New Delhi, the 11th April, 2011

Subject: Working Group on developing software for monitoring pendency of mineral concession applications held on Tuesday, the 5th April, 2011 in Shastri Bhavan, New Delhi

The undersigned is directed to send herewith a copy of the minutes of the Working Group on developing software for monitoring pendency of mineral concession applications held on Tuesday, the 5th April, 2011 in Shastri Bhavan, New Delhi.

2. As per decisions taken in the above-said meeting, action taken on the points discussed and decisions taken in the meeting may please be furnished to this Ministry by 26.4.2011.

(Bhupal Nanda)
Director
Ph. 23073233

To
1. The Director General, Forests, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Paryavaran Bhavan, New Delhi.

2. Senior Technical Director, NIC, Ministry of Mines

3. Technical Director, NIC, Ministry of Environment and Forests

4. State Secretaries in charge of Mining and Geology in the states of:
   i. Chattisgarh
   ii. Gujarat
   iii. Karnataka
   iv. Madhya Pradesh

Copy to:

(i) PPS to Secretary (Mines)

(ii) Sr. PPS to AS (M)
Government of India
Ministry of Mines

Minutes of the Working Group on developing software for monitoring pendency of mineral concession applications at various levels held on Tuesday, the 5th April, 2011 in Shastri Bhavan, New Delhi

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A meeting of the Working Group on developing software for monitoring pendency of mineral concession applications at various levels was held under the chairmanship of Shri S.K. Srivastava, Additional Secretary (Mines) on Tuesday, the 5th April, 2011 at Shastri Bhavan, New Delhi. List of participants is at Annexure.

2. Welcoming the participants, Additional Secretary (Mines) stated that constitution of the Working Group was one of the decisions taken in the 4th meeting of the Central Coordination-cum-Empowered Committee (CEC) held on 22.12.2010. He said that the Working Group would serve as a facilitator between the NICs of the Ministry of Mines and the MoEF on one hand and the State Governments on the other. The Working Group would review linkages among them and enable their movement forward.

3. Secretary, Mineral Resources Department, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh, along with his aides made a presentation on various features of their web-based software e-khanij, which was to be launched by the State Government shortly. He stated that all the Districts in the State would be connected with the system, and that about 90% of the mineral concession applications received by them had already been entered into the system. He informed that there were 5 types of users of the system viz. (i) District (ii) Region (iii) Directorate (iv) Secretariat and (v) lessees/ citizens. He said that all the users would be provided with a user ID and a password. While the lessees would be able to submit their returns as prescribed under the MCDR online, the State Government officials could monitor different aspects of the mineral concession regime and status of concession applications.

4. AS (M) enquired about various aspects of the system and the veracity of the information captured and stored by it. Emphasizing the need for making the system more user-friendly, he made the following suggestions:
(i) The system should also capture the queries made by the Ministry of Mines.
(ii) It should show whether a particular case falls within a notified area and non-notified area since the mode of processing such cases is different from each other.
(iii) It should capture details of all the applicants, who have applied for a particular area.
(iv) There should be in-built safeguards against altering/ removing entries in the system.
(v) Same ID number in respect of an applicant should run through the system at different stages, including RP, PL & ML stages.

Secretary, Government of M.P. assured that these aspects would be looked into and duly taken care of.

5. Secretary, Govt. of M.P. also informed that they were developing the system further for creating an e-payment gateway so that the users could make online payments directly to the Bank.

On a query by the Chairman, Secretary, Govt. of M.P. informed that applicants could submit applications for mineral concessions online as well as through documents.

6. AS (Mines) stressed the need for evolving a system, which could capture information regarding movement of ores in the context of prevention of illegal mining. He suggested that this should be developed separately as decided in the last meeting of the CEC. He lauded the efforts made by the Government of Madhya Pradesh for making the mineral concession system in their State more transparent and user-friendly. He suggested that the State Govt. should also make a presentation on their system in the forthcoming meeting of the CEC to be held on 28.4.2011.

7. Moving to the main agenda of the Working Group, AS (Mines) requested the State representatives to indicate what their requirements were and what they expected from the Forest Department, Government of India. The State representatives stated that considering the large number of cases awaiting forest clearance, an efficient system needed to be developed which could help in expediting forest clearances.

8. Shri H.C. Choudhary, AIG, MoEF explained that they already had a system for monitoring pendency of cases awaiting forest clearances. He mentioned that applications for forest clearances were received by the Nodal Officer, after which it moved to DFO > Conservator > CCF > State Government. He explained that their system showed various categories of cases received by them
for forest clearances; Mining being one of them. He said that the MoEF was in the process of developing the system further so as to expand its scope. The templates of the system being so developed were circulated to the State Governments in the meeting.

9. AS (Mines) enquired about the time lag between the receipt of an application by the Nodal Officer and its actual registration. The MoEF officials stated that each application is required to be accepted and registered by the Nodal Officer within 10 days. AS (Mines) suggested that in line with the Ministry’s efforts for bringing about transparency and efficiency, all applications should be entered immediately on receipt and their monitoring should start then on. MoEF officials assured that this would be attended to and a circular would be issued in this regard.

10. Director, NIC, MoEF stated that each State Govt. needed to assign a unique ID number to each case, which should be indicated while seeking forest clearance. He stated that the MoEF could give a user ID and a password for each State Government.

11. AS (Mines) suggested to all State Governments to access the MoEF website again and also go through the templates circulated by the MoEF in the meeting. If the State Governments have any comments or suggestions with regard to the contents of the website and its proposed expansion, they should furnish the same to the MoEF directly with copy to the Ministry of Mines within 15 days. MoEF would take into consideration all such feedback whilst finalizing the system design. State Governments should satisfy themselves that all relevant information is available to them on the MoEF website which can be linked through a unique number for each case. MoEF stated that they can develop the system which will provide for catching this unique number to be provided for each case by the State Governments. He hoped that considering the importance of the matter, the State Governments would adhere to the timeline so that further necessary steps could be taken in this regard on an urgent basis.

12. It was decided that progress will be reviewed after a month's time. The meeting ended with a Vote of Thanks to the Chair.
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Meeting of the Working Group on developing software for monitoring pendency of mineral concession applications at the State Government level, to be held on Tuesday, the 5th April, 2011 at 11.00 AM in Aluminium Room, ‘D’ Wing, Shastri Bhavan, New Delhi.

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