

Government Notifies Colliery Control (Amendment) Rules, 2025 to Simplify Approval Process for Opening Coal Mines - Empowers Board of Coal Companies to Approve the Opening of Mine, Seam or Section of a Seam

प्रविष्टि तिथि: 26 DEC 2025 4:05PM by PIB Delhi

In a major effort to enhance ease of doing and to make the coal sector more business-friendly, the Government has amended the provisions governing approval for opening coal and lignite mines under the Colliery Control Rules, 2004. The amendment removes procedural redundancies and enables faster operationalisation of mines, while ensuring continued regulatory oversight.

As per earlier provisions of Rule (9) of the Colliery Control Rules, 2004, a coal/ lignite mine owner was required to obtain prior permission from the Coal Controller's Organisation (CCO) for opening a coal mine as well as for opening individual seams or sections of a seam. Permission of CCO was also required for starting a coal/ lignite mine if a mine was not operational for a period of 180 days or more.

To eliminate procedural redundancies, accelerate coal production, and improve efficiency in the approval process, the requirement of obtaining prior opening permission from the CCO has now been dispensed with through amendment of Rule 9 of the Colliery Control Rules, 2004. The Notification amending this Rule has been issued on 23.12.2025 and the details of this notification on Colliery Control (Amendment) Rules, 2025 may be seen at weblink <https://coal.nic.in/sites/default/files/2025-12/26-12-2025a-wn.pdf> or at <https://egazette.gov.in/WriteReadData/2025/268804.pdf>

Under the amended provisions, the authority to approve mine/ seam opening permission has now been entrusted/ vested with the board of concerned coal company. This reform would streamline the approval process, while ensuring that compliance responsibility remains firmly with the company's highest decision-making authority. This reform is expected to reduce upto 2 months in operationalization of mine.

As safeguard, it has been provided that (a) the Board of the concerned coal company can approve mine/ seam opening after the requisite approvals from Central/ State Government and statutory bodies has been obtained, (b) the company has to submit information about mine opening to CCO, and (c) for entities other than companies, such approval will continue to be through CCO.

The overall reform strikes a balanced approach by delegating operational decisions to company Boards while retaining regulatory oversight and statutory safeguards. By reducing approval timelines and placing accountability at the highest corporate level, the amendment is expected to enhance efficiency, expedite coal production, and reinforce confidence in India's coal regulatory framework.

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