



Dear Readers,

I am glad to handover the volume I of Year-5 of AIACE TODAY to the readers. With the modest start of this magazine in 2019, the quality and contents both have enriched. This magazine is a reflection of our activities for general welfare of executives and employees of coal industry.

Coal is the primary source of energy in the country and contributes about 55% in total share. Coal India alone meets about 80% of coal demand in the country and had shown a very good performance in 2022-23 and even in the first quarter of 2023-24. Coal India recorded a growth of 9.85 per cent Y-o-Y with production reaching 175.35 mt in Q1, FY24 against 159.63 mt in the year-ago period whereas, coal production rose 8.4 per cent Y-o-Y to hit 222.93 million tonnes (mt) in Q1, FY24 compared to 205.65 mt in the year-ago period in the country.

There is no chance of coal shortage this year even during the monsoon, because coal inventory is robust @ 35 million tonne (MT) at thermal power plants and 65 MT is lying at pit head of CIL and private miners. With sufficient rake availability, coal can be supplied as per requirement of power plants. It is not only necessary to supply the coal as per demand but also needed that the quality conforms with requirement of the customer for right realization of revenue against the supplied coal.

The NCWA-XI has been finalized and implemented from the month of June, 2023. For offsetting the increase in wage costs, CIL raised prices of higher grades of coal (G2 to G11) by eight per cent, which will boost its revenue by three per cent. While implementing the NCWA-XI, Coal India grossly violated the guidelines issued by Department of Public Enterprises (DPE), from time to time, for avoiding pay conflicts of workers and executives. The initial basic wage of workers has become higher than that of E1, E2, E3 and E4 grade executives which has created much uproar in the executive community. Our Association AIACE has taken up the issue with the managements of CIL, Singreni colliery and also with the coal ministry to compensate the executives with personal pay so that salary of executives should not be less than that of wage board employees.

On the front of welfare of retired executives and employees, our association AIACE, with its sister organisation AICPA, is working hard for revision of pension. Our Associations organised massive and impressive dharna in Varanasi in March, 2023 for enhancement of pension under CMPS-1998. The positive signal in this regard is coming from CMPFO.

Our association seeks revisiting coal prices linked to inflationary costs, such as the wholesale price index or any other, which deems fit. This would be less disruptive than waiting a longer period of time to revise prices. At the same time, we want Rs 10/Te levy, as being charged at present for the pension fund, be replaced by a levy, say 1% of coal price. This linking of levy to coal prices will ensure that whenever the coal price increases, the levy increases correspondingly for pension fund. This will ensure perpetuity of the pension fund and no shortage as being flashed by CMPFO.

In respect of medical benefits to retired executives and employees, on the insistence of our association, policy changes are being implemented by the coal mgt from time to time, but much more needs to be done in respect of cashless treatment. We have also taken up the issue with CIL for inclusion of family members in the scope of CPRMSE as a special case where the executives themselves or spouses have not spent money as earmarked under the scheme but needful fund for treatment of son or daughter after retirement. Although, this seems, not possible but our association will combine to persuade the mgt for the same.

Lastly, our association is working over an innovative idea for creating a joint family system of Coal Indians and members of AIACE by accommodating the willing members to 1 BHK Creche Old Home with the luxurious facilities in selected cities like Bengaluru, Kolkata, Nagpur, Pune, Hyderabad, Bilaspur, Varanasi, Patna, Vrindavan, Puri, Ranchi and at other places. Most of our members, husband/wife are staying alone as their sons and daughters have relocated to foreign countries or other cities for their career and livelihood. In the old age, they are facing many challenges, some known and some unknown. We have understood the issues and working over shifting them to smaller cottages /flats as per their choice of cities by constructing under the brand name of Creche Old Home. At present, the works have advanced at Bengaluru, Kolkata and Bilaspur and lands have been identified and purchase process is on.

With these words, I am handing over the magazine to our readers.

Regards,

P. K. Singh Rathor