

New guidelines and simplified approval process for coal projects to enhance ease of doing business

The Ministry of Coal has decided to simplify the process of clearance for Coal Mining Projects, in sync with the Government's commitment for 'Ease of doing business'. This will not only expedite operationalisation of already allotted coal blocks, but also encourage prospective investors/bidders in future auctions.

The Ministry of Coal has re-engineered the Mining Plan preparation and approval process. This is likely to slash the approval period substantially from existing 90 days to about 30 days. The re-engineering process includes simplification of guidelines & format for preparation of Mining Plan, amendments in relevant provisions of Mineral Concession Rules, 1960 and approval process.

The proposed simplified guidelines and format will reduce the mining plan formulation time and also make the document lighter and easier to comprehend. This will further facilitate hosting the soft copy in an accessible data base.

The proposed system of mining plan preparation and approval allows the leasee to get the mining plan prepared by Mining Plan Preparing Agency (MPPA) and get it certified by Mining Plan Certifying Agency (MPCA) and submit the mining plan to Ministry of Coal for approval. This will improve the quality and reduce time for detailed scrutiny.

To ensure the quality of preparation of Mining Plan, Government approved that accrediting body will accredit agency(s) consisting a team of multi-disciplinary background, which will be recognised for preparation of mining plan and for certification (i.e. scrutiny from geo-mining & techno-administrative angles), Government will accredit agency(s) consisting of multi-disciplinary domain experts, who will certify that the mining plan prepared by MPPA, is in line with the prevailing guidelines and is complete in all respects. On certification by the MPCA, a committee in government will consider the Mining Plan for approval and Government will dispose application of within the stipulated period.

In the next phase to further ease the system, the entire Mining Plan approval process is proposed to be made online for application, processing and approval. This system will ultimately interact with PARIVESH portal of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) and similar portals of other related ministries and organisations of the Central and State Governments.

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