

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.4475**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.03.2020

**Pollution from Mining Activities**

4475. SHRI MANISH TEWARI:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) the existing environmental laws and policies that mining companies have to adhere to;
- (b) whether the Government has taken note of the serious environmental and social concerns, including, air, noise, water pollution and land degradation caused by coal mining activities;
- (c) whether the Government is aware that 83 per cent of all coal mining is undertaken by Coal India Limited and its subsidiaries which are openly flouting environmental norms and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the steps taken by the Government to ensure that all mines/washeries have air quality monitoring stations equipped with connectivity to the server of State Pollution Control Boards to facilitate online monitoring of ambient air quality; and
- (e) the other steps taken by the Government to ensure installation of water treatment plants for eliminating pollutions from mines, discharge from the workshops, installation of Sewage Treatment Plant for treatment of effluents from the residential colonies of the mines?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE**  
**(SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO)**

(a) The environmental aspects of mining operations are largely governed by the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006 and other guidelines issued from time to time by the Ministry. Further, other legislations such as Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, Noise Pollution (Regulation & Control) Rules, 2000, Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management & Trans boundary Movement) Rules, 2016 are also applicable to mining operations.

If the project/mining lease area involves forest land, Forest Clearance under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 is also required. Further, if mining lease area falls in the proximity of any protected area notified under Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, Wildlife Clearance from the Standing Committee of National Board of Wildlife is required as per extant provisions.

Environment Clearance is being granted by the Ministry after the appraisal and recommendation of a technical committee (Expert Appraisal Committee- EAC) as per Schedule-I mandated in the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006.

**(b) & (C)** Coal Mines are generally large projects which may have significant impact on flora, fauna, habitation, air quality, water quality etc. in the surrounding areas. It may also involve Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) activities. In order to mitigate the impact of such large projects on environment, Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) study is carried out and Environment Management Plans (EMP) is prepared including pollution mitigation plan. A thorough deliberation and assessment of these plans and mitigation measures are carried out by Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC). The recommendation of EAC, including mitigations measures, is then considered by the Ministry before granting Environment Clearance to such projects. R&R is being done as per recommendation of the State Governments. The Concerned State Pollution Control Board (SPCB) grant Consent to Operate/Establish under Air (Prevention and Control of Air Pollution) Act, 1981 and Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974.

A large number of Coal Mining projects are being managed by Coal India Limited (CIL) and its subsidiaries. A set of terms and conditions and mitigation measures have been included while granting Environment Clearance to these projects. The compliance of such conditions is being monitored by Regional Offices of the Ministry. In case of violation of EC conditions or non-compliance of conditions, corrective measures being taken against the project proponents.

**(d) & (e)** In order to prevent pollution due to mining operations, Pollution Prevention Technologies/Measures are adopted. Following measures/initiatives are employed on case by case basis for containing pollution caused by coal mines:

- Use of Surface Miners thereby avoiding blasting and detonators to minimize dust generation
- Wet Drilling to minimise fugitive dust emission
- Side discharge loaders (SDL) and Load haul dumpers (LHD) and closed conveyors to minimise fugitive dust generation.
- Radar based monitoring of slope stability of benches in open cast mines, etc. preventing any sliding or fall of Overburden dumps
- Use of automatic mobile and fixed Water Sprinklers on haul roads to prevent fugitive dust emission
- Water Pollution Control through use of STP, ETP, Oil & Grease Separators, etc.
- Promote reuse/recycle of water to achieve zero discharge
- Construction of garland drain around the OB dumps terminating at sedimentation ponds to arrest flow of silts to the rivers/ nalas.
- Reclamation of Abandoned Mines by developing Green Belt

Regional offices of the Ministry monitor the compliance conditions imposed in the Environment Clearance periodically. SPCBs monitor compliance of conditions imposed in the Consent to Operate/Establish with respect to monitoring of control of pollution including installation of Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS), Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP) for mine water, effluent and air pollution control measures. Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS) have been installed in 18 large mines.

For treatment of discharged water from mines Mine Discharge ETP are installed. The mine water is treated and used for dust separation purposes, firefighting, plantation, washing, drinking / domestic purposes for company township. CIL has installed 100 such ETPs. Workshop ETPs, designed with zero discharge concept have been installed in all major OCPs having big workshops for proper maintenance of Heavy Earth Moving Machinery (HEMM). Domestic Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) are also provided in 39 major residential colonies. Soak pit is provided for other residential colonies by CIL.

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