

Friday, March 15, 2013

## **Qaim performs ground breaking of Thar coal mining project**

KARACHI - Sindh Chief Minister Syed Qaim Ali Shah on Thursday performed the ground breaking ceremony of Thar Coal Mining and Power project of Sindh Engro Coal Mining Company Thar Block II and other infrastructure schemes related to Thar Coal held at Chief Minister House.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister Sindh, who is also the chairman of Thar Coal and Energy Board, said that it was Pakistan People's Party Government, which during the last tenure, under the dynamic leadership of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto had initiated this project of power generation of coal at Ket-i-Bunder (District Thatta) which was later shelved by the subsequent government stating that there is no need of power generation on coal. He said that the Thar Coal & Energy project has now been felt in the larger interest of not only the Sindh but for Pakistan.

Chief Minister Sindh informed that there are 8-blocks available for investment in Thar Coal field and many investors have come forward to participate in those projects. He said that the World Bank has very kindly come for assistance and has cooperated. Chief Minister further appreciated the spirit of those investing groups and recently Thar Coal & Energy Board had approached Federal Government for sovereign guaranteed of \$700 Million for Sindh Engro Coal Mining Company. He added that there will be 51% share of Sindh Government and 49% Share of Engro Coal. Syed Qaim Ali Shah said that Sindh government has done efforts to provide basic facilities and infrastructure there so as to attract more investors. He added that 61 R.O's have been installed in various localities of Thar, while Air Base is being completed there.

Sindh Secretary for Coal & Energy Aijaz Ali Khan, Secretary Coal & Energy Development Department / MD Thar Coal & Energy Board welcomed the participants and informed that the project aims to develop a coal mine in Thar with the production capacity of 6.5 million ton per year and also construct a 300 MW Power plant, in the first phase.

The Company also planned to supply coal to Power Plants of GENCO at Jamshoro. Total cost of the project is US Dollar 1.35 Billion and it will be completed in 3.5 year. The share of Government of Sindh in the equity is 51% whereas Engro Group will invest 49% in the equity. Mr. Aijaz Ali Khan acknowledged the valuable contribution of the President of Pakistan, Prime Minister of Pakistan, and Energy Board, Team of Engro corporation and all those who were associated with this noble task of bringing energy Security and through prosperity to the people of Pakistan. He further said that infrastructure schemes including Ground breaking of Thar Airport at Islamkot sufficient to cater for Boeing 737 and medium range aircrafts, ground breaking of improvement & widening of Roads for transportation of heavy mining machinery to Thar Coalfield (two schemes) (Phase-I Thatta to Wango Mor 200 Km & Phase-II Wango Mor to Thar Coalfields-125kms), Inauguration of Thar lodge at Islamkot ( a 20 bedded world class accommodation to facilitate investors in Thar), Inauguration of 61 Reverse Osmosis Plants covering a population of 637000 (25 RO Plants in Thatta & Badin + 36 RO plants in Thar & Umarmkot). In total 110 RO, plants have been established in four districts that are providing clean drinking water to people of four districts.