

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COAL
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2402
ANSWERED ON:12.03.2013
ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE TO COAL MINES
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Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that several coal mines, both in opencast and underground mines are being run in the country from the time prior to 1992 without any environmental and forest clearance;
- (b) if so, the details of such coal mines, company and State-wise; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI PRATIK PRAKASHBAPU PATIL)

(a) & (b): Taken over mines are being operated in Eastern Coalfields Limited (ECL), Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL), Central Coalfields Limited (CCL), Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) and South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL) on the basis of 'Consents' obtained from the respective State Pollution Control Boards under the Air & Water Acts and renewed periodically. No forestry clearance (FC) was needed for these mines at that time. The details of such coalmines are as follows:

i) As advised subsequently by Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), ECL has divided 112 mines, which include taken over mines operated on consent to operate & 25 mines with Environmental Clearance (EC), into 13 clusters to obtain EC on cluster basis. Terms of Reference (TORs) for 11 of these clusters have already been obtained (TOR for one cluster no. 4 awaiting at MoEF) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) & Environmental Management Plan (EMPs) are being prepared for holding Public Consultation. Draft EIA & EMPs for 3 clusters, 1, 6 & 9 have been submitted to the concerned State Pollution Control Board (SPCB). Notification for holding of Public Consultation for Cluster No. 9 has already been issued. These mines are located in the state of West Bengal and Jharkhand.

ii) BCCL has submitted applications for 17 no. of clusters for all the one hundred and three (103) taken over mines. Out of the 17 clusters, Environmental Clearances for 8 clusters have been received. These clusters are Cluster No. I, II, III, IV, V, VII, X, and XVI having 53 no. of mines. Regarding the status of other clusters, EAC has recommended environmental clearances for no. 8, 9, 12, 13 and 14 and for cluster no 6 & 11 final EMP has already been submitted to MoEF. For the other two clusters i. e. 15 & 17, final EMP is under preparation. These mines are located in the state of Jharkhand.

iii) CCL has eight no. of taken over mines which were being operated on consent to operate in Jharkhand. These mines include Central Saunda underground (UG, Urimari UG, Gidi A-Religara group of mines, Kathara opencast (OC), Argada-Sirka Group, Laiyo UG, Pindra UG/OC, Ara-Saruberu Group. Application for environmental clearance of these mines have been already submitted and these are also at different stages of getting environmental clearances.

iv) SECL has three (3) no of mines, namely Manikpur OC, Balgi UG and Dugga OC which are taken over mines and running on consent to operate basis. Manikpur OC and Balgi UG are in Chattisgarh state while Dugga OC is in the state of Madhya Pradesh . Application for environmental clearance for these mines had been submitted and they are in different stages of obtaining environmental clearance.

v) MCL has two no. of taken over mines, namely Orient no. 3 UG and Lajkura OC being operated on consent to operate basis. These are located in the state of Odissa. Application for environmental clearance for these mines had been submitted and they are in advanced stages of obtaining environmental clearance.

(c): Regular meetings are being organized and held between senior officers of Ministry of Coal (MOC) and MoEF to expedite the process of obtaining Environmental clearances. Subsidiaries of Coal India Ltd are ensuring timely submission of clarifications sought on queries raised and regular follow-up with the concerned authorities of the respective Pollution Control Boards and MoEF.

As a positive outcome of the ongoing dialogues between MoC and MoEF, MoEF has issued a new guideline on 19.12.2012 in suppression of earlier guidelines of 15th April 2010 for capacity enhancement (up to 25% with certain conditions). The new guidelines will be applicable to existing coal-mining projects which apply for one time capacity expansion of up to 25% in existing mining operation within the existing mine lease area. Further, nineteen (19) projects/mines of different subsidiaries of CIL have been awarded environmental clearances from January 2013 to till date.