

Government policies

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⑧ Can the establishment of a single body to oversee the coal industry ensure compliance with mining & environmental standards? comment

Coal continues to dominate India's electric generation for at least couple of decade even though government favours towards renewable energy source.

Even though India is second largest producer of coal, India continues to import large amount of coal.

As more than 94% of India coal mining is open cast mining it has some serious ecosystem & societal concerns. Diversion of forest land, rehabilitate local communities are few to mention.

Even though Ministry of Coal mandates the coal mining owner to rehabilitate the mines out areas through amount deposited by them every year, but there is lack of compliance in it.

As mining involves environmental, ethical, geological, hydro-geology aspects it is seen overlapping domains of various

department which delays the mining & lack of regulation

Therefore India needs more effective & efficient regulatory governance authority, as recommended by committee in 2016.

* Authority should be multidisciplinary Independent body on par with Director general of mines safety which staffed with scientific & technologic experts to regulate health & safety in mineral industry

* It should have in house professional expertise in various aspect of coal mine closure to consider facets before grant coal mine

* MoEF & CC must hand over power to approve environmental clearance, it will remove delays & enhance compliance in environment

Thus parliament must enact a "Sustainable coal mining code" to consolidate all statutory power governing opening/closing & environment matter related to coal mine & delegate necessary power to constituted authority. It can follow US, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation & Enforcement (OSMRE) in this regard