

Minutes of the 2nd Meeting of the State Level Task Force on illegal mining held in the Conference Room attached to the CM's Secretariat at 11-30 A.M. on 26.12.2007.

List of participants enclosed.

Meeting has been started under the Chairmanship of the Chief Secretary. Principal Secretary, Commerce & Industries Department initiated the discussion and asked for reports from District Magistrates.

Burdwan District:

The District Magistrate, Burdwan submitted a written report and informed the House that illegal mining sites are of two categories:

1. Within lease-hold area of ECL, there are 57 sites (Baraboni, Jamuria, Asansol South/North, Kulti, Hirapur, Salanpur and Ranigunj PS);
2. Not within lease-hold area of ECL, there are 15 sites (Jamuria, Baraboni and Asansol North PS).

He also informed that joint raids with CISF, District Administration, ECL and Police Administration are going on regularly. He submitted a Year-wise Report describing details of number of cases started, amount of coal seized, vehicle seized, persons arrested and number of rat-holes dozed from the year 2000 to 2007.

According to the said report —

Total number of cases started: 12,569

Total amount of coal seized (in MT): 96,805.05

Total number of vehicles seized: 9,585

Total number of person arrested: 10,248

Total number of rat-holes dozed: 7,298

In the last two years, i.e. 2006 & 2007, there were 132 cases taken up for trial, of these, 3 cases are acquitted and the rest are continuing.

The District Magistrate also informed that ECL Authority would prepare a plan showing all of the present illegal mining spots within and outside their lease-hold areas in suitable scale.

He further informed that requirement of coal in non-coal sector including Sponge Iron Units (52) is 6.2 MT per annum, whereas availability of coal through linkage of ECL is 1.5 to 1.7 MT per annum. This indicates that deficit of good quality of coal exists and these sectors have tendency to fulfill their demands from illegal mines.

WBMDTC Ltd., the authorised agency for providing linkage on behalf of State Government, has coal linkage of only 0.08 MT per annum. The District Magistrate

stressed upon the increase of coal linkage from ECL and allocate more coal to WBMDTC Ltd.

He recommended for Special Task Force under the control of a Committee headed by Senior Government Official, in ensuring and enforcing such units (not having coal linkage) to have coal linkage with WBMDTC Ltd.

The Superintendent of Police, Burdwan raised the issue of accumulation of seized coal in the Police Stations. He mentioned that old stakes are not cleared off on regular basis. He informed that Special Court has been set up recently.

He also suggested an amendment proposal in Section 21 of MMDR Act, 1957 so as to incorporate the provision of confiscation of trucks engaged in the transportation of illegally mined coal. The District Magistrate pointed out the scope of similar amendment in West Bengal Minerals (Prevention of Illegal Mining, Transportation and Storage) Rules, 2002.

Purulia District:

The District Magistrate, Purulia informed the House as follows:

- Illegal coal mining is going on in Neturia and Santuri Block area of this district. It is mainly seasonal work going on in full swing between October to June.
- At Santuri Block illegal coal mining is mainly concentrated at Madhukunda village to be more specific Mokra under Balitora Gram Panchayat and at Murulia, Madhubanpur villages under Muradi Gram Panchayat. The sites where illegal coal mining is going on are not within the ECL command area. The pits are located in the bank of Madhubanpur Jore near Damodar river and Madhukunda Station. Within a radius of 1 km., 8 pits are found where coal are extracted illegally.
- At Neturia Block area coal mining is generally concentrated at Dhengajore village and Gram Parbelia village under Bhamuria Gram Panchayat and 2B 2C village under Saltora Gram Panchayat. Entire Neturia Block is under ECL command area and pits from where mining activities are going on are abandoned pits either of ECL or private company who run colliery before nationalization.
- It is learnt from local officials that on an average 1000 people are engaged in coal mining at each Block area.
- As information received, the workers are getting wages not less than Rs.200/- per day. He has requested for a detailed survey about the existence of coal in the Purulia District.

District Magistrate has also stressed on the survey of the area by WBMDTC Ltd. Principal Secretary reacted that WBMDTC Ltd. has no power but they may visit, rather GSI may assess the feasibility.

Police action against illegal coal mining in Santuri and Neturia Police Stations are as follows:

Year	Santuri PS	Neturia PS	Amount of coal seized (in MT)	Trucks involved
2004	3	19	167.00	9
2005	9	16	149.00	3
2006	8	8	140.00	9
2007	3	5	40.50	1

Birbhum District:

The District Magistrate, Birbhum submitted a written report and stated as follows:

- Mouzas Bastabpur, Bhadulia, Gangarampur and Ahamedpur under Khoyrasole Block of this district are Coal-bearing areas and prone to illegal mining.
- A team of officers consisting officers of ECL, Police, CISF and DFO visited those areas prone to illegal mining. They did not find any active illegal mining in those areas. But they could detect sites of small illegally mined pits which looked like unused for some period.
- Apart from joint raid by Police, CISF with ECL officials, District Police Authorities is taking action against the persons and vehicles engaged in transporting illegally mined coal from different coal fields of ECL through this district. Details are shown as under:

Duration	Number of case recorded	Vehicle seized	Persons arrested	Quantum of coal
April 2007 to October 2007	09	10	11	160.50 MT

- Recently DVC-EMTA has been allotted Gangaram Chak – Bhadulia Coal Block. DVC-EMTA is expected to start coal mining very soon. This will reduce the incidence of illegal mining of coal in those areas.

Bankura District:

The District Magistrate stated that joint raids are being conducted to cut the illegal mining. He also informed that Ardhamgram, which was earlier under lease-hold area of ECL authority, has been handed over to the State Government.


He has stressed on the authorization to implement the provision of West Bengal Mineral Rules, 2002.

Report of Police Action during the year 2007 for the period from 01.01.2007 to 30.11.2007 is stated below:

- Total specific cases started : 21
- Total persons arrested : 302
- Total seizer of coal : 565.19 M.T.
- Total vehicles seized : 159

In concluding, Chief Secretary has summarized the deliberations as follows:

- Commerce & Industries Department will work out the requirement of coal in respect of small and micro units, as well as bricks and sponge iron units. Thereafter State Government will sit with ECL for coal linkage.
- ECL and District Administration will jointly identified the illegally coal patches and ECL will also identify the coal blocks, which are commercially non-viable.
- Commerce & Industries Department will examine the possibility of amendments of provision of MMDR Act, 1957 and similar amendment in the West Bengal Minerals (Prevention of Illegal Mining, Transportation and Storage) Rules, 2002, also empowering the District Authorities under CrPC to confiscate the vehicles carrying illegally mined materials.
- GSI may assess the feasibility of coal area in the Purulia District.


(Amit Kiran Deb)
Chief Secretary

Government of West Bengal