



Press Note - 12th May 2017, Connor, Tamil Nadu

mm&P (mines, minerals & PEOPLE) is a growing alliance of individuals, institutions and communities who are concerned and affected by mining. The isolated struggles of different groups have led us to form into broad a national alliance for combating the socially, culturally and environmentally destructive nature of mining.

Background:

The problem of mining is manifold. The destruction of the preexisting habitat for the mining industry undermines the possibility of using other resources (water, soil, land etc). The Mining Industry is wide spread and severe adverse impacts are visible from small scale rat hole mining and stone quarrying to large open cast and deep underground mines.

The social and political implications of mining assumes far reaching implications when this principle mineral wealth lies in the most forested regions and those homelands traditionally inhabited by Dalit and Indigenous Peoples.

Mineral extraction today is dictated by the market forces and cartels controlling the price according to the profitability rather than for the benefit of society or a community.

Thus a good number of minerals go to the war industry, or to enhance the powers of the powerful through strategic control. Besides this natural resources of the poorer countries are being over used with rampant environmental destruction, while the same resources of the rich countries are being safely preserved for their future generations.

Grassroots organizations and struggle groups grappling with various issues of mining converged to form mm&P in 2002. The first general assembly (GA) was held in 2004 and since then 4 more general assembly's were held every 2 years. During the GA an overview of the mining industry and relevant issues would be discussed in the national and international context. Representatives from each state would give a brief account of issues existing at the ground level and discuss strategies to deal with them.

Some of the noted achievements have been -

- Lobbied with the Ministry of Mines for the amendments of MMDR Act 2010

- Lobbied with Parliamentary Standing Committee on Environmental Impacts of Mining 2016
- Lobbied with Finance Ministry during Pre-Budget Consultation on DMF and Future Generation Fund in 2017
- Successfully organizing and staged Coal Satyagraha by Jana Chetana (mm&P member from Chhattisgarh) in Raigarh for the past 5 years
- Conducting fact finding missions by mm&P members of atrocities in mining regions vis-à-vis Latehar in Jharkhand (where innocent tribals were killed) and other similar incidents in mining regions
- Expressing solidarity with struggles (Women and tribal communities) groups experiencing social, communal and environmental atrocities
- Advocating the Future Generation Fund proposed by Goa Foundation (mm&P member) and implemented by Government of Goa on order from Supreme Court
- Lobbying with the Government on Cooperative or Community based mining

VIth General Assembly, 13th to 15th May 2017, Kotagiri, Tamil Nadu

In the 6th edition of GA some of the main issues that would be discussed apart from the overview of the mining industry and state specific issues are the status of District Mineral Fund (specific to each state), Consensus on Future Generation Fund in states across India, Sustainable mining (Community based), Amendments to Land Acquisition Act, and Occupational Health (with special reference to mining). We also take this opportunity to express solidarity with atrocities on women in mining regions.

With this background we hope to involve and integrate with the main stream society in highlighting the adverse impacts that mining as an industry has on the environment, society, culture, children and well being as a whole.

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