



Khanan Prahari to Combat Illegal Coal Mining

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Why in News?

The **Ministry of Coal** has launched the Khanan Prahari mobile app, revolutionizing the **fight against illicit coal mining activities**.

What is Khanan Prahari?

▪ About:

- This innovative app allows **citizens to take an active role in reporting incidents of illegal coal mining** through the submission of **geo-tagged photographs and textual information**.
 - The corresponding web portal called as **Coal Mine Surveillance & Management System (CMSMS)** has been developed in association with the **Bhaskaracharya Institute of Space Application & Geoinformatics, Gandhinagar, and Central Mine Planning and Design Institute (CMPDI), Ranchi**.
- This comprehensive approach not only leverages cutting-edge technology but also emphasizes public participation in addressing this critical issue.
 - A total of 483 complaints have been lodged through the Khanan Prahari mobile app, reflecting the public's active involvement.

▪ Features:

- **Reporting Incidents:** Users can easily report incidents of illegal mining by taking photographs and providing comments on the incident.
- **Confidentiality:** The user's identity is kept confidential, **ensuring privacy and security**.
- **Complaint Tracking:** Complainants receive a **complaint number**, which they can use to easily track the status of their reported complaints.

What is the Status of Coal Mining in India?

▪ About Coal:

- India is the **world's second largest coal producer and 5th largest country in terms of coal deposits**.
 - Coal is a type of fossil fuel found in the form of sedimentary rocks and is often known as '**Black Gold**'.
- However, some parts of its coal requirement are met through imports as the country is also among the major consumers. **India's coal imports increased by 30% in the 2022-23**.

▪ Major Coal Producing States:

- Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, and Telangana.

▪ Timeline Related to Coal Mining in India:

- India has a rich history of coal mining spanning about 220 years, originating in 1774 with the **East India Company in the Raniganj Coalfield**.
 - The growth was slow initially, but steam locomotives in 1853 boosted production.
- **Post-independence**, the **National Coal Development Corporation (NCDC)** was established in 1956 for systematic coal industry growth.
 - Nationalization of coal mines occurred in two phases, starting with **coking coal**

mines in 1971-72 and non-coking mines in 1973.

- This step aimed to address issues of unscientific mining practices and poor labor conditions. Nationalization continued until the **Coal Mines (Nationalization) Act, 1973**.
- Post-nationalization, India faced **minimal demand-supply gaps until 1991**. Liberalization reforms in 1993 **allowed coal mine allocation for captive consumption**.
 - The **Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015** enabled coal mine allocation through auctions. In 2018, **private firms were allowed into commercial coal mining**.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Prelims

Q1. Consider the following statements: (2019)

1. Coal sector was nationalized by the Government of India under Indira Gandhi.
2. Now, coal blocks are allocated on lottery basis.
3. Till recently, India imported coal to meet the shortages of domestic supply, but now India is self-sufficient in coal production.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (a)

Q2. Which of the following is/are the characteristic/characteristics of Indian coal? (2013)

1. High ash content
2. Low sulphur content
3. Low ash fusion temperature

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (a)

Mains

Q. Despite India being one of the countries of Gondwanaland, its mining industry contributes much less to its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in percentage. Discuss. **(2021)**

Q. "In spite of adverse environmental impact, coal mining is still inevitable for development". Discuss. **(2017)**

