

Q The mining of coal has to be gradually phased out in the country to attain the global energy commitments and mitigate the climate crisis. Explain. 08-01-2021

Answer: → Coal is the abundant 'fossile fuel' in India, accounts for 55% of the country's energy needs. During the 2015 UN climate change Conference in Paris (COP21), the Indian govt. pledged to generate about 40% of electricity from non-fossile fuel sources by 2030.

→ In 2017, India was the 2nd largest producer & importer of coal in the world.

→ Coal is important for development:
Expansion of industries & services for economic growth; improved access to electricity, for employment growth & clean cooking fuel for energy poor people.

→ However coal mining has put environmental & social costs:

① Coal mining generate environmental injustices & is inherently linked to land dispossession, appropriation of livelihoods & water & air pollution.

② For Populations living around coal-fired power plants, premature mortality ranges from 80,000 to 1,15,000/year, also faces many lung diseases such as pneumoconiosis due to the inhalation of coal dust.

③ There are many environmental movement ongoing against coal mining such as Thorkhanda Hazaribagh district protest, protest in goa, Dehing patkai wildlife Sanctuary in Assam.

→ Hence we need to phased out coal mining gradually. for that we need to:

① A joint endeavour of people, govt. & businesses to transform energy system not only from "one fossile fuel to one renewables" but also from a heavy capitalised, centralised system to locally contributed controllable & decentralized energy system.

② Need to adopt solar plants at large scale being india as a subtropical country.

③ More Research & development with sustainable solutions needed in the energy sector for the alternative of coal.

→ As air pollution, temp. continues to rise, it is the need of hour to take action against climate change.