

"Coal is black or black-brown sediment rock, of organic origin, which has the combustion capability. That is the reason for which has been used worldwide for centuries as a fossil fuel and it is one of the most important resources for electricity production".

This would be one of the possible answers to the question "What is coal?". If we put this question in front of the citizens of the Republic of Serbia, the most of correct answers, presumably, could give us the residents of the "Kolubara" area. Why is there an assumption like this? Because the municipalities of Lazarevac, Lajkovac and Ub are the ones in which the coal is being exploited, and because the majority of employees of the MB "Kolubara" are the citizens of the above mentioned municipalities. Employees of this company are employees of the state-owned company, they have regular wages, the right on sick leave, vacation, time off, they have the opportunity to progress and move to the better job positions. It is well known that the employees of MB "Kolubara" are at the top regarding average salary in the Republic of Serbia.

Coal mining is done on four open-pit mines: Field "B", Field "D", "Tamnava West field" and "Veliki Crljeni". These four mines are spread over an area of about 80 square kilometers, at the area of municipalities of Lazarevac, Lajkovac and Ub. Annually, MB "Kolubara" produces about 30 million tons of coal and 70 million cubic meters of overburden. In 2012, were excavated 29,608,945 tons of coal, which is in accordance with the production plan for this period. The MB "Kolubara" employs 9,780 workers. The biggest number of employees, about 6,824 has branch "Open-pit mines", and they are the key role in production process. The importance of the mining basin for all three municipalities is huge, which confirmed to us the presidents of these municipalities.

Mr. Zivorad Bojicic, the municipality president of Lajkovac, said that according to the latest statistics, 52.2 percent of the citizens of the municipality of Lajkovac are employed in the MB "Kolubara", and in the companies within the Mining Basin system.

"The greatest significance of MB "Kolubara" is certainly a smaller percentage of unemployed population, comparing to the municipalities in the region, and also comparing to the other municipalities in southern part of the Republic of Serbia. Other important issues are the fees and taxes, which on the basis of legal obligations, "Kolubara" pays to the municipalities affected by coal mining activities; started from land use compensation, environmental taxes, fees for mineral resources use, to all those other compensations specified in the contract between the municipality of Lajkovac and the MB "Kolubara", said Mr. Bojicic.

He also said that besides these contracts there is also one agreement signed earlier this year, the agreement on the machinery engagement and complete material of the MB "Kolubara" for recovery of village and district roads situated near the open-pit mines, particularly referring to villages Skobalj and Jabucje.

"For the past year we have introduced several new forms of social assistance, especially for

pregnant women. Regardless the number of births, each employed woman receives lump sum of RSD 60,000 while unemployed receives sum of RSD 120,000 ", pointed out the president of the municipality of Lajkovac, Mr. Zivorad Bojicic.

Mr. Darko Glisic, president of the municipality of Ub, says that the importance of the MB "Kolubara" from the aspect of the Municipality of Ub is immeasurable, because the unemployment problem would be huge if coal basin was located on the other territory. "The MB "Kolubara " realized the importance of its position on the area of these three municipalities, or as I like to say - these three communities, in the right way. Besides those legal obligations which MB "Kolubara" has, it also helps these areas to overcome the situation in which, maybe a good part of the municipality will be relocated, excavated, and strives to improve our infrastructure. We cooperated very well last year, and Mining Basin solved us water supply problems, helped our Health center with the necessary equipment, we were equipped by three new modern inhalers and a new aperture for pregnant women. For us and our citizens, this is very important. Our communication is on every day basis, and we solve many problems along the way ", says Mr. Darko Glisic.

The MB "Kolubara" Headquarters is located in the city of Lazarevac. The fact that MB "Kolubara" employs a large number of citizens puts city of Lazarevac at the top position when it comes to the average salary in the country, and it is only one of the major points of close connections and cooperation of the municipality, i.e. local government and the Mining basin.

"Given that the most of coal mining activities are performed in the area of municipality of Lazarevac, it is logical that the cooperation between the local government and MB "Kolubara" to be on a high level and in great number of areas. The Mining Basin "Kolubara" gives substantial funds for local communities, by investing in facilities and building construction, as well as in unclassified roads maintenance. Additionally, the MB "Kolubara" always meets requirements of institutions in the municipality such as Health centre, cultural institutions, schools, sports clubs, vulnerable population etc... ", said Mr. Bojan Stevic, deputy president of the municipality of Lazarevac.

"Kolubara" is not only important because of the employment of those who live on the area of these municipalities. The Mining basin also employed people from Belgrade, Obrenovac, Ljig, and Valjevo. The influence of the "Kolubara" appears throughout community and takes place in more different directions. Funds are invested in the of municipalities development, culture, education, sports, health.

When it comes to working conditions and wide opportunities for training and improvement, employee's loyalty in MB "Kolubara" is on extremely high level, as shows the fact that most employees spent all of their careers within this company.

"The cooperation between our company and local governments in case of coal production is at a satisfactory level. Lately, the cooperation between new MB "Kolubara" management

and municipality representatives is much more active, but there are always ways for its improvement".

From the PR Sector of MB "Kolubara" say that besides legal obligation that "Kolubara" has regarding municipalities, mining giant has intensive cooperation in a number of projects for living conditions and standard improvement of these municipalities population.

Source; RBK