

As regards quantity the following steps have been taken: —

1. Power Stations with inadequate facilities for handling railway wagons have been asked to take steps for improvement of the facilities.
2. Railways have been requested to move coal on priority to those power stations with low stocks.

Setting up of National Council of Steel

324. SHRI. RAFIQUE ALAM: Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up a National Council of Steel for boosting the production of the staggering steel sector; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF STEEL (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) Steel Advisory Council has been set up to advise the Central Government on matters concerning the development and the growth of steel industry.

(b) Steel Advisory Council has been set up under the Chairmanship of Minister, Steel, Mines and Coal and consists of representatives of the Government, steel industry experts, consumers and labour leaders. The Council has been set up to advise the Central Government on short and long term plans for efficient functioning of the integrated steel plants, mini steel plants and re-roller industry.

Involvement of a senior official of CIL in Coal Scandal

325. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a senior official of the Coal India Limited has recently been found involved in coal scandal for allowing a firm in Delhi to get coal from the Raniganj-Kumarghola coal fields for onward distribution to the industries which was later sold in black market; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and action taken by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL, MINES AND COAL (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) and (b) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Rise in prices of iron and steel Products

326. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the decision taken by steel producers in the country to raise the prices of iron and steel products; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and its likely impact on the consumers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF STEEL (SURI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Joint Plant Committee of the main producers raised the prices of iron and steel on an average by 15 per cent effective from the midnight of February 20/21, 1985. It is expected that the impact of this price increase will only be about 0.4 per cent on the wholesale price index.