

## British Columbia regulator reviewing Taseko trades

Taseko Mines Ltd., a Vancouver mining company that suffered a major business setback early this month when its proposed Prosperity gold mine failed to get federal approval, is now at the centre of a related political controversy.

A CBC news report on Wednesday raised questions about unusually heavy trading in Taseko shares on Oct. 14 — about 2 1/2 weeks before the federal environment minister denied his approval for the mine, the company's major project. The value of Taseko's shares was cut by 25 per cent the day after the announcement by then environment minister Jim Prentice on Nov. 2. The shares have continued to trade well below the pre-announcement level and closed Thursday at \$4.67 on the Toronto Stock Exchange. Coincidentally, the shares dropped briefly to about the same level on Oct. 14 — opening at \$6.97 and falling as much 34 per cent to a low of \$4.58 — before rebounding to close at \$6.21 the same day.

Such a fluctuation may not be remarkable for a mining stock but trading in Taseko was unusually heavy that day, with about 7.5 million exchanged in Toronto and nearly 23.5 million traded in New York.

Opposition MPs in Ottawa are calling for an RCMP investigation into whether there was a leak of information ahead of the formal announcement. ... John Baird, the government House leader and recently appointed environment minister, responded that an environmental assessment — which said the project would cause irreparable harm to the environment — was publicly available for some time before the controversial trading. ...

The **British Columbia Securities Commission** confirmed Thursday that the Taseko trading is under investigation but said it wouldn't comment further. A spokesman for Taseko welcomed the BCSC's announcement but said there was little he could say about the incident while the formal review is going on.

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