

# Sustainable Coal Production

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Sustainable development of the coal sector requires protection of environment, conserve resources, care for society and safeguarding forests and biodiversity. The Government is taking following measures to protect the environment, conserve resources, care for society and safeguard our forests and biodiversity for sustainable development of the coal sector:

- i. For opening a new mine or for enhancement in Production Capacity and / or land area, prior Environmental Clearance (EC) is obtained from Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change (MoEF&CC) under Environment (Protection) Act & Rules, 1986 and EIA Notification, 2006 and subsequent amendments. The mines are operated complying with the EC conditions thereby ensuring environment sustainability.
- ii. In compliance of the Van (Sanrakshan evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, prior Forestry Clearance is also obtained from MoEF&CC, in case of projects involving forest land.
- iii. Guidelines for Mining Plan and Mine closure plan are issued by the Ministry with an aim of conserving resources, protection of environment and care for society. Goal is to achieve its coal production target sustainably and ensure land usage for future generations after final closure of the mine. This closure process ensures both environmental sustainability and adherence to statutory regulations. As stipulated in Mine Closure guidelines, biological reclamation, development of green belt, Air and Water and other environmental Quality management etc. is carried out during the operational period of the mine as well as during the post closure period of the mine. Compliance of closure activities as per the guideline is checked by empanelled third party agency and verified by the regional office of the CCO at periodic intervals.
- iv. After receipt of EC, Consent to Establish (CTE) and Consent to Operate (CTO) are also obtained from respective State Pollution Control Boards under Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 and Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974.
- v. In compliance of the EC/ CTE/ CTO conditions, regular environmental monitoring with respect to ambient air quality, effluent quality, noise level monitoring and ground water (both levels and quality) are monitored and reports are submitted to MoEF&CC / State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) / Central Ground Water Board (CGWB).
- vi. Coal/Lignite PSUs have undertaken various environmentally sustainable measures which inter-alia include: Greening Initiatives—Bio-Reclamation/Plantation, development of Eco-parks, Efficient utilization of mine water, Gainful Utilization of Overburden, Energy Efficiency Measures, Green Credit Programme, First Mile Connectivity (FMC) projects, Deployment of Blast free technology in coal mining, and Renewable Energy and clean coal initiatives, etc.

The details of the reforms that have increased coal production to make the country self-sufficient in the production of coal are as under:

- i. Enactment of Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2021 [MMDR Act] for enabling captive mines owners (other than atomic minerals) to sell up to 50% of their annual mineral (including coal) production in the open market after meeting the requirement of the end use plant linked with the mine in such manner as may be prescribed by the Central Government on payment of such additional amount.
- ii. Single Window Clearance portal for the coal sector to speed up the operationalization of coal mines.

iii. Project Monitoring Unit for hand-holding of coal block allottees for obtaining various approvals / clearances for early operationalization of coal mines.

iv. Auction of commercial mining on revenue sharing basis was launched in 2020. Under commercial mining scheme, rebate of 50 % on final offer has been allowed for the quantity of coal produced earlier than scheduled date of production. Further, incentives on coal gasification or liquefaction (rebate of 50 % on final offer) have been granted.

v. Terms and conditions of commercial coal mining are very liberal with no restriction on utilization of coal, allowing new companies to participate in the bidding process, reduced upfront amount, adjustment of upfront amount against monthly payment, liberal efficiency parameters to encourage flexibility to operationalize the coal mines, transparent bidding process, 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) through automatic route and revenue sharing model based on the National Coal Index.

vi. Coal India Limited (CIL) has adopted number of measures to increase coal production. In its Underground (UG) mines, CIL is adopting Mass Production Technologies (MPT), mainly with Continuous Miners (CMs), wherever feasible. CIL has also planned Highwalls (HW) mines in view of the availability of Abandoned/ Discontinued mines. CIL is also planning large capacity UG mines wherever feasible. In its Opencast (OC) mines, CIL already has State-of-the- Art technology in its high-capacity Excavators, Dumpers and Surface Miners.

vii. SCCL has initiated action for developing infrastructure for evacuation of coal like CHPs, Crushers, Mobile Crushers, Pre-weigh-bins etc.

viii. CIL has identified 28 mines with capacity of 253 MTY to be operated through Mine Developer and Operator (MDO) mode.

ix. As part of the recent reforms, 24 (twenty four) closed/ discontinued mines have been awarded to successful bidders so far. Out these, 02 (two) mines belong to the State of Maharashtra (AB-Incline and Walni UG) and no mine belong to the State of Madhya Pradesh.

This information was given by Union Minister of Coal and Mines Shri G. Kishan Reddy in a written reply in Lok Sabha today.

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