
China continues to defer applications for coal prospecting rights

BEIJING, March 26 (Xinhua) -- China will continue suspending new applications for coal prospecting rights for another two years, the Ministry of Land and Resources said here Thursday.

The suspension, which will last until March 31, 2011, aimed to prevent an oversupply of coal and keep coal production stable in the country, the ministry said.

However, major coal exploration projects approved by the State Council, as well as surveys of coal resources with the support of special geological funds from the central and provincial governments, can continue.

China suspended applications for coal prospecting rights for the exact same reasons in February 2007 to last until the end of 2008.

The country's coal output reached 2.72 billion tonnes, up 7.5 percent year on year, according to the State Administration of Work Safety (SAWS).