

It is quite intriguing as to why MoEFCC has gone against the established global practice of washing of coal. Is the ministry not aware of damages that would be caused to the environment?

Coal preparation industry in India, subject experts and all stakeholders were taken by surprise by MoEFCC gazette notification No. 1400 of 21st May, 2020, negating its own order of 2nd January 2014 that mandated supply / use of washed coal in certain power plants.

As soon as the information about the proposed notification came to the notice of Coal Preparation Society of India (CPSI), a Petition was submitted to the MoEFCC highlighting the benefits of washing of coal and at the same time pointing out the inaccuracies and wrong representations made by MoC, MoP and NITI Aayog to MoEFCC that was the basis for MoEFCC's notification. Copies of our Petition were also endorsed to the concerned ministries, NITI Aayog and the Prime Minister's Office.

Our protest was vigorously highlighted on social media platforms (LinkedIn and Twitter) which was positively received by over 3000 supporters & viewers.

A Webinar lasting for two-hour was held on 30th May 2020, engaging eminent experts and some 40 plus participants. The expert panel unanimously concluded that the notification issued by MoEFCC was totally a retrograde step. As per standard practice, due notice should have been given to the stakeholders for giving their views/inputs. This decision of the government, will not only cause an avoidable heavy economic and environmental harm to the country, but will also dent India's credibility in meeting the commitments made at the Paris Climate Treaty.

This bulletin gives an update to our members and industry leaders about the retrograde step taken by the government specially when the Nation is facing unprecedented situation caused by Covid 19 and also when the **Hon'ble Prime Minister wants the coal industry to be brought to international standards.**

In a recently held review meeting, the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi is reported to have urged that an action plan should be developed to bring the coal sector to international standards. While evaluating the coal sector's performance, the Prime Minister added that thermal coal imports should be replaced with local assets, especially when huge inventories are available in India this year.

"Due to the use of washed coal, the energy consumed in transportation, handling and milling, is optimized as the inert material from coal is eliminated. This helps in reducing the auxiliary consumption of equipment involved in coal processing because the use of improved quality coal ultimately results in reduction of emission of GHG as compared to conventional coal."

Quoted from Page-158 of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's book '**CONVENIENT ACTION - continuity for Change**'.

**CPSI view:** No one doubts Prime Minister Shri Modi's keen desire to bring country's coal industry to international standards. However, MoEFCC's Notification dated 21st May 2020, negating its own order of January 2014 mandating supply / use of washed coal with ash content not over 34% in power stations located > 500 km from supplying mines and also those located in urban and environmentally sensitive location is a retrograde step that prompts the coal industry to go in reverse gear and encourage the government controlled Coal India Ltd to have a free run in the matter of the quality of coal-production-supply chain and dispatch coal to power plants with any amount of ash content.

Government ministries of coal and power supported by NITI Aayog misrepresented the facts on basis of which MoEFCC issued the Notification on 21st May 2020. This must be read with reference to and in the backdrop of the fact that washing of coal reduces the ash content, improve its heat value that allows its efficient burning with reduced power plants emissions.

**CPSI view:** Before representing for annulling MoEFCC notification of January 2014, doing away with supply / use of washed coal, MoC, MoP and NITI Aayog should have studied the pros and cons of their opposition to washing of coal. Best would have been, to monetize the value of washed coal taking into account savings in cost of freight in carrying shales and stones, savings in handling/storage disposal of fly ash at the power plant, gains accruing through combustion improvement, lower down-time, better plant performance and reduction in GHGs etc. Putting these benefits against incremental cost of washing and working out savings to the Nation, would have brought out the overall quantified benefits of coal washing.

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