SECL Transformation Since 2014

Expanding coal production and infrastructure while widening opportunities in Central India

Posted On: 12 SEP 2026 3:48PM by PIB Delhi

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, since 2014, India's coal sector has undergone a far-reaching transformation, propelled by a series of policy and structural reforms of the Government of India aimed at enhancing transparency, efficiency, technology adoption, infrastructure development, ease of operations and energy security. These reforms have accelerated decision-making, modernised mine planning, strengthened evacuation infrastructure and lifted productivity across the sector. The outcome is visible at the national level: India's domestic coal production crossed the landmark 1-BT (Billion Tonne) mark for the second consecutive year in FY 2025-26, reaching 1.04 BT (prov.), as coal continues to power about 73% of the nation's electricity generation and ensuring energy security for the nation.

South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL), a Mini Ratna subsidiary of Coal India Limited (CIL)operating across the coalfields of Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, has been one of the principal architects of this national achievement. From an ordinary coal production of 34.2 MT in its year of inception i.e. FY 1985-86, SECL has transformed itself into a major coal behemoth producing 176.28 MT coal in FY 2025-26. Contributing approximately 23% of CIL's output and around 17% of India's total coal production in FY 2025-26. Its operations sustain more than 36000 regular employees and 24000 contractual workers, along with a large ecosystem of transporters, suppliers and service providers.

Building the capacity to deliver

At the centre of SECL's operations are Gevra, Kusmunda and Dipka in Korba, together, these three mega mines represent 185 million tonnes of capacity, a major centre of coal mining and electricity generation, often described as India's powerhouse.

SECL's operational growth over the past decade tells a clear story of scale and efficiency. Coal production has risen from 124.26 Million Tonnes (MT) in 2013-14 to 176.28 MT in 2025-26, a year in which the Company also recorded coal offtake of 178.63 MT across 13 states, up from 122.03 MT in 2013-14, a growth of over 46%. What stands out most is the leap in productivity. Output per Man-Shift (OMS), the key measure of mining efficiency has more than doubled, from 7.23 tonnes in 2013-14 to 16.47 tonnes in 2025-26

SECL is developing the Chhattisgarh East Railway and Chhattisgarh East-West Railway corridors with IRCON and the Government of Chhattisgarh, involving a total investment of around ₹13,685 crore and approximately 342.6 kilometres of railway lines. The network links remotest corners of the Mand-Raigarh and Korba coalfields with the national railway system, enabling efficient movement of goods as well as people in near future.

Further, eleven First Mile Connectivity (FMC) projects, with a combined annual capacity of 156 million tonnes, have been operationalised at an investment of about ₹2,700 crore reducing carbon footprints associated with coal evacuation. Seven future projects are also planned to add 85 MTY of mechanized loading capacity. Dispatch through FMC systems grew by 28 per cent during FY 2025-26 and accounted for 41.3 per cent of total dispatch, showing the increasing role of mechanised infrastructure in delivering coal to consumers.

Changing how mines work

Inside the mines, the spread of surface miners and Continuous Miners reflects a sustained shift towards mechanisation. More than 88 % coal is being produced using Surface miners without conventional drilling and blasting, reducing the associated vibration and dust. Continuous Miners support underground mass-production and contributes 76 % of SECL's UG Coal production.

New paste fill technology at Singhali Underground Mine, by filling mined-out spaces with an engineered mixture, is intended to support underground stability and enable extraction beneath surface areas that constrain conventional mining. Mine Developer and Operator arrangements and revenue-sharing agreements offer additional ways to develop resources and bring specialist operating capabilities into the company.

Digital systems are increasingly supporting these changes. DigiCOAL brings together machinery monitoring, drone surveys, video analytics and worker-safety applications. DigiCOAL's presentation at the Central Vigilance Commission's national workshop in February 2026 also highlighted the role of digital systems in strengthening transparency and accountability. A network of over 1,600 CCTV cameras across mines, sidings and dispatch points are building an intelligent, digitally connected mining ecosystem, with AI-enabled surveillance analytics planned as the next step.

Opening new roles for women

Modernisation is also widening opportunities within SECL's workforce. Project Dharashakti, an initiative of SECL management to empower women employees, provides skill training and pathways into technical and operational roles, including Heavy Earth Moving Machinery (HEMM) operations. It supports women recruited as landowners and dependants in taking up work suited to their qualifications and abilities. A group of 19 women trainees has been undertaking HEMM operator training using advanced simulators, creating a route into occupations where women's participation has traditionally been limited. SECL has also established Coal India's first all-women-operated dispensary at Vasant Vihar, Bilaspur, and its first all-women-operated Central Store Unit at the Central Workshop, Korba.

A stronger financial contribution

SECL's financial base has grown alongside its operating capabilities. Reported net worth increased from about ₹9,544 crore in March 2015 to ₹20,457 crore in March 2026, a rise of nearly 114% per cent.

Its contribution to public revenues is substantial. In FY 2025–26, SECL contributed about ₹11,830 crore to Central and State government exchequers through direct taxes, royalty and other taxes and levies. Royalty payments alone increased from about ₹2,075 crore in FY 2014–15 to ₹3,485 crore in FY 2025–26, a rise of nearly 70 per cent. These payments extend the company's economic contribution beyond coal supply and employment.

Creating opportunities around the coalfields

SECL's CSR journey has evolved from need-based infrastructure and basic amenities to large-scale, outcome-oriented and sustainable interventions across Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh. CSR expenditure by the company has grown from ₹43.91 Crore in FY 2013-14 to over ₹127 Crore in FY 2025-

26 (growth of approx. 188%). SECL has invested about ₹1,078 crore since 2014-15 in mining-affected communities, focusing on healthcare, education, skill development, livelihoods, rural infrastructure, water conservation and social inclusion. Community development remains central to SECL's mandate. While Empowering the local communities, SECL has provided total 5405 employments against land from 2014-15 to Aug'2026.

The human significance of development is visible in programmes that address barriers to education and healthcare. Launched in 2023, SECL Ke Sushrut provides free residential NEET coaching, including accommodation and meals, to meritorious students from SECL's operational areas. Across its first two batches, 70 of 80 students qualified NEET and secured admission in MBBS, dental, Ayurveda, physiotherapy and veterinary courses. It is also the first CSR scheme of a coal PSU to be listed on the Government of India's Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) Portal. Its inclusion connects the programme with the national framework for transparent and accountable delivery of benefits. SECL Ki Dhadkan provides free corrective heart surgery to children with congenital heart disease. The programme has completed 300 surgeries and is progressing towards the goal of 1,060, helping families access treatment that can change a child's future.

Restoring land and supporting communities

SECL has completed the scientific closure of 28 abandoned mines, the highest number among Coal India subsidiaries, as of August 2026. Planning for the next use of mining land is becoming an increasingly important part of the company's work with local communities.

On the environmental front, a highest-ever 14.36 lakh saplings were planted across 571 hectares including dense plantations using the Miyawaki method during FY 2025-26 which happened to be around 5 Lakh in 2014. These efforts support the restoration of green cover around mining areas.

Kenapara Eco Park, near Bishrampur in Surajpur district, Chhattisgarh, shows how a former mining site can support tourism and community enterprise. At Banki 7&8 Underground Mine in Korba district, Chhattisgarh, land now accommodates a health centre and a weekly market. These examples give a practical meaning to mine repurposing: places once used for extraction can continue to serve surrounding settlements. Reused mine water supported irrigation across more than 3,800 hectares, while solar projects are creating another productive use for mining land. SECL continues to expand its renewable energy footprint, with its installed solar capacity now reaching 44 MW (as compared to NIL in the year 2014).

Preparing for the next phase

As India advances toward its USD 5-trillion economic aspiration and coal continues to provide the reliable, affordable, base-load energy that allows renewable power to scale, SECL's sustained record of growth in production, productivity, financial performance, infrastructure and community welfare makes it a vital pillar of that journey. While Korba coalfields is the hub for largest energy security at present, Mand-Raigarh coalfield is emerging as an additional production base, supported by expanding rail connectivity.

SECL's story since 2014 is, therefore, not simply one of more coal mined. It is a story of higher productivity, stronger finances, modernized logistics, digital and technological advancement, environmental responsibility and meaningful community development, which is a comprehensive demonstration of how progressive policy reform, institutional commitment and human capital can convert India's coal-sector potential into tangible national value. As the Company looks ahead, SECL remains committed to producing and delivering more, efficiently and responsibly, ensuring that the benefits of its growth reach its employees, communities, consumers and the nation at large.

****

Shuhaib T