

Parliamentary Consultative Committee of Coal Ministry Reviews Compliance Status of Environmental Norms by Coal / Lignite Companies

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Union Minister of Coal, Mines and Parliamentary Affairs Shri Pralhad Joshi chaired a meeting of Parliamentary Consultative Committee of Ministry of Coal today in Parliament House to discuss the status of compliance of Environmental Norms by Coal/Lignite Companies. Minister of State for Coal, Mines and Railways Shri Raosaheb Patil Danve also participated in the meeting.

In his opening remarks, Minister Shri Pralhad Joshi informed the committee members that mining operations in coal/lignite mines are carried out with due regard to safety, environment protection and sustainability. Environment Protection during mining activities is one of the key thrust areas of coal/lignite PSUs, which ensures that various statutory provisions prescribed in environmental rules and regulations are adhered to and appropriate environmental standards are maintained in and around mining areas.

Secretary (Coal) briefed the committee about creation of a Sustainable Development Cell (SDC) in the Ministry to advice, mentor, plan and monitor environmental sustainability of coal mines. He also informed the committee that the Ministry and Coal/lignite companies have been preparing reports, booklets and videos on the status of environmental sustainability and best environmental practices. Also, Star rating of Mines has been adopted to incentivise self-environmental compliances.

During the meeting, a presentation was made by Joint Secretary, Ministry of Coal during which it was informed that the status of environmental compliance of big mines is monitored by Secretary (coal) at intervals and SDC cell also monitors the status at regular intervals. In consultation of coal/lignite PSUs, a roadmap has been drawn for plantation, mine water utilization, development of eco-parks, energy efficiency measures etc. Initiatives have also been taken to explore use of LNG to reduce carbon footprint. Also, a programme for third party environmental audit of mines and ecological studies by engaging reputed Institutions has been chalked out.

Director (Technical), CIL also made a detailed presentation on the compliance of environmental norms in CIL mines and submitted that coal mines are operating with various environmental permits and are complying with prescribed environmental conditions and norms. To mitigate the adverse impacts of mining, coal companies are implementing various pollution control measures and adopting environment friendly technologies such as Surface Miners/Rippers for blast free extraction of Coal/OB, FMC Projects for minimizing road transport of coal, installation of mist sprayer/Fog canons, deployment of mechanical road sweepers etc. In addition, CIL is promoting various other sustainable practices to reduce carbon footprint of mining and for the welfare of host community. CIL has planned to install 3000 MW solar plants .

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by 2023-24, which will meet their electrical power requirement. Subsidiaries of CIL is promoting mine tourism and developing ecological parks in and around coalfields. They are also recovering sand from the overburden for gainful utilisation of waste and supplying mine water after proper treatment to the nearby villagers for domestic as well as agricultural purpose.

During discussion, all Committee Members appreciated the efforts being undertaken by the Ministry and coal/lignite PSUs towards environment care and benefits of the society. The members acknowledged the good works especially third party audit, gainful utilisation of mine water, promoting renewables, mine tourism and OB to sand initiatives and made valuable suggestions for further improvement in environmental management in mining areas. It was suggested by committee members that public representative should be consulted more frequently by Coal Companies on the issues like environment protection, social welfare and productivity.

In his concluding remarks, Minister Shri Pralhad Joshi thanked the Committee Members for their active participation and assured that their valued suggestions would be adopted by the Ministry and coal/lignite PSUs.

CMD (CIL), CMD (NLCIL) and CMDs of CIL subsidiaries were also present during the meeting.