

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COAL

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 667
ANSWERED ON 10.02.2025

Pollution due to open mining in North-Eastern Region

667. Shri Ajit Kumar Bhuyan:

Will the Minister of **COAL** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has evaluated the level of pollution due to open cast mining of coal fields in the North-Eastern Region, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the action initiated by Government to attain a pollution free excavation, processing and transportation mechanism;
- (c) impact of such mining in the Dihing Patkai Range of Upper Assam on its biodiversity and environment; and
- (d) action taken so far to mitigate the negative impact?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF COAL AND MINES
(SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)

(a): A detailed Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) is carried out for each project considering pre and post mining conditions for preparing Environment Management Plans (EMPs). On the basis of the discussions, Environment Clearance (EC) is granted. While granting EC, conditions/ mitigation measures are stipulated for implementing the EMPs, which have to be complied with by the project proponents. On obtaining EC, the project proponent also secures Consent to Establish (CTE) - one time and Consent to Operate (CTO) – periodic, under the provisions of Water and Air Acts from the concerned State Pollution Control Boards (SPCB). During the course of implementation of the project, the compliance of the conditions laid in the EC, CTO etc. is monitored regularly by the regulators like MoEF&CC, SPCB etc.

Monitoring of Air, Water (Effluent, Drinking and Ground), Noise, Heavy Metals is done by Environmental Laboratories approved/ recognized by Pollution Control Board of Assam/ CPCB/ MoEF&CC having valid ISO 9001 along with OHSAS 18001 (Occupational Health and Safety Management System).

(b): Various actions initiated by North Eastern Coalfields are as under:

Air Pollution & Control:

1. Control Blasting is done to reduce fly work and dust emission.

2. Fixed Sprinklers are installed at coal siding to arrest coal dust emission.
3. Water tankers are deployed on haul road for dust suppression.
4. Tarpaulin are used over Road Sale Trucks for prevention of dust dissemination.
5. Regular monitoring of Air Pollution is done.

Water Pollution & Control:

1. Settling Tank and Mechanized Effluent Treatment Plant by the use of Chemical are installed to mitigate Water Pollution caused due to the Coal in the Stockyard.
2. Regular Monitoring of Effluent Water is done.

Noise Pollution & Control:

1. Efficient use of diesel operated equipment to the extent possible for coal production and waste removal. Operator cabin of HEMM are sound proof.
2. Providing Ear muffs to the persons working in the area where there is noise pollution, etc.

Further, for captive/commercial coal blocks, Clause 11.5 of Coal Block Development and Production Agreement for commercial mining executed between successful bidder and Nominated Authority mandates that the Successful Bidder shall implement mechanised coal extraction, transport and evacuation in the Coal Mine, in line with modern and prevalent technologies. Further, the Successful Bidder shall strive to minimise the carbon footprints from operations at the Coal Mine, undertake steps to reduce environmental pollution and promote sustainability, in accordance with Good Industry Practice.

(c): The aerial distance is greater than 10 km from the mines of North Eastern Coalfields for which the impact of mining in the Dihing Patkai Range of Upper Assam on its biodiversity and environment is Nil.

(d): All the control measures mentioned above in point no. (b) are taken in order to mitigate the any negative impact.
