

Coal Washeries Capacity needs to be Enhanced to Reduce Coal Import: Coal Secretary Amrit Lal Meena

National Seminar on “Washing of Coal - Opportunities & Challenges” held in Delhi

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The Indian National Committee World Mining Congress under the patronage of Ministry of Coal organized a national seminar on "Washing of Coal - Opportunities & Challenges," bringing together industry experts, researchers and stakeholders to deliberate on the future of coal beneficiation in India. The seminar provided a unique platform for knowledge exchange, fostering collaborations and driving innovation in the coal sector.

In his keynote address, Shri Amrit Lal Meena, Secretary, Ministry of Coal, highlighted the urgent need to enhance the capacity of washeries for coking and non-coking coal. He mentioned that by doing so, India can significantly reduce its reliance on coal imports and promote domestic coal beneficiation. The Secretary emphasized the incorporation of latest technologies and the opening of new mines to boost coal production efficiently. Furthermore, numerous railway projects are underway to overcome transportation constraints and infrastructure developments are being carried out to support the coal industry's growth.



Shri M Nagaraju, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Coal underscored the importance of technical optimization in coal washing. By adopting cutting-edge techniques and methodologies, the coal sector can maximize the yield of high-quality coal, thus contributing to India's energy security and sustainability goals, he said.

In his address Shri PM Prasad, Chairman, Coal India Limited (CIL), underscored the pivotal role of coal washeries in enhancing the quality of both coking and non-coking coal and emphasized the importance of coal washeries in ensuring a seamless supply of high-quality coal for various sectors. Recognizing the increasing demand for cleaner and more efficient coal, he envisioned the establishment of additional washeries in the coming years. This strategic move aims to meet the nation's coal requirements while upholding stringent quality standards.

Dr B Veera Reddy, Director (T) CIL & CMD CCL, Ministry of Coal, articulated the seminar's objective to

make coal cleaner and improve its quality and efficiency. He unveiled the Ministry's vision to export coal to neighboring countries, starting from the next year, which would bolster India's position as a prominent coal supplier in the region.



During technical session, Shri H L Sapru, CEO of MDCWL Limited, emphasized that coal washing has the potential to save up to 1 rupee per KWhr in the landing cost of coal for power plants. The country currently operates 20 washeries with a total capacity of 113.6 million tonnes per annum (MTPA), reflecting India's commitment to cleaner and more efficient coal production.

Shri Manish Mishra, Chief Corporate Affairs at Tata Steel, presented detailed information on coking coal for the domestic steel industry. He provided a comprehensive overview of the washability characteristics of Indian coal, showcasing the critical role of coal washing in producing high-quality coking coal for steel making.

Dr. U S Chattopadhyay from CIMFR Dhanbad addressed the challenges in the beneficiation of low volatile coking coal (LVC) in India. He highlighted the significant reserves of LVC, amounting to 7953 MT in Jharia Coalfields and 496 MT in East Bokaro. Dr. Chattopadhyay discussed issues related to the deterioration of coal quality and inadequate supply. He recommended that the Government of India (GOI) devise a strategic plan to halt the supply of LVC to power plants. Additionally, he proposed the construction of new washeries to replace conventional ones and suggested installing deshaling plants for LVC coal with ash content greater than 40 per cent.

Shri Kapil Dhagat, EVP of JPL, presented details of coal beneficiation with special reference to the Direct Reduced Iron (DRI) making process, steelmaking, and gasification. He elaborated on the characteristics of coal required for successful steelmaking processes and emphasized the need for quality consciousness during coal mining. Shri Dhagat recommended an emphasis on establishing new washeries near mines, increasing research and development efforts, modernizing existing washeries and supplying only washed coal to various sectors.

Furthermore, Shri Gautam Senapati discussed washing high-grade non-coking coal for use in steelmaking in the blast furnace route. He requested support from the Ministry of Coal (MoC) and Coal India Limited (CIL) for conducting more sampling of 2-3 types of coal at the pilot level, aiming to enhance the quality of coal in this sector.

A panel discussion was chaired by Shri M Nagaraju, Additional Secretary, which witnessed industry leaders and representatives including Shri Alok Perti, Former Secretary Coal, Shri VK Tiwari, former Additional Secretary Coal, Smt. Santosh, DDG MoC/ CCO, Shri Abhijit Narendra, JS Steel, Shri Varinder Dhawan, Executive Director, SAIL and Capt. R S Sandhu, Executive Chairman, ACB. The discussions emphasizing the holistic approach towards coal washing which can ensure reducing coal imports and the nation can aim to achieve self-reliance in the coal sector, thus contributing to the nation's economic growth and environmental sustainability.

Dr. Peeyush Kumar, OSD, Ministry of Coal, expressed gratitude to all participants for their valuable contributions for making the seminar a resounding success. He informed that all presentations of the seminar

can be viewed on www.wmc-inc.org . Over 130 delegates from 20 companies have participated in the Seminar.

The national seminar on “Washing of Coal- Opportunities and Challenges” underscored India's dedication to produce cleaner and higher-quality coal while promoting technological advancements in the sector. By investing in research and development, improving technical optimization, and resolving transport constraints, India aims to unlock the full potential of coal washing and bolster its position as a key player in the global coal industry.

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