
HCCL to resume full scale coke production

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Hwange Colliery Company Limited is expected to resume coke production at full capacity by the end of this month as significant strides have been made in resuscitating the coke oven battery.

According to information posted on the company website, the battery stopped functioning in February 2009 after most of the 32 ovens were damaged and the country's largest coal producer had to engage consultants from ArcelorMittal and Forsbel Africa Private Limited in South Africa and Ziscosteel to revive the coke producing plant.

The report said that "The initial stage in its resuscitation has been the charging of tar into the ovens to achieve an average of 800 to 1 000 degrees Celsius followed by infusion of liquefied petroleum gas that will culminate in temperatures rising to 1 050 degrees Celsius which is suitable for burning coking coal to produce coke thus charging the first 10 ovens. The whole process which began last week is expected to be completed within the next two weeks and full production is projected to commence by August 24th 2009."

At full capacity, the battery produces an average of 18 000 tonnes of coke per month which it exports to its traditional markets, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia and parts of South Africa.

Meanwhile, the commissioning of the dragline which has for the past six months been under service and repair is scheduled for the end of this month. Most of the electrical and mechanical components that had gone to South Africa for repairs are already on site.

(Sourced from www.sundaynews.co.zw)

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