

Coal Imports During April-December 2024 Drops by 8.4% Compared to Same Period of FY 2023-24

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Coal imports to the country during April to December 2024 fell by 8.4%, totalling 183.42 million tonnes (MT), compared to 200.19 MT in the same period of previous fiscal year. This reduction resulted in foreign exchange savings of approximately \$5.43 billion (₹42,315.7 crore). Notably, the Non-Regulated Sector, excluding the power sector, experienced a more significant decline, with imports dropping by 12.01% year-on-year. Although coal-based power generation grew by 3.53% from April to December 2024 compared to the previous year, imports for blending by thermal power plants sharply decreased by 29.8%. This highlights India's ongoing efforts to reduce its dependence on imported coal and enhance self-sufficiency in coal production.

The Government of India has implemented several initiatives, including Commercial Coal Mining and Mission Coking Coal, to enhance domestic coal production and reduce imports. These efforts have also led to an encouraging 6.11% growth in coal output during the April-December 2024 period compared to the same period of FY 2023-24.

India's coal sector plays a pivotal role in supporting its rapidly growing economy, with coal serving as a primary energy source for critical industries like power generation, steel production, and cement manufacturing etc. However, the country faces a significant challenge in meeting its domestic coal demand, especially for coking coal and high-grade thermal coal, which are in short supply within the country's reserves. As a result, coal imports have been vital to meet the needs of key sectors, including steel production.

The Ministry of Coal has been implementing strategic measures to strengthen domestic production and ensure a secure coal supply, aligning with India's goals of reducing coal imports and enhancing energy security. By prioritizing domestic coal output, the government aims to march ahead towards *Viksit Bharat* goal by building a self-reliant, sustainable energy framework that supports long-term economic growth.

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