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## Indian coal ministry to track illegal coal mining

*Saturday, 04 Jul, 2009*

The Telegraph reported that the coal ministry's extremely concerned about illegal mining of coal that was going on in Dhanbad and its adjoining areas and would soon adopt satellite surveillance to keep track of this rampant practice and bring its perpetrators to justice.

Mr Sriprakash Jaiswal union minister of state for coal said "The coal ministry will opt for satellite surveillance which will not only help find virgin coal mines lying untapped but also keep an eye on illegal mining."

Mr Jaiswal said the state was apparently not doing enough to stem illegal mining activities which, was being promoted by Maoists.

Mr Jaiswal said he is committed to making India the global number one in coal energy by allotting captive coal mines to private players to raise production in a time bound manner. But so far, only 15 to 18 big private players that had been handed over captive mines had begun production.

He said "Land acquisition and environmental clearances pending at the state level for years were becoming huge hurdles to production of coal. I hope the governor will look into this urgently and ensure files are cleared within the next 6 months."

He further added that on Jharia, where an underground fire has been raging for decades, adding that the rehabilitation plan for residents would be implemented as soon as it was cleared by the union cabinet. But those living in Jharia will have to evacuate once the plan is implemented.

(Sourced from The Telegraph)

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