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Coal India opens e-auction window to foreign buyers

FE BUREAU
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RECENT REFORMS in the coal sector — such as allowing commercial coal mining by the private sector and permitting free open market sales from captive mines — have created a surplus in the domestic market. This has enabled state-run miner Coal India on Friday to open its e-auctions to buyers from Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal.

With last summer being moderate, demand for coal from the thermal power sector has remained subdued, resulting in surplus fuel stocks at pitheads.

The development is significant as India had witnessed a sharp surge in coal imports a couple of years ago, when thermal power plants ramped up capacity utilisation to meet rising electricity demand. At the time, coal-based plants using imported fuel were even directed by the government to operate at full capacity despite their higher generation costs.

Coal India shares extended gains on Friday to trade more than 6% higher, the highest level in over a year.

The move will help in utilising the surplus coal resources better and promote transparency. Earlier, access to Coal India's produce by consumers across the borders was only through domestic coal traders who were allowed to buy and sell without any end-use restrictions. "In a first, effective January 1, CIL has permitted coal consumers located in the neighbouring countries like Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal, who wish to import coal from

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India, to directly participate in the Single Window Mode Agnostic (SWMA) auctions conducted by the company," CIL said.

The decision follows a policy approved by the Cabinet last month that allows allocation of coal linkages on an auction basis for any industrial use and exports. This was done by adding a separate window under a 2016 policy for non-regulated sectors (NRS), enabling any domestic buyer requiring coal to participate in linkage auctions.

"Tepid domestic coal demand this year has hit coal e-auction premiums for Coal India, so this move to level the playing field for foreign buyers will also help the company boost margins and reverse the trend of posting lower offtake volumes," *Reuters* quoted Rupesh Sankhe, a research analyst with Elara Securities, as saying.

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वाणिज्यिक व निजी खदानों से बढ़ा कोयला उत्पादन

वित्त वर्ष 2026 की तीसरी तिमाही और दिसंबर महीने में निजी उपयोग वाली (कैप्टिव) और वाणिज्यिक खदानों से कोयले का उत्पादन और लदान में वृद्धि हुई है। इससे कोयले की घरेलू आपूर्ति में इनके योगदान में लगातार हो रही वृद्धि का पता चलता है।

कोयला मंत्रालय द्वारा जारी आंकड़ों के अनुसार इन खदानों से कोयला उत्पादन दिसंबर में 194.8 लाख टन रहा, जो पिछले साल की समान अवधि में 5.75 प्रतिशत बढ़ा है। वहीं इस महीने के दौरान लदान 180.2 लाख टन रही है।

वित्त वर्ष 2026 की अक्टूबर दिसंबर तिमाही (तीसरी तिमाही) में निजी उपभोग वाली और वाणिज्यिक खदानों का कुल मिलाकर कोयले का उत्पादन बढ़कर 541.4 लाख टन हो गया, जो पिछले साल की समान अवधि से 5.35 प्रतिशत कम है। इस तिमाही के दौरान लदान 506.1 लाख टन रहा, जिससे बिजली और औद्योगिक उपभोक्ताओं द्वारा स्थिर उठान का पता चलता है।

वित्त वर्ष 2026 की अप्रैल-दिसंबर अवधि के दौरान निजी और वाणिज्यिक खदानों से कोयला उत्पादन सालाना आधार पर 9.72 प्रतिशत बढ़ा है।

