

Ministry of Coal Releases 'AAROH': India's First Report on Scientific Mine Closure and Repurposing Practices

Ministry of Coal also Signs Implementation Agreement with Germany's GIZ to Boost Scientific Mine Closure Cooperation

Coal Minister Inaugurates Coal NEER Plants, Turning Mine Discharge into Safe Drinking Water

BCCL, JRDA Sign Tripartite MoUs with Hindalco and Rajdhani Universal Fabrics for Jharia Rehabilitation and Skill Development

प्रविष्टि तिथि: 22 JUL 2026 8:54PM by PIB Delhi

The Ministry of Coal today released 'AAROH: Annual Report on Mine Closure' at the Oberoi, New Delhi, highlighting India's progress in adopting scientific approaches to mine closure, ecological restoration, and sustainable post-mining land utilisation.



The event was graced by Shri G. Kishan Reddy, Union Minister of Coal and Mines; Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and Minister of State for the Prime Minister's Office, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space; Shri Satish Chandra Dubey, Union Minister of State for Coal and Mines; H.E. Dr Philipp Ackermann, German Ambassador; Dr. Ewa Suwara, Deputy Head of the EU Delegation; Shri Vikram Dev Dutt, Secretary, Ministry of Coal; Shri Sanoj Kumar Jha, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Coal and Shri Sajeesh Kumar N., Coal Controller. The program witnessed participation from other senior officials of Central and State Governments, coal companies, international organisations, industry, academia, and other stakeholders associated with sustainable mining and post-mining development.

The Union Minister of Coal and Mines Shri G Kishan Reddy inaugurated the Exhibition on Mine Closure and Mine Repurposing, showcasing innovative initiatives undertaken by Coal India Limited and its subsidiaries, NLC India Limited, Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL), NTPC and private mining organisations. The exhibition highlighted successful practices in scientific reclamation, ecological restoration, mine repurposing, community development, and sustainable utilisation of post-mining land.

The Ministers formally released 'AAROH – Annual Report on Mine Closure', followed by the screening of a documentary film showcasing the publication. The AAROH, developed by the Coal Controller Organisation, presents India's first comprehensive documentation of scientific mine closure and repurposing practices. The report documents the transformative journey of 42 scientifically closed coal mines, showcasing structured reclamation processes, ecological restoration initiatives, sustainable post-mining land utilisation, and community-oriented interventions that have contributed to the creation of environmentally restored and socially beneficial landscapes.

Each mine profile featured in AAROH presents key closure initiatives, post-mining land-use outcomes, before-and-after visual documentation, and QR code-enabled documentary videos capturing the transformation journey of the respective mine sites. The publication serves as a knowledge repository, highlighting successful models and providing valuable insights for future mine closure and repurposing efforts.

The report also captures the evolution of India's mine closure framework and highlights key initiatives of the Ministry of Coal, including the RECLAIM Framework, L.I.V.E.S. Framework, SUVIKALP – Mine Repurposing Tool, and SUVIKALP Samvaad, which promote scientific assessment, stakeholder participation, knowledge exchange, and sustainable post-mining land use.

Another highlight of the event was the signing of the Implementation Agreement between the Ministry of Coal and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) for technical cooperation on 'To-be closed mines'. The agreement aims to strengthen collaboration in scientific mine closure, mine repurposing, technical capacity building, knowledge exchange, and adoption of global best practices, further strengthening India-Germany cooperation in the mining sector. The project has been commissioned by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and is co-financed by the European Union, with a total project volume of EUR 10 million until 2030. The cooperation will take place over the next four years focusing on developing innovative and sustainable approaches for the closure and repurposing of coal mines in India. This investment by Germany and the European Union reflects Team Europe's strong partnership with India to deepen cooperation on sustainable economic development, a priority reaffirmed at the 16th India-EU Summit and the visit of German Chancellor to India earlier this year.



The Union Minister also virtually inaugurated Coal NEER Plants established by Coal India Limited through its subsidiaries—Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL), Central Coalfields Limited (CCL), Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL), and South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL). The initiative is aimed at strengthening access to safe and sustainable drinking water facilities in coal-bearing regions and improving the quality of life of communities residing in mining areas. Aligning with the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of 'Waste to Wealth', these plants purify mine water and markets it as safe, high-quality bottled drinking water under the brand name 'Coal Neer.' These projects use advanced treatment methods including RO, UV and CDI technologies to provide safe, clean, and affordable drinking water to nearby villages and local communities. Apart from providing affordable bottled drinking water, these projects also offer sustainable livelihood opportunities for Self Help Groups from nearby villages.



The event also witnessed the signing of tripartite Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) by Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) and Jharia Rehabilitation and Development Authority (JRDA) with Hindalco Industries Limited and Rajdhani Universal Fabrics Private Limited. These partnerships will facilitate coordinated efforts towards rehabilitation, infrastructure development, community welfare, and socio-economic development in the Jharia coalfield region. The MoU signed between BCCL, JRDA and Hindalco aims to establish an Industry-Linked Skill Centre that will equip the youth of the Dhanbad region with industry-relevant skills to work in world-class apparel manufacturing units. The MoU signed between BCCL, JRDA and Rajdhani Universal Fabrics Pvt Ltd aims to establish a world-class integrated technical textile manufacturing ecosystem, which will generate large-scale employment and strengthen skill development.

In his keynote address, Union Minister of Coal and Mines Shri G Kishan Reddy, mentioned that under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, India has fundamentally transformed the philosophy of mine closure, viewing it not as the end of mining but as the beginning of new opportunities for people, communities and sustainable development. He described scientific mine closure as a national priority and a key pillar of the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, adding that India has scientifically closed 42 coal mines, including 33 in the last year alone, and has set an ambitious target of scientifically closing 147 more mines over the next two to three years. He highlighted that the Ministry has built a comprehensive ecosystem for mine closure through the RECLAIM Framework, the SUVIKALP digital platform, the A.R.T.H.A. Framework, and District Collector-led Mine Closure Advisory Committees, while the Mine Closure Guidelines, 2025 place people and sustainability at the heart of mine closure. The Minister further informed that, for the first time, 25 per cent of the approved mine closure cost has been earmarked for community development, creating an investment potential of nearly ₹10,000 crore over the next decade. He also announced that the Government has created a dedicated corpus of over USD 5 billion (approximately ₹40,000 crore) for scientific mine closure and progressive mine closure, demonstrating its long-term commitment to environmentally responsible mining, ecological restoration and the socio-economic development of mining-affected regions.



Highlighting the transformative potential of scientific mine closure, the Minister said reclaimed mine lands across the country are being repurposed for renewable energy, eco-tourism, water conservation, agriculture, community infrastructure and sustainable livelihood generation, citing successful examples

from West Bokaro, Bishrampur and the Viveknagar Solar Project. Referring to global best practices, particularly Germany's experience in mine closure and Just Transition, he said the implementation agreement between the Ministry of Coal and GIZ would combine Germany's expertise with India's scale, policy leadership and implementation capacity to create an Indian model of mine closure that integrates environmental protection, technological innovation, community participation and economic opportunity. Emphasising that successful mine closure requires the collective efforts of governments, industry, academia, civil society, local communities and international partners, he expressed confidence that together they would transform every closed mine into a source of hope, opportunity and prosperity for future generations.



Addressing the gathering, Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, and Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Space, remarked that "the time has come to change the phrase from mine closure to mine of wealth." He lauded the Ministry of Coal for its progressive policies on scientific mine closure, stating that the successful closure of 42 coal mines demonstrates how degraded mine lands can be transformed into productive assets through ecological restoration, afforestation, water conservation, renewable energy and other sustainable community-centric initiatives. He noted that these efforts embody the principles of the circular economy by turning waste into wealth. Appreciating the India–Germany partnership and increasing private sector participation in scientific mine closure, he reaffirmed India's commitment to achieving its Net Zero target by 2070.

In his address, Shri Satish Chandra Dubey, Minister of State for Coal and Mines, emphasised that the Ministry of Coal is committed to ensuring that the benefits of mining extend far beyond coal production and translate into meaningful improvements in the lives of people living in coal-bearing regions. He said the Ministry's approach to scientific mine closure is guided by the principle that environmental restoration and socio-economic development must progress together. Referring to the Indo-German technical cooperation initiative, he said the partnership will strengthen institutional capacities, facilitate the exchange of global expertise and support the adoption of best practices in scientific mine closure and sustainable post-mining development, enabling closed mines to be transformed into assets that promote ecological restoration, sustainable livelihoods and long-term regional development.



Highlighting the significance of Coal NEER and the Tripartite MoUs under the Jharia Master Plan, Shri Dubey said these initiatives reflect the Ministry's commitment to translating sustainable mining practices into tangible community benefits. While Coal NEER will improve access to safe drinking water, promote efficient water resource management and generate livelihood opportunities through the active participation of local Self-Help Groups, particularly women, the Jharia initiative will complement rehabilitation with industry-linked skill development and employment opportunities, ensuring long-term socio-economic empowerment for rehabilitated families.



Addressing the gathering, Shri Vikram Dev Dutt, Secretary, Ministry of Coal, emphasised that mining must be guided by conscience, with people and their lives at the centre of development in mining regions. He described mine closure as a critical stage in the life cycle of mining, where responsible resource extraction must transition into long-term environmental restoration, land repurposing and sustainable

community development. He noted that the Ministry of Coal has transformed mine closure from a regulatory requirement into a planned, people-centric process through the Mine Closure Guidelines, 2025, comprehensive frameworks and digital tools developed by the Coal Controller Organisation, ensuring that environmental rehabilitation, community participation and future land use are integrated into every stage of mine closure planning. Referring to the signing of the Implementation Agreement for the Indo-German Technical Cooperation Project on "To-be-Closed Coal Mines" under the Indo-German Green and Sustainable Development Partnership, he said the EUR 10 million grant from the Government of Germany and the European Union would enable India to adopt global best practices in scientific mine closure while reinforcing the shared vision that mine closure is not merely the end of mining, but the beginning of new opportunities for people, communities and the environment.

Highlighting the Ministry's commitment to inclusive post-mining development, the Secretary said that the Revised Jharia Master Plan goes beyond rehabilitation by creating sustainable livelihood opportunities through skill development and the establishment of a Plug-and-Play Textile Manufacturing Facility for rehabilitated families. He also highlighted the significant contribution of coal PSUs in supplying nearly 300 lakh kiloliters of treated mine water annually, benefiting around three lakh people, including the supply of drinking water to Chennai. Referring to the launch of Coal NEER, he said the initiative demonstrates how treated mine discharge water can be transformed into safe drinking water for nearby communities, exemplifying the Ministry's commitment to scientific innovation, sustainable resource management and community welfare.

Addressing the gathering, H.E. Dr. Philipp Ackermann, Ambassador of Germany to India and Bhutan, highlighted the continuing India–Germany partnership in advancing sustainable development. Referring to the Implementation Agreement between the Ministry of Coal and GIZ, he said the collaboration would facilitate the exchange of technical expertise and global best practices for scientific mine closure and sustainable mine repurposing, while further strengthening Indo-German cooperation for a just and sustainable transition in mining regions.

In her address, Dr. Ewa Suwara, Deputy Head of the EU Delegation to India said that the partnership between India and EU is founded on shared democratic values, mutual respect and a common commitment sustainable development. She said the Government of India's commitment to sustainable closure of abandoned mines reflects a forward looking and responsible approach. She added that successful closure of mines requires long term planning, active engagement with stakeholders, investment in skill and reskill, land restoration and a firm commitment to ensure that the transition is fair and inclusive. She said that in this context, today's implementation agreement represents a significant and practical step forward. She also said that the agreement gives concrete expression to the shared ambition and lays the foundation for tangible cooperation through technical assistance and capacity building.

The event reaffirmed the Ministry of Coal's commitment to advancing scientific mine closure through progressive policies, technological innovation, institutional partnerships, and community-focused initiatives. Through initiatives such as AAROH, the Ministry continues to strengthen India's framework for responsible mining, ecological restoration, and sustainable post-mining development, contributing towards the vision of Viksit Bharat.

Shuhaib T

(रिलीज आईडी: 2288053) आगंतुक पटल : 5589
इस विज्ञप्ति को इन भाषाओं में पढ़ें: हिन्दी , Telugu

