

## Coal is vital for meeting India's energy needs and is critical to country's economic growth.

- The latest amendment regarding utilisation of fly ash, proposed by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), introduces a three-year cycle to achieve average ash utilisation of 100 per cent. In the three-year cycle, the ash utilisation should not fall below 80 percent in any year, failing which the power plant will have to pay a fine of Rs 1,000 per tonne of unutilised ash. Non-complying power plants will be required to provide ash free-of-cost to agencies engaged in construction activities within a 300 km radius. Transportation cost is also to be borne by power plants.

**CPSI view :** This is a glaring dichotomy. MoEFCC vide its notification of 21st May 2020 had done away with the requirement of supply and use of washed coal with ash content not more than 34% by certain power stations, thereby allowing the supply and use of coal with any ash content without any upper limit. Now power plants are being penalised for not being able to utilise the excessive fly ash generated due to use of unwashed coal of higher ash content. This double standard approach of MoEFCC is bound to make thermal power more expensive and drive the generating companies to brink of bankruptcy. If the government is really serious about the environment, it should make supply and use of coal with ash content not above 30% mandatory, irrespective of the location of the power stations.

- Coal India plans to invest Rs 1.43 lakh crore in 26 projects in new business areas which include solar wafer manufacturing, Aluminium project, solar generation projects, and thermal power plants. The company has prepared a draft market assessment report and plans for a special purpose vehicle (SPV) and aims to float tender for the JV by Q2 of FY22. Company plans to invest Rs. 38,000 crore in clean coal technologies and is expected to float tenders for 4 coal gasification projects, 3 coal bed methane projects and 3 coal washeries in the first quarter of FY22. *Source: CNBC-TV 18*
- Addressing the 66th convocation of IIT Kharagpur, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi gave the students the mantra of 'Self-3' - 'self-awareness, self - confidence and selflessness' - in order to become startups for bringing about a change in the lives of people. He also spoke of the need for making available safe, affordable and environment-friendly energy to people through initiatives like the International Solar Alliance.
- Indonesia is removing royalty payments for coal used in its downstream sector in a bid to boost its coal processing industries. The world's top exporter of thermal coal aims to develop its coal processing industry to replace energy imports, such as refining coal to gas to reduce its liquefied petroleum gas imports, while optimising the use of its domestic coal. *Source: The Reuters*
- Coal India Ltd. (CIL) is reported to have signed a pact with the Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS), for monitoring the movement of rakes and coal dispatch activity. The first-of-its-kind data sharing offers CIL a bouquet of benefits that help it in rationalising the entire coal supply matrix through rail mode, according to the company. It will provide precise details of loading, weight and unloading along with turnaround time of rakes, etc.
- Non-coal generation plants accounted for half of China's total power capacity share for the first time in 2020, while the power output of non-fossil fuels made up one-third of the nation's power output, according to Hellenic Shipping News.
- Coal is projected to remain the largest single source of electricity in India in 2040, according to Michelle Manook, Chief Executive, World

Coal Association. She said that coal will continue to play a vital role in supporting intermittent renewable energy sources to underpin infrastructure development and industrialisation.

- Solar power generation could equal coal-fired output in India's power generation by 2040, reported the International Energy Agency (IEA), according to Reuters. The growth could be driven by falling renewable tariffs and a government push to increase green energy use, it said.
- As temperatures plunged and snow and ice whipped the state, much of Texas' power grid collapsed, followed by its water systems. Tens of millions huddled in frigid homes that slowly grew colder or fled for safety. And a prideful state, long suspicious of regulation and outside help, was left to seek aid from other states and humanitarian groups as many of its 29 million people grasped for survival.
- Germany now finds itself in the dead of winter. Much of the country's solar panels are often covered by snow and thus rendered useless. Even without snow cover, the weeks-long overcast sky prevents any noteworthy solar power generation. Moreover, this winter there have been many long windless periods, and so Germany's approx. 30,000 wind turbines have been largely out of operation. In a world 100% reliant on green energies, this would mean near 100% darkness at home.

**CPSI view :** Both Texas and German examples make it amply clear that putting too much reliance on solar and wind power alone is fraught with repetition of such serious 'no power' situations that could plunge large areas into darkness during extremely adverse weather conditions. Coal based power is affordable, reliable as well as sustainable.

For stable and uninterrupted electricity supply, a judicious mix of coal and renewable must be planned.

- A new MIT study examines the opposing roles of natural gas in the battle against climate change - as a bridge toward a lower-emissions future, but also a contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. According to David Chandler of MIT, 150 billion cubic meters of gas flares are released each year, 350 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> released by flare gas each year. 4.2 million cars running non-stop produce the same amount of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions as flare gas does. Thus uncertain role of natural gas in the transition to clean energy. *Source: MIT News*
- Coal India Ltd. (CIL) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the state energy service company Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) for collaboration in the area of energy efficiency and resource conservation for de-carbonisation of Coal India, it said in a statement. EESL will help the company to conduct energy audits and undertake assignments to minimise losses on account of energy through the financial energy service company (ESCO)/renewable energy service companies (RESCO) model.
- The Union coal ministry is planning to offer 64 new mines, with coal reserves of 30,505 million tonnes, for the second tranche of the commercial coal auctions. To allay the fears of investors regarding environmental norms, the government is reported to have excluded mines falling in wildlife reserves and blocks in areas where there is more than 40% green cover.
- The International Energy Agency (IEA) has said that India will make up the biggest share of energy demand growth at 25% over the next two decades. IEA expects India's oil demand to rise to 8.7 million bpd in 2040 from 5 million bpd in 2019. Rising oil demand could take India's import bill to \$255 billion by 2040, IEA added.