouring Gali’s Obulapuram Mining Company (OMC) by overlooking other bidders for giving mining licences in Anantapuram district, Srilakshmi is learnt to have told the CBI that former minister for mines and geology P Sabita Indra Reddy, who is Home Minister now, pressured her to sign and even “speed up the files” for allotting 68 hectares and later 32 hectares land to OMC for mining.

Srilakshmi, who was remanded in three days CBI custody on Tuesday, is also learnt to have told the investigating agency that she “felt that there was pressure on from her higher ups including former chief secretary M G V R Bhanu, retired, and currently chairman of Tea Board, Kolkata.

Bhanu, a 1985 batch IAS officer, is son-in-law of former Congress MP P V Rangaiah Naidu and was allegedly instrumental in advising late YSR in processing the mining leases issued to Gali Janardhana Reddy. Bhanu was Special Secretary to YSR.

Based on Srilakshmi’s statement, the CBI may also arrest a joint director and field investigation officers of the AP Mineral Development Corporation for colluding and allowing OMC to do mining illegally.

Bhanu was summoned by CBI to appear to give a statement on November 20 and is learnt to have told officials that he was just taking orders from above, and passed instructions down to his juniors.
Iridium smuggling on the rise, Customs notice to airports

GEETA GUPTA
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

IRIDIUM powder, an expensive metal used for increasing the weight of gold, seems to have become the most preferred article to be smuggled into the country from Hong Kong.

Taking the increase in iridium smuggling cases into consideration, the Customs department has sent an internal notice to airports across the country, asking officials to look out for people trying to smuggle the contraband into the country.

On December 12, a passenger from Hong Kong was arrested for smuggling iridium powder worth Rs 17 lakh by Customs officials at Terminal 3 of the Indira Gandhi International Airport.

"Though iridium is also a rare metal, it is cheaper than gold. It is used by jewellers to make gold and platinum ornaments heavier," a senior Customs official said.

Gurmeet Singh Bhatti, who holds a Chinese passport, arrived in the Capital on Cathay Pacific flight CX-695 from Hong Kong. Based on a tip-off, Air Customs caught him at the exit gate of the Green Channel.

"Upon conducting a body search of the passenger, Customs officers found 1,075 grams of iridium powder concealed inside his socks," the official said.
गंगा की रक्षा के लिए अब होगी आर-पार की लड़ाई

सुनील दत्त पांडेय
हरिद्वार, 29 नवम्बर। मातृ सदन के संस्थापक स्वामी शिवानंद सरस्वती, पयारीपारदिव प्रो. जीडी आयवाल और स्वामी अभिमुक्तेश्वरानंद गंगा में खत्म होती रूप में गंगा तथा पवित्रताओं के लिए अब आर-पार की लड़ाई लड़ने जा रहे हैं। हरिद्वार में मातृसदन में ये तीनों पयारीपारदिव प्रेमी आपस में मिले। इन तीनों ने गंगा के दोहन के खिलाफ सभी लड़ाई लड़ने का फैसला किया है।

प्रो. जीडी आयवाल और स्वामी अभिमुक्तेश्वरानंद सरस्वती हरिद्वार में मातृसदन में चार दिन से अनुशासन पर बैठे स्वामी शिवानंद सरस्वती की अपनी समर्थन देने आए थे। तीनों ने फैसला किया कि अगले गंगा में खत्म अधिकार में बदल देने का फैसला दिया। प्रो. जीडी आयवाल ने एक फॉरम के अंतर्गत इस दिशा में जोरदार कहा था कि शिवानंद सरस्वती का अनुशासन जल देह देने आए हैं। तीनों ने फैसला किया कि अगले गंगा में खत्म की अधिकार में बदल देने का फैसला दिया।
जानिए गंगा गंगा में ख़नन: खंडहर
जनसत्ता संवाददाता
हरिद्वार, 29 नवंबर। उत्तराखंड के मुख्यमंत्री पुलिंदर खंडहर ने कहा कि हरिद्वार में कुंभ क्षेत्र को छोड़कर गंगा नदी के अन्य तटों पर ख़नन व खुसाब का काम जारी रखा है। वे मंगलवार को हरिद्वार के उपनगर कन्हाई में श्री दस्लेखर महादेव मंदिर परिसर में आयोजित एक धार्मिक कार्यक्रम के बाद पत्रकारों से बात कर रहे थे।
उन्होंने पत्रकारों के सवालों का जवाब देते हुए कहा कि बरसात में नदियों में बाढ़ आती है। उससे लगता पतन, रेत, भविष्य बहुत हैं जिन्हें अचूक में आते हैं। यदि इन नदियों में पुगान व खनन नहीं होगा तो इन नदियों के तटों पर बसने वाली बस्तियों के बरसात में डूबने का खतरा है। अचूक ज्ञान बढ़ जाएगा।
खंडहर ने कहा कि गंगा व अन्य नदियों में पुगान व खनन बंद होने से कई लोग रोशनराज हो गए हैं। रोशनराज के दम भाग गए हैं जिससे हमारी कार्यक्रमों में विकास आ गया है। साथ ही अन्य अवतारों को मंदिर बनाने में मुफ्तियों आ गयी है।
खंडहर ने कहा कि उन्होंने जनहित को रखते हुए गंगा व अन्य नदियों में खनन खोला है।
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नोट: राष्ट्रीय बजट 2011-12 के अनुसार इम्पोर्ट
Copper likely to slide on supply concerns

Bloomberg
Nov. 29

Copper was little changed in New York but may fall later on concern Europe’s sovereign-debt crisis might worsen after Italy had to pay more than 7 per cent for the third time in a week to borrow money.

Declines may be limited after Anglo American Plc and Xstrata Plc fired some workers as a third strike this year slowed operations at the Collahuasi mine in Chile, fuelling concern supply might fall short of demand.

The market is still going to be tight-ish next year, which should be supportive, Mr. David Wilson, an analyst at Citigroup Inc. in London, said by phone today. Copper for March delivery was little changed at $3,371 a pound by 8:52 a.m. on the Comex in New York. Copper for three-month delivery fell 0.7 per cent to $7,443 a tonne on the London Metal Exchange.

Copper stockpiles monitored by the LME declined to the lowest level since Jan. 25, dropping 0.6 per cent to 890,425 tonnes, daily exchange figures showed. They’re down 18 per cent from this year’s high in June.

Orders to draw copper from LME warehouses, or cancelled warrants, declined 3.5 per cent to 28,125 tonnes.

Aluminium, zinc, tin, nickel and lead fell in London.
IAS officer spends sleepless night in CBI custody

PNS III HYDERABAD

The two lady constables assigned to look after senior IAS officer Y Srilakshmi in the CBI custody last night had a very difficult time. The IAS officer who has been arrested by the CBI in connection with the mining scam involving former Karnataka Minister Gali Janardhan Reddy did not sleep throughout the night and continued to plead innocence before the constables.

According to sources, a tearful Srilakshmi told the constables that she had no role in the decision to allot land for mining to the Obulapuram company of Gali Janardhan Reddy under pressure from higher-ups and she was being made a scapegoat now.

The IAS officer was the Secretary of Mining and Geology department when the YSR Government had allotted 68 hectares of land to the OMC of Gali for mining of iron ore. The CBI has charged that the officer had favoured Gali's company in the matter.

Srilakshmi, who was summoned for one more round of questioning by the CBI on Monday and then taken to a bank for opening of a locker, was arrested by the CBI on several charges, including cheating, theft, dishonesty, forgery and violation of Prevention of Corruption Act and conspiracy to favour one company over the others.

Srilakshmi, who is the first IAS officer to be arrested by the CBI in a corruption case in the State, offered puja in the morning before she was taken to the CBI office in Kothi. After she was examined by the doctors in view of her complaints of cardiac pain, she was produced in the CBI court where the judge remanded her to three-day CBI custody. The judge ordered that after that she should be lodged in jail under judicial custody till December 12.

The CBI counsel sought her custody for 15 days, saying she had to be questioned on the amount of money changing hands in the mining scam, who all were involved in it and where the money was now.

However, defence counsel opposed the CBI plea saying she was already questioned five times by the CBI and she had replied all their questions.

CBI sources said the IAS officer will be questioned over the next two days in the CBI office and will be produced in the court on December 1. "We will seek further custody if necessary", a source said.

Meanwhile, the CBI court rejected yet another bail petition of Rajagopal, former director of mining department. Rajagopal had moved the bail petition saying he had no role in the decision taken in the matter of mining lease for OMC. But the CBI counsel opposed Rajagopal's bail saying he had played a key role in the scam and he will try to destroy the evidence if he was released from the jail.

However, the court accepted Rajagopal's plea that he be given the special category status in the jail on the lines of the other two accused Gali Janardhan Reddy and OMC managing director BV Srinivasulu Reddy.

Meanwhile, the main opposition Telugu Desam Party has wondered why the CBI was not taking action against the then Mining Minister P Sabita Indra Reddy, another former Minister B Srinivas Reddy and KVP Ramachandra Rao, the close advisor of then Chief Minister late YS Rajashekar Reddy in the mining scam.
Afghan ore project cost pegged at $2b

Jayanta Mallick
Viswanath Kulkarni
Kolkata/New Delhi, Nov. 29

The total development cost of the Hajigak project in Afghanistan will be around $2 billion, including the cost of building infrastructure.

The Chairman and Managing Director of a public sector enterprise, which is a partner in the fourteen-entity consortium, told Business Line that at present the group was focusing on mining and building the necessary logistics infrastructure.

India's SAIL-led consortium of state-run RINL, NMDC and private players such as JSW Steel, JSW Ispat, Jindal Steel and Power Ltd and Monnet Ispat has bagged the development and mining rights for three blocks of the Hajigak deposits, which were offered by the Afghanistan Government. The terms of the deal are unclear at present.

Sources in the consortium said the initial plan was to transport the ore to a third country and not bring it to India. “There are three possible and viable routes for the proposed transportation. The ore can be directly sent across China through an eastern road-way. The other possible alternatives are dispatches through Iran and Pakistan.”

OPPORTUNITY
The Hajigak deposits will open up opportunities for Indian steel makers, but the move is fraught with challenges relating to geopolitical security, infrastructure, logistics and human resources in the land-locked country. The assets, however, might prove cheaper in terms of commercial exploitation.

The CMD of another public sector enterprise said there was a road link that connected Afghanistan with China. “Improving that would be more cost effective than transporting ore through the sea route.”

“It is a good way forward for the Indian companies to pool their resources and tap the opportunity,” said Mr Manish Pande, Regional Director, CRU Strategies.

Terming the development as positive, Mr Sandeep Jajodia, Managing Director, Monnet Ispat, expressed confidence that security related issues would be sorted out.

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खानिज घोटाले की जांच सीबीआई से कराई जाए

ये ही खबराई

लारक अय्याला की प्रतिवादियों से अदालत रिचर्ड खिंटा

राजस्थान पत्नी, जयपुर
tuesday, 29th नवंबर 2011, नेप: 12

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साहित्य कारोबार की विभागों में लाए जा रहे अधिकार प्रस्ताव के भीतर एक दिन पहले फिर से बिखराए जा रहे थे। अब की जारी यह चुंबक, विभाग के दूःख के दौर में से नहीं साहित्य के भीतर विभाग के हैं।

साहित्य विभाग के अध्यक्ष मानक आयक ढालिया के सामने बैठे आप भी का खुलासा कर दिया गया जो अधिकार प्रस्ताव में भी सामने आये थे। इस पर नेता प्रतिष्ठा अजय सिंह ने प्रमुख जानाहै। इसके अंतर्गत उन्होंने मानक को यह भी कहा है कि अधिकार प्रस्ताव के एक दिन पहले जिन मुद्दों पर सवाल पर भरी गोपनीयता बताते जा रहीं थी। एक दिन पहले सामने लाना थी कि नहीं है। सिंह ने इसकी विभाग प्रतिवाद कांग्रेस अध्यक्ष कार्यकाल पूर्वी से भी कहा है।