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**Coal mining operations resume at Tikak Colliery of North Eastern Coalfields**

**Government is committed to maintain a balance between development and environment: CM**

**Dispur, March 26:** Coal mining operations at North Eastern Coalfields (NEC), a unit of Coal India Limited (CIL), resumed on Saturday with the Union Minister of Coal, Mines & Parliamentary Affairs Pralhad Joshi inaugurating the resumption of mining operations along with Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma at Tikak Colliery of NEC at Margherita in Tinsukia District.

Noteworthy that mining operations at NEC were halted in 2020 owing to certain environmental issues. NEC presently operates in Tikak Colliery in Margherita with two opencast projects (OCPs) namely Tikak OCP and Tikak Extension OCP with a combined coal production capacity of 04 lakh tonne per annum. NEC will also start producing coal from its Tirap OCP from upcoming fiscal 22-23 with a target to produce 10 lakh tonne of coal per annum.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Dr. Sarma thanked Union Minister for Coal and Mines Pralhad Joshi for his pro-active initiatives while resuming mining operations at Tikak Colliery. The Chief Minister also lauded the role of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi saying that his vision for the growth of the region and his guidance were instrumental in opening mining operations again at North Eastern Coalfields today.

Stating that with resumption of mining operations at Tikak Colliery, the State Government has fulfilled yet another promise made to the people in the State Assembly Election, Dr. Sarma said that the Assam Government is committed to maintain a balance between development and environment. While operationalizing Tikak Colliery, we have ensured that mining activities continue in sync with nature, Dr. Sarma added.

"Our Government has extended all co-operation to Coal India Ltd. in resolving environmental and all other issues that stalled the functioning of the North Eastern Coalfields", the Chief Minister said.

Underlining the efforts of the Coal India management, central government and state government while resumption of mining operations of Tikak Colliery, Dr. Sarma observed that the productive result of this coordinated effort will open up employment generation in this sector once again. "This step was very important for the socio- economic development of the region, which has received a major boost today", the Chief Minister said.

Union Minister of Coal, Mines and Parliamentary Affairs Pralhad Joshi and Union Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas Rameswar Teli also spoke on the occasion.

While Chairman CIL Pramod Agrawal delivered the welcome address, the programme was also attended by Minister of Mines and Minerals of the Government of Assam Jogen Mohan and Margherita MLA Bhaskar Sarma among others.

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