

BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
EASTERN ZONE BENCH, KOLKATA

ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO. 222/2024/EZ

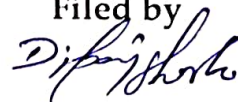
NEWS ITEM TITLED "SIX KILLED IN ACCIDENTAL
BLAST IN BIRBHUM COAL MINE" APPEARING IN
THE HINDU DATED 08.10.2024

REPORT ON AFFIDAVIT FILED BY THE WEST
BENGAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD.

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Filed by

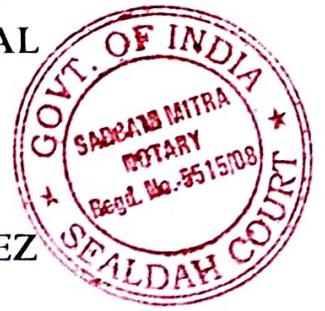


DIPANJAN GHOSH
ADVOCATE

SL. NO. 42. Dt.-16 JAN 2025

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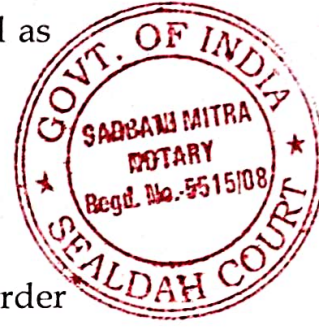
REPORT ON AFFIDAVIT FILED BY THE WEST
BENGAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD.

Most Respectfully Sheweth

I, Sri Subrata Ghosh, son of Late Shri Biswanath Ghosh, aged
about 60 years, by faith-Hindu, Occupation- Service, residing at
Narkelbagan, Gorosthan, Chinsurah, District - Hooghly, do
hereby solemnly declare and say as follows:-

16 JAN 2025

01. That, I am the Officer on Special Duty (OSD), West Bengal Pollution Control Board (hereinafter will be referred to as the 'State Board') and I am well acquainted with the facts and circumstances of the case. I have been duly authorized by the Respondent No. 01, to affirm this Affidavit on its behalf and as such, I am competent to do so.



02. That, this affidavit is being affirmed in pursuant to the order passed by this Hon'ble Tribunal dated 03.12.2024.

03. That, in compliance to the order of the Hon'ble Tribunal dated 03.12.2024, the State Board official visited the alleged site of Gangaramchak & Gangaramchak-Bhadulia Coal Mine, which is a captive open-cast coal mine of M/s. West Bengal Power Development Corporation Limited (WBPDC), located at Vill.- Bastabpur, P.O.-Sagarbhangra, P.S.- Lokepur, Birbhum-731125, on 07.01.2025, between 11.45 hrs. to 12.55 hrs.

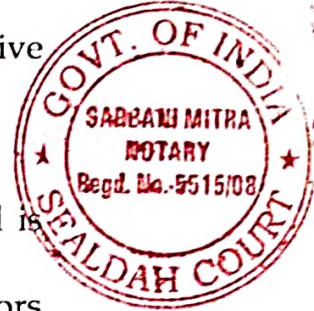
16 JAN 2025

04. That, the following observations were made by the State Board official:

This is an open-cast coal mine having a lease hold area of about 186 Hectares. No blasting was going on during the time of inspection. Some pay loaders were seen stationed at the active mine site for transportation of coal.

For blasting purpose prior to mining, the main explosive used is Site Mixed Emulsion (SME), which in turn is aided by detonators (non-electrical/electrical/electronic) & boosters (high explosives for blasting the whole column).

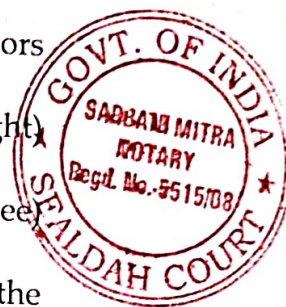
It was informed that for the mine under scrutiny, blasting time followed is from 2 PM to 3 PM (also, displayed in boards) and 500m radius from blasting face is considered to be the danger zone. The blasting face is demarcated with red flag & caution tape. Boosters & detonators are taken to the blasting site in separate vans. SME & fuel oil are carried to the blasting site in pump trucks. No mobile phones, smart watch & cigarettes are allowed to be taken to the blasting site by the crew members (Overman/Shot-firer & helpers).



16 JAN 2025

It was informed by the unit personnel that in the morning of October 7, 2024 at about 10:30 AM, an explosion took place in a detonator van at a blasting face on the eastern side of the mine and about 20m below the ground surface level, while the detonators were being unloaded. The accident led to the death of 08 (eight) crew members in the immediate vicinity and injured 03 (three) others standing a little far away. It was also informed that the injured members have recovered and joined duty and the explosion is the only such accident that took place since the mine started operating. At present, nothing is apparent at the explosion site. It was informed by the unit personnel that officials of Petroleum & Explosives safety Organization (PESO) and Director General of Mines Safety (DGMS) visited the explosion site a number of times post explosion.

The unit personnel informed that influence zone of the explosion was having approximately 15m radius from the spot of explosion. Actual reason for such explosion has yet to be identified. But the possible reason for such explosion, as told by the unit personnel, could be mishandling of detonators or faulty detonators or both.



16 JAN 2025

Appreciable greenery has been developed over the closed mine sites by the occupier. Greenery development was also seen to be in progress.



05. That, the State Board official recommended/suggested that the Chief Controller of Explosives (PESO) and Director General of Mines Safety (DGMS) are the best authorities to comment on the possible reason behind the explosion that took place in the morning of 07.10.2024.

Copy of Inspection Report of State Board is annexed herewith and marked with letter "R".

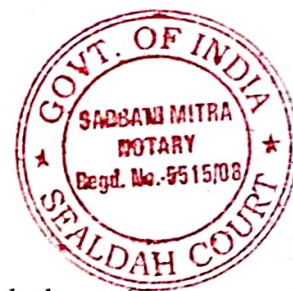
06. It is therefore respectfully prayed that Hon'ble Tribunal may pass such order/orders as it deems fit and proper in the interest of justice.


DEPONENT

16 JAN 2025

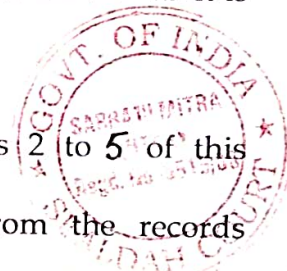
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VERIFICATION



I, Sri Subrata Ghosh, son of Shri Biswanath Ghosh, aged about 60 years, by Religion - Hindu, by Occupation- Service, residing at Narkelbagan, Gorosthan, Chinsurah, District-Hooghly, do hereby solemnly declare and say as follows:-

1. That, I am the Officer on Special Duty (OSD), West Bengal Pollution Control Board and I am well acquainted with the facts and circumstances of the instant Original Application.
2. That, the statements made in paragraph 1 of this affidavit is true to my knowledge and belief.
3. That, the statements made in paragraphs 2 to 5 of this affidavit are my information derived from the records available in the office of the State Board which I verily believe to be true and the rest are my respectful submission before this Hon'ble Tribunal.



Sri Subrata Ghosh
DEPONENT

D. Biswas
Identified and corrected by me
Advocate
WBPCB

Solemnly Affirmed &
Declared Before Me
On Identification By

Sarbani Mitra
SARBANI MITRA
NOTARY
Regd. No.-5515/08

16 JAN 2025

Field visit report

Reference:

Order of the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal, Eastern Zone Bench, Kolkata dated 03/12/2024 in connection with O.A. No. 222/2024/EZ.

Unit/Site covered:

Gangaramchak & Gangaramchak-Bhadulia Coal Mine, which is a captive open-cast coal mine of M/s. West Bengal Power Development Corporation Limited (WBPDCL), located at Vill.- Bastabpur, P.O.- Sagarbhanga, P.S.- Lokepur, Birbhum-731125.

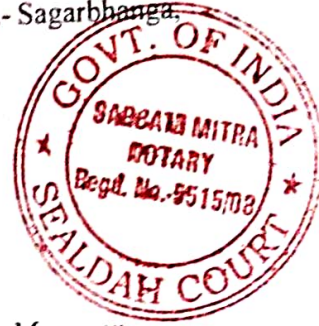
Date & time of inspection: 07/01/2025; 11:45 hrs. to 12:55 hrs.

Inspecting official:

Sri Chiranjib Dawn, Assistant Environmental Engineer, Durgapur Regional Office, WBPCB

Persons met:

WBPDCL representatives: Sri Swarup Banerjee, Safety Officer & Sri Sadhan Kumar Mondal, Manager Mine Developer & Operator (MDO) representatives: Sri Sabyasachi Gangopadhyay, Project Manager & Sri Milind Kore, DGM



Status of Consent to Establish (CTE) / Consent to Operate (CTO):

CTO (CO144043 dated 13/10/2023) is valid till 31/7/2026.

Observation:

This is an open-cast coal mine having a lease hold area of about 186 Hectares. No blasting was going on during the time of inspection. Some pay loaders were seen stationed at the active mine site for transportation of coal.

For blasting purpose prior to mining, the main explosive used is Site Mixed Emulsion (SME), which in turn is aided by detonators (non-electrical/electrical/electronic) & boosters (high explosives for blasting the whole column).

It was informed that for the mine under scrutiny, blasting time followed is from 2 PM to 3 PM (also, displayed in boards) and 500m radius from blasting face is considered to be the danger zone. The blasting face is demarcated with red flag & caution tape. Boosters & detonators are taken to the blasting site in separate vans. SME & fuel oil are carried to the blasting site in pump trucks. No mobile phones, smart watch & cigarettes are allowed to be taken to the blasting site by the crew members (Overman/Shot-firer & helpers).

It was informed by the unit personnel that in the morning of October 7, 2024 at about 10:30 AM, an explosion took place in a detonator van at a blasting face on the eastern side of the mine and about 20m below the ground surface level, while the detonators were being unloaded. The accident led to the death of 08 (eight) crew members in the immediate vicinity and injured 03 (three) others standing a little far away. It was also informed that the injured members have recovered and joined duty and the explosion is the only such accident that took place since the mine started operating. At present, nothing is apparent at the explosion site. It was informed by the unit personnel that officials of Petroleum & Explosives Safety Organization (PESO) and Director General of Mines Safety (DGMS) visited the explosion site a number of times post explosion.

The unit personnel informed that influence zone of the explosion was having approximately 15m radius from the spot of explosion. Actual reason for such explosion has yet to be identified. But the possible reason for such explosion, as told by the unit personnel, could be mishandling of detonators or faulty detonators or both.

Chiranjib Dawn

Other relevant information:

Appreciable greenery has been developed over the closed mine sites by the occupier. Greenery development was also seen to be in progress.

Photographs taken during inspection are annexed herewith for ready reference.

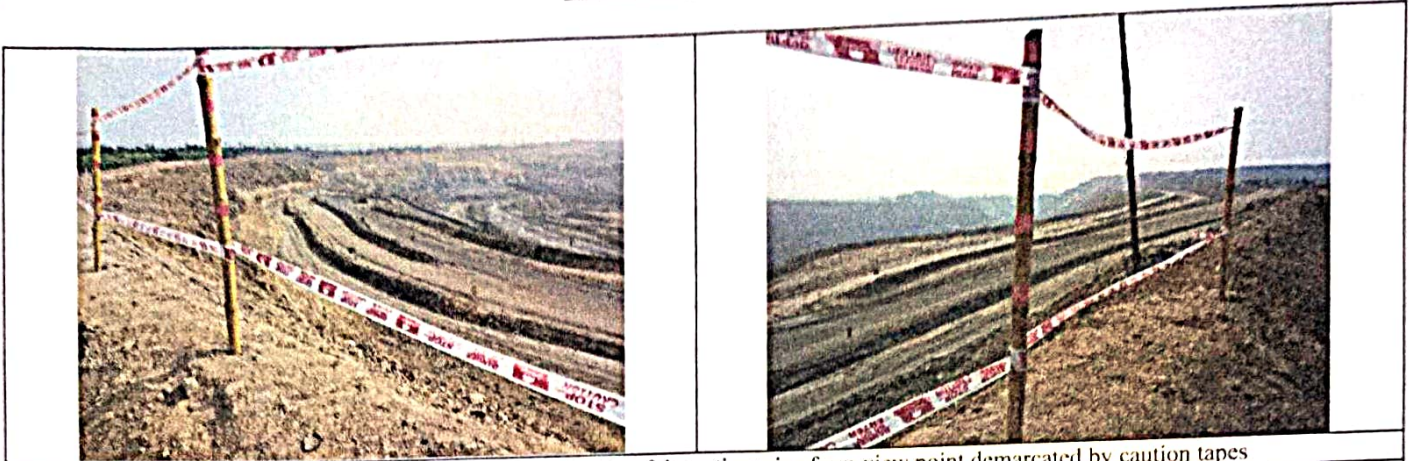
Recommendations/suggestions:

Chief Controller of Explosives (PESO) and DGMS are the best authorities to comment on the possible reason behind the explosion that took place in the morning of 07/10/2024.

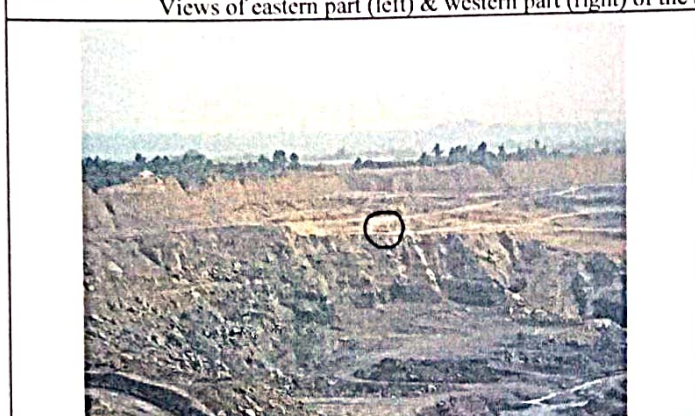
Chiranjit Datta 22/01/25
.....
(C. Dawn, AEE)



Photographs of Gangaramchak & Gangaramchak-Bhadulia Coal Mine of M/s WBPDCCL taken on 07/01/2025



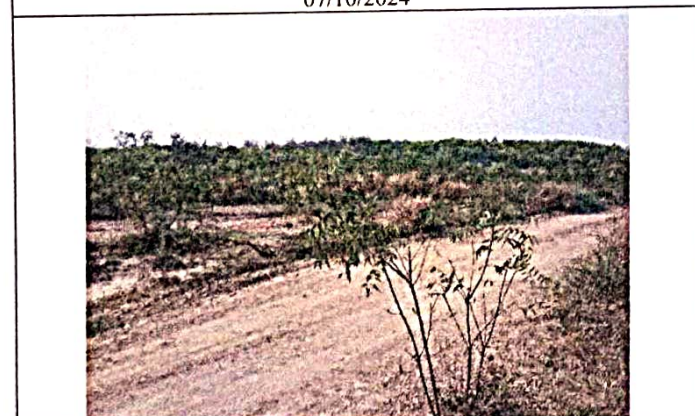
Views of eastern part (left) & western part (right) of the active mine from view point demarcated by caution tapes



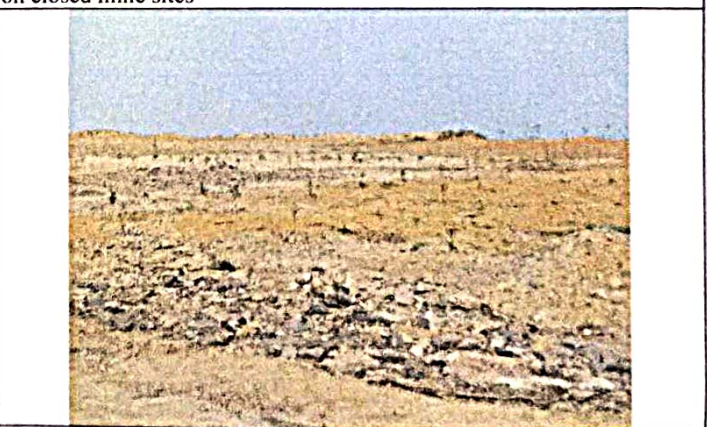
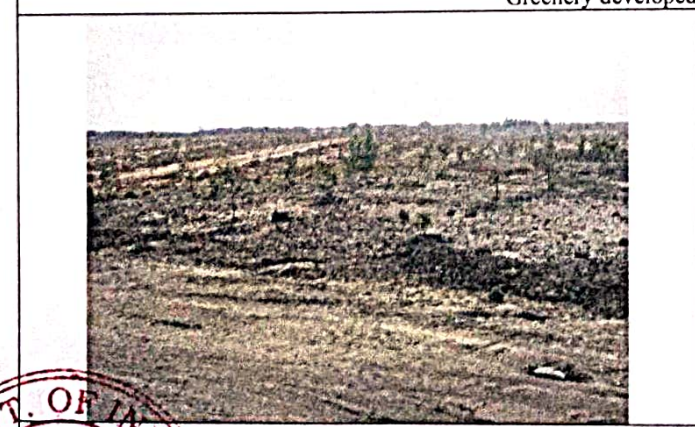
Encircled part showing the point of explosion that took place on 07/10/2024



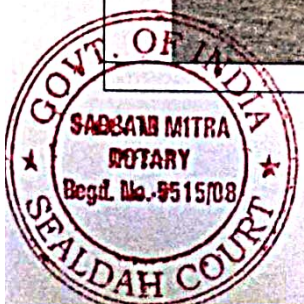
Pay loaders stationed at the site



Greenery developed on closed mine sites



Saplings planted for further greenery development



Chiranjit Das

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