

of coal and unloading of wagons and their release are resolved in a coordinated manner. The plant load factor of Badarpur Thermal Station in 1983-84 was 48.7% as against the All-India figure of 47.9%.

#### Increase in Price of Soda Ash by Producers

1207. SHRI AJIT BAG : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the producers of soda ash have increased their prices further on account of price hike in coal;

(b) if so, the price increase per tonne;

(c) whether the producers informed Government of the price increase;

(d) if so, whether Government are satisfied that the price increase is in consonance with the extra cost involved for coal per tonne of soda ash production;

(e) whether the Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices has also been consulted in the matter and if so, the outcome thereof; and

(f) the reasons why the producers were not advised by Government not to resort to price increase pending investigation by the High Powered Committee ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI R.C. RATH) : (a) to (f) The coal prices were increased with effect from 8.1.1984, Subsequent thereto the producers of Soda Ash have increased their prices as below :

Name of Producers	Increase in price of Soda Ash light (in Rs. per tonne)
1	2
M/s. Tata Chemicals Ltd.	182.20
M/s. Saurashtra Chemical Ltd.	165.00

1	2
M/s. Dhrangadhra Chemical Works.	220.00
M/s. Hari Fertilizers	120.00
M/s. Tuticorin Alkali Chemicals & Fertilizers Ltd.	163.68

At present, there is no statutory control on the price of soda ash. However, the prices of producers are being informally monitored. Recently when the producers reported their increased prices to Government, attributing the increases to increase in input costs such as coal, freight, power and jute bags, the matter, as to whether the increase in prices was reasonable, was referred to Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices, who will take into account these factors while updating the earlier study on Soda Ash Costs and Prices. The matter will, thereafter, be placed before the Sub-Committee on Price & Cost Structure. The producers have also been asked to re-examine whether the quantum of increase was justified.

#### Industrial Disputes for Conciliation before Regional Labour Commissioner, Dhanbad

1208. SHRI A.K. ROY : Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the Industrial Disputes brought for conciliation before the Regional Labour Commissioner, Dhanbad in the last one year till 31. May, 1984 in regard to deduction of the 'eight days' wage of the miners giving the number of the collieries, dates of deduction and the number of colliery workers involved in each case;

(b) the cases where deductions were made pending conciliation before the officer;

(c) whether in one case of Phularitaur Colliery of Area I, deduction was made despite undertaking given by the BCCL Officer in writing that the status quo would be maintained; and