



To

July, 2017
New Delhi

Honourable Sir,

This written representation is in relation to the increasing socio-cultural and developmental apathy towards tribal communities and communities affected by mining, especially children.

Mining has always been a symbol of struggle between human need and human greed. The greed has always undermined the need. We are witness to many struggles by tribal and rural communities across India such as the one in Niyamgiri hills against Vedanta in Odisha, against POSCO in Odisha, against SAIL in Salem, Tamil Nadu, Iron ore mining in Goa, Coal mining in Chhattisgarh and many more. Through these struggles one can see that social and economic prosperity has never really percolated to the community.

There are laws, acts and rules for resource management, utilisation, extraction and benefit sharing but poor implementation on the ground meant violations, socio-economic marginalisation, skewed and unequal development and poverty.

Children and women are most vulnerable to the stark realities of extractive economy. They are affected by mining both- indirectly and directly. Commonly referred to as mining children the impacts can be summarised as follows -

- **Increased morbidity and illness**
- **Increased food insecurity and malnutrition**
- **Increased vulnerability to exploitation and abuse**
- **Violation of Right to Education**
- **Increase in child labor**
- **Increased marginalization of Adivasi and Dalit children**
- **Migrant children are the no-identity children**

In view of the above impacts of mining on children, mm&P alliance requests you to take cognizance of the severity of the problems faced by children and initiate suitable measures to minimize the same.



We would like to bring to your kind attention some specific issues that we think should be discussed between policy makers and decision makers for better accountability and democratic functioning.

1. Illegal mining

It is a known fact that there is around 80% - 90% illegal mining activity across our country. Due to this huge resource plundering our country is being robbed of its income. This results in illegal hoarding of money, unequal development further pushing the rural community towards poverty and socio-cultural alienation.

We request you to raise the issue of illegal mining and its impacts both economically and socially and the urgency to address this issue at the earliest by the government.

2. District Mineral Foundation (DMF)

DMF is a trust established in each of the mining districts and is an outcome of the amendment to MMDR 1957. The responsibility of forming the functional rules of this trust was given to each of the states. The funds accrued in this trust was deemed to be used for the rehabilitation and development of communities affected by mining. Though the rules have been prepared and funds accrued in most of the states, the Utilisation of these funds have not been in line with the objectives i.e. uplifting and improving the socio-economic, infrastructure facilities of the communities affected by mining. In this regard we request you to consider the ambiguity that exists in the term 'affected community'. Though most DMF rules define the terms 'affected area' and 'affected community', in reality the funds are not being used for the benefit of the community that is **directly** affected by mining.

3. Occupational Hazard (Silicosis)

Extractive activities generate lot of dust and particulate matter which get accumulated in the lungs causing silicosis leading to death. The symptoms of silicosis one of the most common hazards due to mining is very similar to TB. Misdiagnosing silicosis as TB is very common in mining areas as TB patient is not entitled for any compensation from the government but Silicosis patient is eligible for compensation. The policy developed by Haryana state in this regard is commendable and needs to be replicated across other states.

The second issue in this regard is the lack of infrastructure in place for diagnosing silicosis. Most of the affected individuals are daily wage workers or those living around the mine site. The ambiguity in establishing the reason for silicosis and procuring compensation is a big hurdle. So



we request you to champion the cause for universal detection and compensation of silicosis affected individuals.

4. Future Generation Fund

As the resources are plundered so is the fate of future generations. In line with the Supreme Court judgement in case of Goa Foundation Vs Sate of Goa, we request you to kindly champion the cause of forming such funds across the country.

5. Governance in 5th schedule regions

Post PESA and Samata judgement and other reports by many other commissions, the state governments in 5th schedule regions have not shown proactive interest in implementing the recommendations and suggestions for the benefit of the tribal community. We request you to kindly push the issue of tribal governance forward for a more democratic holistic development of our country.

About mm&P

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 broad national alliance for combating the destructive nature of mining. mm&P network is present in 17 states across the country.

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