

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COAL
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:55

ANSWERED ON:03.08.2011

CLEARANCE TO COAL BLOCKS IN ``NO-GO`` AREA

Paranjpe Shri Anand Prakash; Tarai Shri Bibhu Prasad

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has given clearance to some of the coal blocks in 'no-go' area of the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor alongwith the names of coal blocks and their location;
- (c) whether the Government has allocated these coal blocks;
- (d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the names of the companies to whom these coal blocks allotted;
- (e) whether his Ministry has consulted the Ministry of Environment and Forests for clearance of other coal blocks in "no-go" area including Morga-II; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Ministry of Environment and Forests in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF COAL (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL)

(a) to (f): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred in parts (a) to (f) of the reply to Lok Sabha Starred Question No.55 for 03.08.2011

(a) & (b): Yes, Sir. The four coal blocks namely Tara, Parsa, Parsa East and Kante Basan located in the "No-Go" areas in Hasdeo-Arand coalfield in the Surguja district of Chhattisgarh were accorded approval by Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. The reasons for approval of the above coal blocks are given below:

i) These coal blocks are in the fringe of the Hasdeo-Arand forest region. It is separated by a high hilly ridge and is a different watershed.

ii) The project proponents have made substantial changes from the original mining plans.

a) The significant changes incorporated in the Tara Coal Block are (i) reduction in the medium – density forest area from about 2000 hectares to 778 hectares; (ii) reduction in the total trees to be felled from about 8.5 lakh to about 1.2 lakh; (iii) the operation period of the mine reduced from 45 years to 25 years; (iv) all movement of coal from the mine to the power plant situated 7 km away through overhead conveyor systems only.

b) The changes in the Parsa East and Kante Basan includes mining in two phases. A 15 year Phase-I covers 762 hectares and a subsequent 15 year phase-II covers around 1136 hectares. The reclamation of the mined out area starts from the 3rd year.

c) The coal blocks are linked to the Supercritical Thermal Power Stations. Supercritical Technology is essential to deal with global warming issues.

iii) The broader development picture has been considered in approval of these projects.

iv) The approval of these four coal blocks are also accorded under the following conditions:

The State Government is not to come up with proposal for opening the main Hasdeo-Arand Forest Area as it will severely disturb the fragile eco-system of the region.

The renewal for Phase-II in the Parsa Est and Kante Basan coal block is linked to the performance on reforestation and bio-diversity management in Phase-I

Wildlife Management Plan and Programme under the aegis of reputed institution will be prepared and executed with the funds from the project proponents.

The Parsa block will not be worked commercially for atleast the next five years till some reclamation of the other two coal blocks has commenced in a visible manner.

(c) & (d): Yes, Sir. These blocks have been allotted to the following companies as per details given below.

Sl.No.	Name of block	Name of Company	End-Use
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|----|-------------|---|-------|
| 1. | Tara | M/s. Chhattisgarh Mineral Development Corporation Limited | Power |
| 2. | Parsa | M/s. Chhattisgarh State Electricity Board. | Power |
| 3. | Parsa East | M/s. Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Utapadan Nigam Limited | Power |
| 4. | Kante Basan | M/s. Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Utapadan Nigam Limited | Power |

(e) & (f): Ministry of Coal (MoC) has approached MoEF for considering all the blocks including Morga-II falling in forest areas without the criteria of Go and No Go. However, it was not agreeable to MoEF as a result of which MoC moved a Note for consideration of Cabinet Committee on Infrastructure (CCI). CCI in turn decided to refer the matter for consideration and recommendation of a Group of Ministers GoM) at the first instance. The GoM has held three meetings in this regard.