MINISTRY OF MINES MAJOR ACTIVITIES APRIL – 2020

The highlights of the achievements and activities of the Ministry of Mines for the month of April, 2020 are as under

- Major activities of the month:

  - Since the amendment to MMDR Act, 1957, a total of 97 mineral blocks across 9 States have been auctioned with estimated revenues of Rs. 8,25,583 Cr accruing over fifty years based on current prices. A total of 12 auctioned mines have now been operationalized. Further, 20 mineral blocks are presently under auction in Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Karnataka.

  - 46 working mining leases got expired on 31.03.2020 under Section 8A(6) of the MMDR Act, 1957. The major impact on production of minerals is from the mines whose leases are expiring in Odisha (24) & Karnataka (7). Auction process has been completed for 27 mines (23 mines in Odisha and 4 mines in Karnataka). Further, 7 expired mines are in readiness for auction. Against anticipated disruption of 60.94 MT iron ore, the production from these 27 expiring mining leases will cover 58.56 MT (96%). Exploration is being carried out in remaining 12 mines for preparing these mines for auction for grant of mining lease.

    State Government of Odisha and Karnataka have nominated the nodal officer under Rule 9A inserted in the Minerals (Other than Atomic and Hydro Carbons Energy Minerals) Concession (Amendment) Rules, 2020 for issuing the vesting order along with the Letter of Intent. State Govt. of Odisha raised an issue about payment of NPV through online mode for which necessary feature has been incorporated by MoEF&CC. Ministry of Mines is closely coordinating with the stakeholders to facilitate expeditious issuance of vesting order for vesting of all valid rights, approvals, clearances, licenses and the like of the previous lessee for a period of two years to the successful bidders.

  - In order to augment the efforts of the Central Government in the ongoing fight against COVID-19 pandemic, Ministry of Mines allowed the State
Governments to pool the funds available in various District Mineral Foundations (DMFs) for setting up a well coordinated and targeted response to the situation. State Governments have been allowed to use funds in DMFs to provide facilities for testing, screening and treatment of the patients affected by COVID-19, establishing other medical facilities and to implement various measures required to contain the spread of COVID-19. Rs. 116.82 Cr has been spent on activities related for prevention of COVID-19 till 30.04.2020. Daily report is being shared with Deptt. of Economic Affairs.

- Ministry of Mines, MoEF&CC and State Governments have taken several steps to prevent disruption in production and supply of minerals and raw materials on account of expiry of leases on 31-03-2020 and recent granting of new leases. These steps include amendment to MMDRC Act, Mineral Auction rules, 2015, Mineral(Other than Atomic & Hydrocarbon Energy Minerals) Concession rules, 2016 etc. The outbreak of COVID-19 has created operational issues for the entire economy including the mineral industry. The industrial associations like FIMI, ASSOCHAM, FICCI, CII, AAI etc have all indicated the grave situation and the need to consider supporting the sector in these difficult times. In view of extraordinary situation, Ministry of Mines vide letter no. 16/43/2020-M.VI dt. 22.04.2020 has recommended to State Governments to annualize the upfront payment needed for execution of lease. Regarding the annualization of the payment of stamp duty, State Governments have been asked to consider the request. Further, MoEF&CC has also been requested to consider annualizing the payment of Net Present Value (NPV) for issuance of Forest Clearance.

- A 200 bedded exclusive COVID 19 hospital at Nabarangpur, funded by NALCO was inaugurated by Hon’ble Chief Minister of Odisha in presence of Hon’ble Union Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Coal and Mines (Joined through video conferencing) on 20.04.2020. This hospital facility include a 10 bedded ICU with oximetry along with 24 hour diagnostic facility etc. It will provide round the clock facilities to the patients of undivided Koraput district with high tribal population and help in combating COVID-19 cases.
A review meeting of HCL was taken by Hon’ble Minister for Coal, Mines & Parliamentary, Shri Prahlad Joshi through video conferencing. Production and financial performance of HCL was discussed in detail. CMD HCL was advised to improve performance of the company.

- **Monthly Status of Auction/PMKJKY-DMF:**
  - Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKJKY) is being implemented through the funds collected under District Mineral Foundation (DMF) and as on March, 2020, Rs. 37,911 Cr was collected, Rs. 31,974 Cr stands allocated and Rs 14,608 Cr was spent. Total 1,53,247 projects have been sanctioned under the scheme.

- **Conferences Workshops/Seminars/Meetings and other activities:**
  - Under the ongoing nationwide lockdown due to COVID-19, Geological Survey of India (GSI) has fruitfully utilised this period for conducting various training programs to the trainee geoscientist of GSI through iGOT_Diksha platform and has successfully conducted e-lectures on basic geoscience programs including special training program on “Basics of COVID-19” from GSI-Training Institute (GSI-TI). Besides this, GSI-TI has been conducting e-lecture through Web-conference to the students and faculty members of Universities/Institutes under “BHUMISAMVAD” platform.
  - Geoheritage sites/Geoparks are the areas with outstanding Geoheritage establishments aimed to conserve geosites with promotion of geotourism to support sustainable local economic and cultural development. Keeping in view of the conservation of geoheritage sites in the country and finalisation of legislation, a task group has been constituted in the Ministry. In this connection, the first meeting of the task group was held on 1.4.2020 wherein it was decided that the legislation for conservation of geoheritage sites will be finalised as per the international best practices. It was also decided that the M/o Tourism, Govt. of India may be involved in this effort.

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