

(b) whether this over-sensitivity to ecological issues will hinder thermal power generation plans, lined up for the next decade including ultra-mega thermal projects coming up at four locations; and

(c) whether Government would strive towards striking a balance between development and environmental protection?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL):

(a) No, Sir. A study is going on under the purview of Ministry of Environment and Forests to demarcate the category 'A' and category 'B' coal blocks. When a coal block having large forest area or dense forest cover or forms a part of unbroken landscape or located in important wild life areas will fall in 'A' category. Application of forest clearance will not be entertained in such areas. Rest of the areas will fall in 'B' category where applications for clearance will be entertained and processed under Forest Conservation Act, 1980.

(b) The study at (a) is in a nascent stage. Impact of these issues on thermal power generation plants in the next decade can be assessed only after completion of the above study.

(c) Government is making efforts to strike a balance between development and environmental protection.

Coal production

†3230. SHRI RAGHUNANDAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the volume of coal production, during the last three years till now;

(b) whether coal production has declined of late and if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government is planning to work on a new policy to augment coal production; and

(d) the volume of coal proposed to be allocated to Madhya Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL):

(a) and (b) No, Sir. All India coal production during the last three years has increased from 457.08 Mts. in 2007-08 to 531.56 Mts. (Prov.) as given below:—

	(In million tonnes)		
Year	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Production	457.08	492.76	531.56 (P)

(c) There is no new policy to augment coal production. Enhancement of production is a continuous process *inter alia* through mechanization and taking up new projects in both the public and private sectors.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) For major consumers, State-wise allocation of Coal is done. However, Madhya Pradesh received 40.08 million tonnes of coal in 2008-09 and is expected to receive about 44 million tonnes in 2010-11.

Affordable coal to power and steel sector

3231. SHRID. RAJA:

SHRI R.C. SINGH:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the coal industry is not able to meet the demand of coking coal and thermal coal to the Steel and power sector manufacturing plants in the country;

(b) if so, the projected demand of coal by these two sectors for 2010-11;

(c) how Government proposes to meet the demand;

(d) whether his Ministry has approached the Ministry of Finance to reduce the import duty on thermal coal and persist with zero duty on coking coal to enhance the availability of affordable coal to power and steel sector; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL):

(a) to (c) As per Annual Plan 2010-11, the coal demand by steel sector is estimated at 50.51 million tonnes and the indigenous availability at 17.92 million tonnes, leaving a gap of 32.59 million tonnes, which is required to be met through imports. As far as thermal coal for the power sector is concerned, the coal demand for 2010-11 has been estimated at 442.00 million tonnes and indigenous availability at 388.92 million tonnes. The gap of 53.08 million tonnes is to be met through the planned imports of 35 million tonnes by the power utilities, which is considered equivalent to about 53.08 million tonnes of indigenous variety, considering the higher calorific value of imported coal.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise in view of reply given at (d) above.

Coal reserves in Neyveli lignite mines

3232. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the extent of coal reserves in Neyveli lignite mines area;

(b) the time period during which the lignite reserves will last at the current rate of exploitation; and

(c) the quantum of electricity produced by the Neyveli Lignite Corporation through its Thermal Power Plants during each of the last three years and its distribution during the period, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL):

(a) There are no coal reserves in Neyveli Lignite Corporation's (NLC)'s mining area. However,