

## Environmental Clearance under Two Years of NDA

### 1. Projects cleared in major development sectors

- In the past two years (June 2014 until April 2016), the MoEF&CC has given environmental clearances (EC) to nearly 385 development projects (combining new and expansion projects) in major sectors – mining (coal and non-coal), thermal power plant, hydropower, iron and steel and cement (*see Table 1: Environmental clearances granted to major sectors*). The number accounts for clearances given at the Central level.
- Among these, a key focus has been the mining sector combining both coal and non-coal projects. For coal mining, 68 projects with a cumulative production capacity of about 164 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) were cleared.
- For non-coal mining projects a total number of 250 projects of about 338 MTPA were cleared. Among this, majority clearances involve mining for sand/bajri/gravel/stone etc.

**Table 1: Environmental clearances granted to major sector (June 2014 - April 2016)**

Sectors	No. of projects	Capacity
<b>Coal Mining</b>	68	164.29 MTPA
<b>Iron Ore Mining</b>	12	41.66 MTPA
<b>Lime Stone Mining</b>	34	64.68 MTPA
<b>Bauxite Mining</b>	10	9.57 MTPA
<b>Other Minerals (including sand/bajri/gravel/stone)</b>	194	222.43 MTPA
<b>Thermal Power</b>	21	19,517 MW
<b>Iron and Steel</b>	24	25 MTPA
<b>Cement</b>	15	49 MTPA
<b>Hydro</b>	7	3643 MW

- Besides the Government has also granted considerable clearances for roads (also connecting roads) and highways including projects in coastal areas. About 150 projects have been cleared under this as per Government categorization.

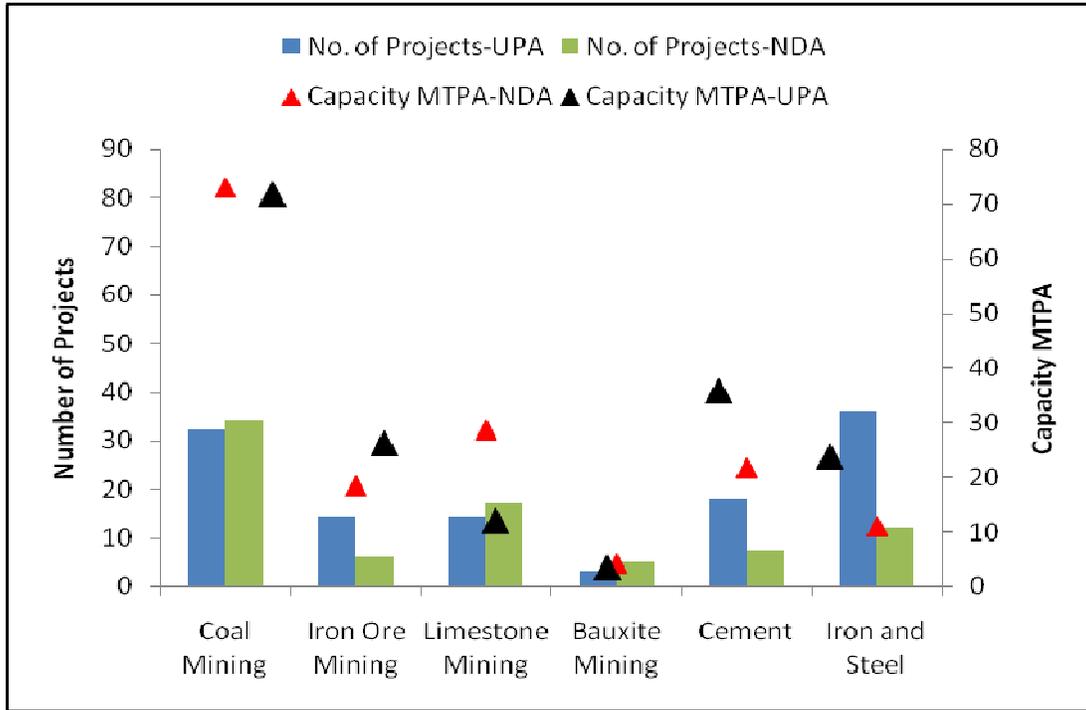
### 2. UPA vs. NDA

#### (i) No clear trend indicating a massive increase or decrease in ECs in the first two years of the NDA Government as compared to the UPA

- For instance, for coal, bauxite and limestone mining, the average trend of granting clearances has remained more or less same when compared between the last five years of the UPA terms and the first two years of the NDA, taking a yearly average of number of clearances granted and capacity cleared for the respective periods (*see Figures 1-2*).
- The clearances given to the coal based thermal power plants have significantly reduced actually in the last two years. This is reflective of the stagnation in the industry. Between 2009–2013, the industry had taken clearances for more than 1.5 lakh megawatt (MW)

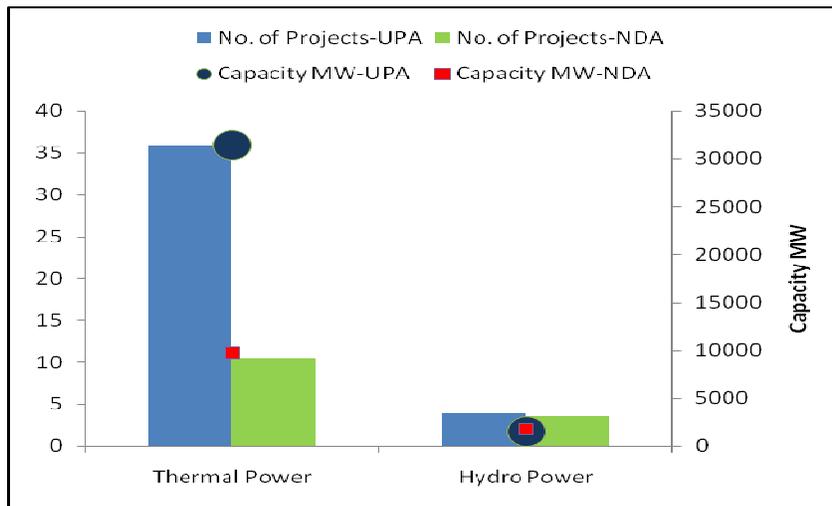
worth of projects. However, there was a slow down since 2013, which continues in the first two years of the UPA term.

**Figure 1: Environmental clearances for major sectors: UPA vs. NDA**  
 (Yearly average for UPA: period 2009- May 2014; and NDA: June 2014- April 2016)



*\* For Other Minerals (including sand/bajri/gravel/stone), the data as available at the time of the UPA Government was not substantial for a comparison*

**Figure 2: Environmental clearances for Thermal and Hydro power sectors: UPA vs. NDA**  
 (Yearly average for UPA: period 2009- May 2014; and NDA: June 2014- April 2016)



## **(ii) Outstanding concerns with coal remains**

For years, a key concern with coal mining has been how and where mining is happening. There have been two outstanding concerns; the first is with respect to mining happening in critically polluted coalfields such as Singrauli, Hazaribagh-Chatra, Korba, Angul-Talcher etc., and the second is with respect to provisions of public consultation that has been undermined. Unfortunately the trend has not been reversed yet.

- Projects (including expansion) continue to come up in critically polluted coalfields, such as in Singrauli district of Madhya Pradesh and Dhanbad district of Jharkhand. For instance, out of the eight coal mining projects cleared in MP with a cumulative production capacity of 18.45 MTPA between June 2014 to April 2016, four were in Singrauli (10.95 MTPA) two in nearing Sonebhadra (2.5 MTPA), and one in nearing Sidhi (4 MTPA).
- The provision of public hearing also has been progressively relaxed for expansion of coal projects. The trend was set during the UPA times, the NDA Government has hastened the process further (see section *Less projects requiring public hearing*).

The MoEF&CC has also taken measures to expedite coal production from a number of mines that were cancelled by the Supreme Court in 2014. Following the passing of the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Bill 2015, by the Parliament (March 20, 2015), Ministry facilitated transfer of ECs from the previous coal mine allottees to the new leaseholders, without them having to obtain any extra approval. This was done by amending the EIA Notification 2006. The Notification until now required a no objection certificate to be obtained from the original holder of the EC and also from the concerned authority when a particular project or activity changes hands. The amended notification of the Ministry dated March 23, 2015, removed the requirement of the “no objection” certificate. The EC of a cancelled block can be transferred to the person whom such block will be subsequently allotted without it.