

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COAL**

**RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. *328
ANSWERED ON 23.03.2026**

**JUSTIFICATION FOR NEW COAL PLANTS ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF
RENEWABLE ENERGY**

***328. SMT. PRIYANKA CHATURVEDI:**

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state

(a) justification for adding 46 per cent coal capacity (210 GW to 307 GW by 2035) when India committed 500 GW non-fossil capacity by 2030 and net-zero by 2070;

(b) details of Chhattisgarh protests over coal auctions causing Tribal displacement, environmental destruction;

(c) whether coal production hitting record 1 billion tonnes Financial year 2024-25 contradicts phasedown commitment; and

(d) measures for ensuring coal doesn't lock emissions for decades, undermining climate targets?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF COAL AND MINES

(SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF THE RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. *328 FOR REPLY ON 23.03.2026 REGARDING JUSTIFICATION FOR NEW COAL PLANTS ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY ASKED BY SMT. PRIYANKA CHATURVEDI.

(a): Electricity demand in the country is met through a mix of resources. As on 28.02.2026, total installed generation capacity in the country is 524 GW, comprising about 248.5 GW from thermal power plants with fossil fuels (i.e. 227.8 GW from coal & lignite, 20.1 GW from gas, 0.6 GW from diesel), 8.8 GW from nuclear and 266.7 GW from Renewable Energy (RE) sources (51.2 GW large hydro power plants, 143.6 GW solar, 55.1 GW wind and 16.8 GW from other RE e.g. biomass and small hydropower sources). Thrust of the government is to achieve 500 GW of non-fossil fuel-based installed generation capacity by 2030.

As per studies carried out by the Central Electricity Authority, the projected installed electricity generation capacity requirement by 2034-35 is expected to be approximately 1,029 GW, out of which the share of non-fossil capacity is likely to increase to 68%. As per these studies, projected thermal (coal and lignite) capacity requirement by 2034-35 is estimated at approximately 307 GW as against installed capacity of 211.8 GW as on 31.03.2023. To meet this requirement, the Ministry of Power has envisaged setting up an additional minimum of 97 GW coal and lignite-based thermal capacity.

(b): Coal remains an important component of the country's energy mix. Matters relating to land acquisition, rehabilitation, environmental clearances, and welfare of affected communities, including Scheduled Tribes, are addressed in accordance with applicable statutory provisions and established safeguards.

Though no protest has been reported on coal auctions conducted by the Ministry of Coal, in the course of operationalization of coal block by a private coal block allottee, there has been reports of local obstruction. Issues relating to local law and order, including public protests, fall within the domain of the respective State Governments.

(c): India's achievement of producing over 1 billion tonnes of coal in Financial Year 2024-25 is a significant milestone from the view of energy security and meeting the energy demand of India through coal-based energy generation and reducing imports. Although coal production in India is increasing in absolute terms, the percentage share of coal in the total energy mix is on a declining trend.

Coal continues to be a preferred energy fuel in India due to its abundance, availability and affordability and till alternative energy sources start making a significant contribution to the country's prime energy basket. NITI Aayog, in its report published in November 2022 related to "The Inter-Ministerial Committee on Just Transition from Coal", emphasised the requirement of coal for the country's energy security and stated that coal consumption in the country is likely to peak between 2035 and 2040. Accordingly, coal companies are working in tandem with the government's Action Plan to provide energy security for the country.

(d): India has already achieved a landmark in its energy transition journey by reaching 50% of its installed electricity capacity from non-fossil fuel sources in June, 2025, more than five years ahead of the target set under its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the

Paris Agreement. As on 28.02.2026, the share of non-fossil fuel based installed capacity in the country is 52.57%. This significant milestone underscores the country's steadfast commitment to climate action and sustainable development.

Further, In order to reduce carbon emissions and environmental impact of coal-based thermal power generation, the Government is taking following steps:

(i) Ministry of Power is promoting installation of efficient Supercritical/ Ultra Supercritical units which are more efficient and lead to reduced CO₂ emission per unit of electricity generation. A total capacity of 72,450 MW (104 units) of Supercritical units and 8,340 MW (12 units) of Ultra-Supercritical units have been commissioned till 28.02.2026.

(ii) To improve the energy efficiency, the Perform Achieve and Trade (PAT) scheme has been implemented in various thermal power plants. Improvement in energy efficiency reduces carbon dioxide emission in thermal power generation.

(iii) Ministry of Power has issued a comprehensive policy on 07.11.2025 for co-firing of Biomass pellets [including torrefied charcoal made from Municipal Solid Waste (MSW)] in Coal Based Power Plants to use 5-7% blend of biomass pellets and/or MSW-based torrefied charcoal along with coal, after assessing the technical feasibility.

(iv) NTPC Ltd. has commissioned a 20 Tonnes Per Day (TPD) capacity Pilot Carbon Capture Project at its Vindhayachal Thermal Power Station.

(v) An outlay of Rs. 20,000 crore for Carbon Capture Utilisation & Storage (CCUS) Mission has been announced in the Budget 2026-27.

(vi) MoEF&CC, vide notification dated 07.12.2015, and its subsequent amendments dated 31.03.2021 & 11.07.2025 has notified stack emission standards [including Particulate Matter (PM), Sulphur-di-Oxide (SO₂) & Oxides of Nitrogen (NO_x)] along with timelines for compliance in respect of coal and lignite-based thermal Power Plants. To meet these standards, Thermal Power Plants are using techniques like Electrostatic Precipitator (ESP), Flue Gas Desulphurization (FGD), NO_x Combustion Modification, etc.
