



# Union Minister of Coal & Mines Shri G. Kishan Reddy chairs Day-long Half-Yearly Review Meeting on Coal Sector

Safety and Welfare of Mineworkers Must be Top Priority: Shri G Kishan Reddy

Coal Minister Advocates for Enhanced Efficiency and Environmental Responsibility in the Coal Sector

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The Half-Yearly Review Meeting on the coal sector was convened at Sushma Swaraj Bhawan in New Delhi, today. The meeting was chaired by Union Minister of Coal and Mines, Shri G. Kishan Reddy, with Union Minister of State for Coal and Mines, Shri Satish Chandra Dubey, serving as co-chair. Shri Vikram Dev Dutt, Secretary of the Ministry of Coal; Smt. Rupinder Brar; Smt. Vismita Tej; Additional Secretaries, Ministry of Coal; and all senior officers from the Ministry of Coal, along with CMDs of Coal/Lignite PSUs, were also present. The meeting was to assess the progress of ongoing projects, discuss future strategies, and enhance the coal sector's growth trajectory.



In a significant step towards sustainability and resource efficiency, Shri G. Kishan Reddy launched the Report of the High-Powered Expert Committee (HPEC) on the Gainful Utilization of Overburden (OB) in the Coal Sector.

The report outlines a comprehensive framework for using OB as a valuable resource. Historically seen as waste, OB is now being positioned as an asset with the potential to contribute significantly to environmental sustainability, economic development and create employment opportunities for local communities.



During the Half-Yearly review, Final Mine Closure certificates were awarded to three WCL mines: Pathakhera-I UG Mine, Pathakhera-II UG Mine, and Satapura-II UG Mine. It is for the first time since independence that Coal Mines are officially closed and certificates have been issued. Union Minister Shri G. Kishan Reddy presented these certificates to Shri J.P. Dwivedi, CMD, WCL; Shri Deepak Rewatkar, GM (Safety), WCL; and Shri L.K. Mohapatra, Area General Manager, Pathakhera Area.

In his keynote address, Union Minister Shri G. Kishan Reddy emphasized the importance of production efficiency and environmental stewardship in the coal sector. He highlighted the need to embrace innovative technologies that enhance coal production while minimizing environmental impact. He expressed deep concern for the environment, urging all stakeholders to prioritize responsible mining practices, including the implementation of accredited compensatory afforestation initiatives and effective reclamation of de-coaled lands. Furthermore, the Minister stressed that mine closures must be managed responsibly, ensuring that affected communities are supported and that rehabilitated areas are returned to productive use.



The Minister also underscored the critical importance of safety for mineworkers, stating that their health and well-being must be prioritized through rigorous enforcement of safety protocols and ongoing training programs. He expressed concern for the families of mine workers, emphasizing that a safe working environment is essential not only for the workers themselves but also for their communities. Shri Reddy urged stakeholders to foster a culture of safety and social responsibility, reinforcing the need for proactive Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives that engage and uplift local communities. By aligning industry practices with community needs, promoting social welfare, and addressing environmental concerns, the coal sector can transform into a model of modernity and responsibility, ultimately ensuring a sustainable future for both the industry and the environment.

While Reviewing, Union Minister of State for Coal and Mines, Shri Satish Chandra Dubey highlighted the remarkable progress made by the coal sector over the past six months. He commended the efforts of all stakeholders in enhancing production capacity while emphasizing the need for continued focus on safety and environmental sustainability. Minister Shri Dubey stressed the importance of innovative practices and technologies in driving efficiency and moving towards net zero. He called for collaborative efforts to address challenges and ensure the long-term viability of coal as a critical energy resource, reaffirming the government's commitment to supporting the industry while prioritizing the welfare of workers and local communities.

Addressing the gathering, Shri Vikram Dev Dutt, Secretary, Ministry of Coal, outlined the agenda of the event and highlighted the key focus areas of the discussion. Secretary Shri Dutt reiterated the Government's commitment to ensuring that the coal sector can sustainably meet the energy demands of the nation while protecting the environment and the lives of those who work in it.





Further presentations were made on the Operational Overview of the coal sector, along with the Vision 2030 and Vision 2047 frameworks. Detailed discussions were held on the operationalization of newly allocated coal blocks, the status of exploration activities, and accelerating coal production to secure India's energy needs and foster self-reliance in the energy sector. The session also highlighted critical areas that need to be addressed to ensure sustained energy security and support the nation's long-term economic growth.

Subsequent sessions delved into the financial, technical, and business development of the coal sector. The Minister held in-depth discussions with CMDs and HODs regarding capital expenditures (CAPEX), asset monetization, and market capitalization, offering a comprehensive overview of the current landscape and future prospects. Presentations showcased technological advancements, particularly in underground mining, and strategies to enhance coking coal capacity, with the goal of reducing reliance on imports and boosting domestic production. A significant emphasis was placed on adopting environmentally sustainable practices in the mining sector, including the transition to gas-based technologies and the integration of electric vehicles (EVs). These efforts align with the overarching aim of lowering the carbon footprint in coal mining operations. The progress of First Mile Connectivity (FMC) projects was reviewed, focusing on eco-friendly coal transportation systems designed to minimize environmental impact. Furthermore, discussions highlighted the promotion of Heavy Earth Moving Machinery (HEMM) to improve operational performance and productivity, supporting the Make in India initiative championed by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

Shri G. Kishan Reddy led a discussion on Inter-Ministerial Coordination and Sustainable Development, emphasizing the importance of collaboration among ministries. Presentations were made by the Ministries of Power, Railways, and Environment, Forest, and Climate Change (MoEFCC), addressing critical challenges and aligning goals to enhance cooperation. Shri G. Kishan Reddy reiterated the necessity of sustainable development, particularly through accredited compensatory afforestation, environmental initiatives, and the reclamation and proper utilization of de-coaled land. He highlighted that responsible mine closure is not merely an operational requirement but a commitment to environmental stewardship, ensuring long-term sustainability.



The discussions also extensively covered safety protocols in mining operations and welfare programs for mine workers and their families. Special attention was given to CSR and HR initiatives, recruitment promotion and transfer policies, and labor relations, along with the Employees' Provident Fund, all aimed at fostering a safe and supportive environment for all stakeholders. An interaction session on CSR, HR, and Labour Relations covered strategies for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) planning and execution, ensuring the effective alignment of social initiatives with the needs of communities around coalfields. Discussion also focused on transfer policies, aiming to create a more transparent, merit-based system for employee transfers and promotions, as well as the status of labor relations, emphasizing welfare measures such as the Employees Provident Fund (CMPFO) to ensure the financial security of coal sector employees.

A significant aspect of the discussions was the observance of Vigilance Awareness Week. The Ministry of Coal reiterated its dedication to upholding transparency and accountability across its operations. Presentations were made on the various vigilance initiatives being undertaken by Coal PSUs, which include strict compliance with ethical standards, ensuring fair practices in tenders and contracts. The Minister interacted with Chief Vigilance Officers (CVOs), reinforcing the Ministry's anti-corruption stance and its drive toward a corruption-free governance structure.

The Half-Yearly Review Meeting concluded with a vote of thanks, setting the stage for an action-packed second half of the year, driving the coal sector forward toward the ambitious targets of Vision 2030 and beyond.

Final Mine Closure certificates were given to Three Mines, namely Pathakhera -I UG Mine, Pathakhera -II UG Mine & Satapura-II UG Mine of WCL, during the Half-Yearly Review of the Coal Sector at Sushma Swaraj Bhawan, New Delhi today. It is for the first time since independence... [pic.twitter.com/pqOcoaFJmq](https://pic.twitter.com/pqOcoaFJmq)

— G Kishan Reddy (@kishanreddybjp) October 22, 2024

During the Half-Yearly Review of the Coal Sector, unveiled the Report of the High-Powered Expert Committee (HPEC) on Gainful Utilization of Overburden (OB) in the Coal Sector at Sushma Swaraj Bhawan, New Delhi today.

HPEC included multi-disciplinary experts from five central... [pic.twitter.com/WskNjBQYI8](https://pic.twitter.com/WskNjBQYI8)

— G Kishan Reddy (@kishanreddybjp) October 22, 2024

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