‘Over-mining will kill water sources, ruin agriculture’

NGOs Start Expeditions Into Hinterland To Create Awareness

Joaquin Fernandes

Panaji: Green fields against rugged, blowing hills; an aquifer that was ripped into a ‘waterfall’ only to dry up some days later; and a sight that could well qualify for the largest concentration of mining trucks in the world. On Sunday, a few hills and two car loads of citizens were taken on a daylong drive into North Goa to focus on the effects of over-mining. With plans for more such expeditions in the future, Goveo, a new NGO, set up base in Panaji to finance the project.

The NGO’s president, Deepak Chudasama, envisions a scenario where the government is forced to take immediate remedial steps to check over-mining. On Sunday, starting from Quepem, the expedition travelled to the affected areas in the talukas of Sangem, Ponda, Sattari and Bicholim.

While dust pollution and its related health hazards are well known fallouts of mining in the hinterland, the activists explain that the killing of water aquifers in the hills being mined is destroying agriculture.

“More than 80% of the water in the area is from the rainwater, but the aquifer is being depleted,” said an activist from Goveo. “Most of the aquifers are already depleted. Many of the wells are dry. The fields are barren. The hills are barren.”

The group stopped at the huge mining dump of the ‘Dowas’ mine owned by PWD, which is situated in the north-western part of the state. The mining company’s新技术 claims that the site is currently being used for mining. But the group members pointed out that the site is being used as a dumping ground for mining waste.

MINING MALADIES: Mines at Pole

The group also visited the ‘Railway’ mine, which is situated in the north-eastern part of the state. The mine is owned by the State Electricity Board (SEB) and is being run by a private company. The group members pointed out that the site is being used as a dumping ground for mining waste.

The group also visited the ‘Tungol’ mine, which is situated in the north-western part of the state. The mine is owned by the State Electricity Board (SEB) and is being run by a private company. The group members pointed out that the site is being used as a dumping ground for mining waste.

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