

Being second largest consumer as well as importer of coal, India will need a smart approach to balance & fade out coal based energy amid climate concerns.

India currently meets 56% of power generation & 77% of electricity from coal. These thermal power plants and mines & mineral

Recent amendments of Act, coal mining Act, 2015, set a target of 1bn tonne coal production by 2024.

This generates several concerns

(i) meeting commitments of Paris Agreement to achieve 40% energy from non fossil source

(ii) environmental pollution because coal emits 60% Industrial PM, 45 SO₂ & 30% NO_x.

→ This causes health issues such as black lung disease.

→ Acid rain & smog.

(iii) Adding with Pandemic - Pollution & Pandemic are creating a toxic mixture which can cause 80% of breathing deaths

(iv) India's Image - many countries like China, Japan, Germany, EU & Australia already pledged to become carbon neutral & India is nowhere in the picture.

(v) Re-emerging Paris deal with changing geopolitical power dynamics in USA will pressurise India.

Thus India needs a smart

policy towards no carbon or zero carbon India such as

(i) R & D in renewable sectors & promoting entrepreneurship will bring down the cost.

(ii) 2015 rule of MoEF&CC norms for thermal power plants to equip with

→ flue gas desulfurification

→ selecting & Non selective catalytic
reduction

→ cooling towers.

(ii) closing old and inefficient plants with
huge negative externalities.

(iv) clean energy investments, better mining
techniques to complete stoppage in open
caste mining which is more polluting.

(v) Gas based economy should be promoted.

(vi) global collaboration such as International
Solar Alliance for technology sharing.