

SEVENTY-EIGHTH REPORT

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE (1983-84)

(SEVENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS—MOVEMENT
OF COAL BY RAILWAYS



[Presented to Lok Sabha on 11.4.1984]

572
LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

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(1983-84)**

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2. Shri Bipin Behari—*Chief Financial Committee Officer*
3. Shri D. M. Chanan—*Senior Financial Committee Officer*

INTRODUCTION

1. the Chairman of Estimates Committee having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this 78th Report on the Ministry of Railways—Movement of Coal by Railways.

2. The Committee took evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Railways/Department of Coal on 11th January, 1984. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the Officers of the Ministry/Department for placing before them the material and information which they desired in connection with the examination of the subject and giving evidence before the Committee.

3. The Committee also wish to express their thanks to all other institutions, bodies and individuals, who furnished memoranda on the subject to the Committee.

4. The report was considered and adopted by the Committee on 6th April, 1984.

5. For facility of reference the recommendations/observations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report, and have also been reproduced in a consolidated form in the Appendix to the Report.

BANSI LAL.
Chairman
Estimates Committee.

NEW DELHI ;
April 9, 1984
Chaitra 20, 1906 (S)

CHAPTER I

GENERAL

1.1 According to the Ministry of Railways Coal is the most important bulk commodity transported by the Railway. It constitutes about 40% of the revenues earning traffic carried by Railways. The major consumer of coal are power houses, steel plants, cement Railways, plants, textile mills, fertilisers and chemical plants. Coal is also used by other medium and small scale industries like pottery and ceramic units, glassfactories, refractories, brick kilns etc. Soft coke is used as domestic fuel.

1.2 Loading of coal/coke is permitted from the colliery sidings, coke oven plants etc. to the various sponsored consumers in full rake loads, multi-consumer rakes or in piecemeal depending on the requirements of the consumers. Consumers whose coal requirement is 1500 tonnes or more per month get supplies in full rakes. Medium scale consumers are grouped in multi-consumer rakes while small scale consumers whose requirements are upto 5 wagons per month get the supplies in piecemeal.

1.3 The wagon and locomotive requirements, loading and unloading arrangements and line capacity works are planned in advance and are augmented as and when any increase in the traffic is anticipated; subject to the availability of funds made available by the Planning Commission.

Wagon Demand Projections for 1983-84 and 1984-85

1.4 The Preliminary Material furnished to the Committee by the Ministry reveals that as against 12404 wagons (in terms of 4 wheelers per day) indented by the users for the year 1982-83, 12548 wagons were supplied by the Railways. However, the Ministry of Railways have projected the wagons requirement for movement of coal for the year 1983-84 at 11822*only.

In reply to SQ. 574 dt. 5-4-1984, the Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways informed Lok Sabha as follows :—

“The provisional daily average number of wagons allotted being 13228 wagons in terms of 4-wheelers, during the current financial year, the average daily loading being 11639 wagons.”

1.5 Asked to state the reasons for such decline in the wagons requirement for the current year for coal movement, the representative of the Ministry of Railways clarified the position during evidence as under :

“In these figures there is an element of repetition. The fact is that in 1982-83 the actual loading was a little over 11,000 wagons. The projections were based on the 99 million tonnes of coal which was the target loading for the current year. But the average loading in 1983-84 upto December was 21,342 wagons*. In the second half of 1983-84 the production is reported to have picked up.”

1.6 Regarding production of coal, the representative of the Department of Coal, informed the Committee during evidence that “the overall production of coal in 1981-82 was 124 million tonnes and in 1982-83 130.61 million tonnes and in the current year the production target is 142 million tonnes. The actual achievement may be of the order of 140 million tonnes. But there is going to be at least 8 to 9 million tonnes higher production in terms of demand at the beginning of this year which was estimated to be 147 million tonnes.

Actually there has been a much higher level of movement in the current year than in the last year.

1.7 The representative of the Department of Coal also informed the Committee that :

“Our total estimate is 147 million tonnes. We may end up with the movement of 140 million tonnes or so. There was some inflation in that estimate and the demand did not materialise to the extent projected. So, the actual movement will be 141 million instead of 147 million tonnes. Out of that, 102 million will be by rail and the rest by other modes of transport. For next year, Planning Commission has estimated a total demand of 155 tonnes and production target of 153 million tonnes. According to our estimates, out of 155 million tonnes, almost 117 million would be moved by railways.”

* In reply to SQ 574 dt. 5-4-1984, the Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways informed Lok Sabha as follows :—

“The provisional daily average number of wagons allotted being 13228 wagons in terms of 4-wheelers, during the current financial year, the average daily loading being 11639 wagons.”

1.8 Asked to state whether the Railways have got the infrastructure to load 117 million tonnes of coal, the representative of Railways stated during evidence that:

"That is the point under discussion. We are making an exercise as to what is the maximum we can carry, what is the infrastructure and what we can get in the current year. We feel that more than 106 or 107 million would be difficult. The full exercise is on. After that, we are required to have a further discussion with the Planning Commission and if necessary, take it up with the Committee of Secretaries to see how it can be bridged. The present infrastructure will not permit us to carry 117 million. Alternatively, the inputs into the railways will have to be stepped up on a priority basis so that additional capacity can be developed as quickly as possible."

1.9 The representative of the Ministry of Railways also informed the Committee that "at present the average wagons loading for coal was only 12,500. If we have to get an average of 14,000 and add, we will have to be in a position to load more than 15,000 or 16,000 wagons,

1.10. The Ministry of Railways have stated in their preliminary material furnished to the Committee that "on the basis of present indications and projections of the Department of Coal, the per day requirement of wagons for coal movement would be 14,82 in 1984-85 (on 5 major Zonal Railways).

1.11 Drawing their attention to the assurance given to the Estimates Committee by the Ministry of Railways in 1981 that by the end of Sixth Plan i.e. 1984-85, the availability of wagons would be enhanced to 20,000 wagons per day, the Committee enquired of the witness the reasons for scaling it down to 14,62 wagons per day.

1.12 The representative of the Ministry of Railways clarified the position with regard to the projection of demand for wagons for coal movement as follows:—

"These projections were in the form of certain estimates. Our past experience is that these demands do contain an element of inflation. That is why every year, before the annual plan is finalised we undertake a joint exercise with the Ministry of

Coal and the Planning Commission and then come to some view with regard to the demand pattern and the fieldwise production and the transportation capacity and arrive at a figure of target for loading. The exercise for 1984-85 is still currently on and the demand is varying between 105-106 and 115-116 million wagons a year. If the daily target is achieved, it will mean that the railway loading would be of the order of 165 to 167 million tonnes, whereas the coal production in 1984-85 would be of the order of 153-154 million tonnes."

1.13 The projected demand of wagons for transportation of coal is linked with the target of production of coal and the Railways share in the movement thereof. During 1982-83 against a target loading of 99 millions tonnes out of a total production of 130.61 million tonnes of coal and indent for 12404 wagons (in terms of 4 wheelers) per day, Railways supplied 12548 wagons but the actual loading was confined to a little over 11,000 wagons. Similarly in 1983-84, against a target of 147 million tonnes, the actual production of coal is estimated to be 140 million tonnes out of which 102 million tonnes was to be carried by Railways for which a demand of 11822 wagons (in terms of 4 wheelers) per day has been made out upto December, 1983, the average utilisation of wagons has been 11,342, wagons per day. The Committee desire that effective steps should be taken to achieve optimum utilisation of wagons.

1.14 In 1984-85 out of an estimated production of 155 million tonnes, Railways are supposed to carry 117 million tonnes of coal. However, the representative of the Ministry has informed the Committee that it will not be possible for them to carry more than 106 or 107 million tonnes with the present infrastructure. The matter is under discussion with Planning Commission to find ways and means to bridge the gap between demand and availability of wagons for coal transportation. Coal being one of the most essential ingredient for the industrialisation of the country, the Committee expect the Ministry of Railways to impress upon the Planning Commission, the urgent need for allocation of more funds to augment the coal carrying capacity of the Railways-not only to meet the present needs but also the future needs.

CHAPTER II

ALLOTMENT AND LOADING OF WAGONS

(i) *Indents for Wagons*

2.1 It is stated in the Preliminary Material furnished by the Ministry that :—

“Unlike in the case of general goods traffic for coal loading, the indents are placed on day to day basis. Indents not accepted for loading for any reason, are treated as lapsed at the end of that day.”

2.2 During evidence, the Committee asked the representatives of the Ministry about the reason for treating the indents “not accepted” as lapsed at the end of the day in the case of wagons for coal movement and also the manner in which the Railways assessed the extent of short supply of wagons against demands. The witness replied that :—

“The indents are on daily basis. To the extent indents are not compiled with on one day, it is repeated on the second day. It has repetitive element. There is no harm in cancelling it.”

2.3 When asked whether the repeating of indents was confined to supplies to Public Sector only or was such a facility accorded to Private Sector also, the witness clarified that this was done so,

2.4 Pointing out that since the private parties had to get their requirements sponsored through the State Governments leaving some scope for pressurisation and malpractices to the detriment of genuine consumers, the Committee asked the witness to suggest improvements in the procedure to ensure supplies of wagons to genuine consumers and to curb frivolous demands. The witness replied :—

“This system is a heritage right from the war days when Coal Controller used to be incharge of the allotment. Subsequently coking coal came under the Coal Controller and non-coking

coal was de-controlled. Government felt that some other agency must step into it to regulate it, otherwise difficulty will be there. That is how the Railways took over this responsibility of distribution also. When this distribution was taken over, we had to have some kinds of guidelines as to whom to give it. Whatever practices were obtaining in the Coal Controller Organisation, more or less came to us. My personal reaction to your question is 'yes' there is a lot of scope. In this case and in many cases we find that there is no relationship between the level of sponsorship and the actual coal which goes to that particular State. There have been cases where Industries have not taken coal, but still their names are found in the sponsored list. There are a large number of customers in Bengal, Bihar. This system does require a kind of change. This system is leading to a lot of uncertainty with the consumers even. We have told the State Governments that for non-coking sector we will be able to accommodate only so much. Therefore, you sponsor only this much of coal for movement by rail. To whomsoever they are sponsoring, we will assure 100% coal.

2.5 When it was pointed out by the Committee that in many sponsored cases the coal did not go to the industry concerned but was actually diverted to someone else resulting in black-marketing, the representative of the Ministry of Railways stated during evidence that :—

“In the core sector there is not much of confusion. In the other sector about 12000 to 13000 consumers are spread all over the country. So agency has to be there to verify the need. As long as there is gap between the demand and the supply some kind of regulation is necessary.”

2.6 Asked to suggest the agency which could be created to check the malpractices in supply of coal, the witness submitted :—

“As in the case of Singareni coal, Coal India could take over this responsibility. Coal India asks for the wagons to be given and Indian Railways give those to them. Then it is a matter between them—the supplier and the customer, Railways do not come into picture at all. We tell them, you allot so many wagons per day, so much for this field and so much for that field. Accordingly they give so many wagons. That is how,

we suggested the system to the Coal India to take over the responsibility. They said, 'It is not possible'. Now, the question is how to find out the agency for this."

2.7 However, the representative of the Department of Coal interjected as follows :—

"Some modifications of the old system have already been made : in as-much-as earlier, all the allocation was being made by the Coal Controller and it was loaded by the Railways. Now, for the major sector consumers, cement plant, power houses etc., which constitute 70 to 80%, specific offer has been made by the coal companies. Now, for these major sectors, specific offers have already been made. For other sectors, Railways continue to allot individual wagons being loaded. There also, the Coal India has done one thing. Of course, on the basis of sponsorship, they do it. But there are certain bogus units. On enquiry, you will find that many small scale units which do not exist or have been closed down continue to get coal and blackmarket it. Now, the Coal India did two things. One is all those who are getting coal by road have been asked first of all to furnish affidavits in the prescribed proforma giving various details of what is their industrial unit, how much coal is required supported by certain certificates. For rail users also, for whom coal is moved by rail Coal India has asked them to furnish similar affidavits. Those who do not furnish affidavits, Coal India will not give consent for the movement of coal. If they do not give affidavits supported by certain documentary evidence regarding their genuineness of coal requirements, they will not get coal."

2.8 The representative of the Department continued further :

"Those who have been sponsored by the State Government, have also been asked to give affidavits. Unless those who are sponsored produce the affidavits, the consent for allotment of coal will not be there. Once they give the affidavit, coal will be given. But we will try to verify by our agencies. It is under consideration. In due course, Coal India may try to have some verification procedure on even those who have given certificates. But there are 14,000 consumers spread all over the country and

the Coal India does not have the machinery to do it. But still it is being thought of that the regional offices of the Coal India may gradually start the procedure of verification."

2.9 Asked to state how far this system has been effective to curb any malpractice in the distribution of Coal, the representative of the Deptt. of Coal, informed the Committee that it was experienced that when we asked affidavit from the road users of coal, 25% users could not furnish their affidavit; consequently the coal supply to them was stopped. The witness further added that they were going to introduce the provision of affidavits to be furnished to the rail users of coal which would eliminate about 25% wagon consumers. Because there is provision in the affidavit that on account of misuse of coal the responsible unit will not only be stopped the supply of coal but also prosecuted.

2.10 According to the present practice, unlike in the case of general goods traffic, for coal loading the indents are placed on day-to-day basis. Indents not accepted for loading for any reasons, are treated as lapsed at the end of the day and have to be repeated. This is obviously a very cumbersome procedure. Moreover, under this system it is not possible even for the Railway Administration to assess as to what part of the demand for wagons remains unsatisfied. The Committee would like the Ministry of Railways to review this system keeping in view the difficulties experienced by the consumers and the need of the Railways to plan the availability of wagons according to demand.

2.11 The Railways at present bear the responsibility for distribution of Non-coking coal. Whereas supplies to core sector are determined by priorities, elaborate system has been devised for meeting the demand of non-core sector. The system at present in vogue is that first the coal loading programme is determined by the Railways in consultation with the collieries. This, from the railway side is on the basis of the likely availability of wagons and on the collieries' side on the basis of the likely loading capacity. The loading programme (ceiling limits) is then communicated to the sponsoring authorities. The sponsoring authorities thereafter sponsor the demand of various units which is, according to the Railways, always much more than the "ceiling limits" fixed by them. This necessitates pruning of demand to bring it within the "ceiling limits". The system is reverse of what it should be. In fact, the Railways should first collect the sponsored demand and then, in consultation with the collieries, earnestly attempt to meet it.

2.12 The representative of the Ministry of Railways has confessed before the Committee that there is a need for change in distribution system. He informed the Committee that sometimes the sponsorships by States leave much to be desired and proves to be the breeding ground for malpractices like black-marketing. Cases have been detected where names of industries which have not taken coal at all find a place in sponsorship to the detriment of genuine consumers. Supplementing the views of the representative of the Ministry of Railways, the representative of Department of Coal informed the Committee that cases had come to notice where names of many small scale industries which had been closed down or did not exist were sponsored by States. They got the coal and black-marketed it. To check such malpractices, Coal India Ltd., has started insisting on the consignees to furnish affidavits giving various details irrespective of the supplies being made through road or rail. Such affidavits have to be supported by certain documentary evidence regarding the genuineness of their coal requirement. Even parties sponsored by State Governments have to give affidavits. Twenty-five per cent of the ghost indentors drop out at this stage. Coal India is considering the verification of the affidavits submitted by private parties through their own agency and for this purpose to utilise the services of their regional offices. In the affidavits, it is made clear that misuse of coal will not only result in stoppage of coal supplies but shall render the culprits liable to prosecution. The Committee desire that it should be ensured that the steps taken are such as would eliminate malpractices in the distribution of coal.

(ii) System of Allotment of Wagons/rakes for Coal movement

2.13 According to the preliminary material furnished to the Committee by the Ministry of Railways, even when the allotment of wagons is sanctioned by the Director Movement (Railways) on the recommendations of the sponsoring authorities and consent of the collieries for loading "this sanction does not.....convey any assurance or guarantee of allotment/supply or movement so sanctioned" It is further stated that "sanctions are issued on anticipated availability of wagons and offer of coal by the Coal Companies one day to-day basis Prorata cuts in the sanctions as considered necessary are imposed at the time of making allotment when coal loading by rail is likely to fall short of the demand."

2.14 Asked to explain the system of allotment of wagons for

movement of coal the representative of the Ministry of Railways stated during evidence that:

All this rigmarole has become necessary because of the general scarcity conditions Distortion occurs mainly because the consent given or the sanctions given are much more than the capacity of the railways to load. Assuming that the coal is there, I will not go into that controversy whether the coal is there or not—but if I am in a position to load 13,000 wagons, the sanctions are for 17,000 wagons. Now with the priority given for the core sector, the burnt of the shortfalls on the non-core sector which number nearly 10,000-12,000 units and for whom the overall requirements of steam coal particularly is of the order of 2000-3000 wagons. But in the past few days and weeks this has been narrowed down and we have been able to meet their requirements and we find that many people are cancelling their requirements”

2.15 With regard to the modalities and the procedure, in this regard, the representative of the Ministry added :

“The ceiling limit kept on increasing every year because new units were coming into the field. Initially the formula accepted was that being a new unit, it will get one-third of its quota for the first year of production and in subsequent years they will be given the full quota. The figures for 1983 were like this. ————— The core sector programmes are being implemented at very high percentages because they get the priority. Whatever is left is being shared by the non-core sector. In the overall figures also there is a considerable distortion and imbalance between the programme accepted for each field as compared to the loading target for that field. For instance, for the Asanol field which is the most important field and for Raniganj field, as against a programme of 2900 wagons per day, we are loading only 2200 wagons. Obviously, the programme in this field except for loco and steel programmes which were being implement at 100% basis the rest gets cuts varying from 25% for consumers above, Moghalsarai 50% for consumers below Moghalsarai where we are giving a slight priority in order to get a better turn-round of wagons. That was an operational necessity and this practice has been going on ever since the allotment was

taken over by the railways. In order to maintain a certain level of loading a certain number of wagons had to be loaded for down direction.

A higher level is being kept for centrally sponsored items like cotton, paper etc. As regards slack coal we are maintaining 50 percent for non-core sector and 80-90 percent for core sector like power and cement".

2.16 Elaborating the position further in this regard the witness informed the Committee :—

"Take the case of Andhra State. The ceiling limit for steam coal was 4,800 wagons whereas the actual recommendations was for 24,000 wagons. Some States have been more disciplined and kept within the limits. So, in consultation with coal India now we have decided that for 1984 we should have a realistic system of ceiling limit. For each field we will keep a cushion for the core sector because the power houses have a quarterly programme. Power and cement sectors consume 6,000 out of the 12,000 wagons that we keep for the core sector. In the new system whatever we will accept within the ceiling limit, the same will be implemented on 100 per cent basis".

2.17 Reacting to a suggestion made during evidence that the Ministry of Railways should control and coordinate wagon movement with the help of a computer, the witness stated :

"A scheme is already on for operating information system. The tenders are being floated and we are hopeful that we may get World Bank assistance. The exercise has been done and consultants have been consulted in this regard".

2.18 Asked to state the period by which the scheme would be in operation, witness stated that "the job is so colossal that, I think, a time of 7 years will be optimistic".

2.19 Asked to state the adverse effects suffered by the non-core sector on account of cuts imposed on them, the witness informed the Committee that "compared to 1983 limit in regard to slack coal the cut is limited to 25%. In the case of steam coal the cut was 55 per cent".

2.20 The Committee are surprised that even when the allotment of wagons is sanctioned by the Director, Movement (Railways) on the recommendation of the sponsoring authorities and consent of the collieries for loading, this sanction does not have any assurance or guarantee of allotment supply or movement so sanctioned. They are informed that while priority is accorded to movement on account of core sector, the sanctioned allotments of wagons for non-core sector is subject to cuts varying from 25 to 50%. This is highly unsatisfactory state of affairs. The Committee would like the Ministry of Railways to so plan the system of allotment of wagons that once the allotment is sanctioned by the Director, Movement (Railways) it is fully honoured and no difficulty is experienced by the non-core sector units in this regard.

(iii) *Diversion of Wagons*

2.21 It has been stated in a memorandum furnished to the Committee that "some times the coal wagons are diverted to some locosheds or power houses, without giving any reason whatsoever. If for any reason the wagons are diverted, the consumers' loss should be made good by the railways either by paying the cost of coal or by giving coal against coal." Conversely, it has also been represented that superior grade coal meant for Power Houses is diverted to private parties and instead inferior coal is delivered to them. Cases of deliberate mis-delivery of coal are common.

2.22 In this connection it has been suggested to the Committee that "such diversion should be made good by the Railways/within one month to avoid any hardship to the consignee. The Railways should also pay to the consignee the amount of Sales Tax and other taxes paid by him so that the consumer does not suffer unnecessarily on this account".

2.23 Commenting upon the factual position in this regard the representative of the Ministry of Railways informed the Committee during evidence that :—

"Normally in two circumstances such diversions take place. First, when a particular power station is short of coal and there is a danger of its shutting down for want of coal ; in public interest, to avoid this, we authorise diversion from one power house to another. The second situation which used to happen in the past and now it has been reduced to minimum is if any parti-

cular loco shed is falling short of coal, we used to take industrial coal. But we tried to make good by giving the matching coal.

Then there is a third instance where out of a rake, a particular wagon gets disconnected en-route and it cannot be linked to the colliery. Then we send it to the nearest power house or loco shed, depending on the quality of coal. Some cases have been reported where there is some kind of mala-fide diversion of coal by some interested parties. In those cases where diversion comes to our notice, we are having investigation. This used to be fairly common some time ago, but now it has been reduced”.

2.24 It was pointed out by the Committee that there were specific cases reported to them where superior coal meant for the power house was diverted to some other party and inferior coal was supplied to the power house. The witness admitted during evidence that “in Ahmedabad some such cases have come to our notice. Recently, there was some complaint about transshipment. Whenever specific cases come to our notice, we take serious action.”

2.25 When it was pointed out by the Committee that superior coal meant for a power house was being taken away by the private industries, the witness stated that :

“without the connivance of the interests, concerned, it cannot be done. After all, the railway user receipt is there. He will not take delivery of it unless it is intact. May be one or two unconnected or missing wagons can be diverted. But it is difficult to divert a full rake. Some cases have occurred, which came to our notice and we made investigation. We are aware of this”.

2.26 During the evidence of the representatives of Ministry of Railways before the Committee, it transpired that the possibility of diversion of coal wagons cannot be ruled out, both for bona-fide and mala fide reasons. The Committee can understand the deliberate diversions by Railways when a power house or locoshed is in distress. However, the Committee will like to draw the attention of the Ministry to the recommendation contained in para 3.63 of the 17th Report of the Committee on Public Undertakings (1980-81) that “should such diversions become necessary, the consignor should invariably be consulted and the

consignee should also be consulted in case payment of the coal has been made."

2.27 What really disturbs the Committee is the *mala fide* diversions when high quality coal meant for power houses is clandestinely diverted to some private parties. The representative of the Ministry of Railways confessed before the Committee that such *mala fide* diversions had recently taken place at Ahmedabad. The Committee are certain that *mala fide* diversions cannot take place without the collusion of Railway Staff. They urge the Ministry to streamline the procedures with the aim of plugging the loopholes that enable such diversions. Further, when any such case comes to notice, it should be investigated in all seriousness and those found guilty should be suitably punished.

(iv) *Wagons Left Behind or Drawn Empty During 82-83*

2.28 In a statement furnished to the Committee by the Ministry of Railways the position regarding indents, supply, loading etc. of wagons in terms of daily average 4-wheelers during 1982-83 has been as follows :—

	Wagons
Indents	12404
Supply	12548
Loading	11011
Left Behind	1424
Drawn Empty	113

2.29 During the evidence, the Committee asked the witness to explain the category of wagons described as left behind and drawn empty and the reasons therefor the witness explained :

"By 'left behind' what we mean is the wagons which have been supplied to the collieries but which, when the pilot goes back to collect the loaded wagons, have not been completely loaded ; if a rake is given and if that rake is not ready to be drawn—a part of the rake has been loaded and the remaining has not been loaded—, if the entire rake is not ready for being brought back when the pilot visits for the second time as per the schedule, we say that these wagons are 'left behind'.

"When we say 'drawn empty' these are wagons which are drawn back in an empty condition without being loaded because they are unfit for loading and have been supplied by mistake or due to their not being detached before supply or the Railways consider that the wagons are fit for loading but the collieries are not able to load for any reason."

2.30 Asked to state measures taken or proposed to be taken by the Ministry of Railways to minimise this problem, the representative of the Ministry stated during evidence that :—

"It is a question of greater coordination with the collieries and some more checks at the base station depots to see that these unfit wagons are not supplied. This is a continuing exercise and we will continue to do it to see that wastage due to this is brought down to the minimum."

2.31 When asked whether the problem of 'left behind' or 'drawn empty' wagons was due to shortage of coal at pitheads or due to lack of co-ordination between the Railways and Collieries, the witness replied :—

"There is a co-ordination in that when the idents are given from the colliery side, they do this indenting on the basis of the actual availability and actual labour arrangements and all that. You will see from the figures that as against the supplies of 12,000 to 13,000 wagons, left behind on an average comes to 1400 and during the busy season when there is adequate labour and adequate pressure and where the monsoon conditions are not there, the left behind is very marginal. There is a system of communication but on some odd occasion it does happen either due to empties being late or the labour not being available or due to some accident or machinery breakdown in the colliery. Sometimes the telephone communications are not properly looked into. But we are trying to see that this system is perfected further so that this much of wastage does not occur."

2.32 Pointing out that the number of left behind wagons was 1423 as against 11014 loaded wagons, the Committee asked the witness

if the situation could be treated as satisfactory. The witness responded :—

“Considering the fact that we are short of transport capacity, any wastage is certainly not something which has to be taken as satisfactory. This, as I said, is the average for the whole year. It does happen in some of the slack months. Particularly there are surplus empties which we are anxious to load but due to climatic conditions these are left behind. But our endeavour is to see that they are loaded.”

2.33 When asked by the Committee whether under mechanised loading conditions, the gap between the indents and supply could not be narrowed, the representative of the Deptt. of Coal replied :—

“We are trying to mechanise more and more in regard to loading of coal. Now, coal handling plants are being set up in a systematic way. We have already about 147 coal handling plants and about 120 are being commissioned in the next two years or so. So, there is going to be more and more mechanised loading. At the same time, I am not certain that this will always result in improvement in the supply and allotment of coal to various points because those mechanised facilities are subject to break-down. But certainly there will be streamlining of loading which will be much quicker. However, more coordination will have to be done because more and more open wagons will have to be made available. Now, about computerisation and the need for greater sophisticated coordination, I would submit that would become more relevant. For instance, wherever we have mechanised facilities we will be doing much quicker loading work. But at the same time, for this purpose, special type of wagons are to be supplied and all these things have to be properly coordinated. So, this coordination will become more relevant and use of sophisticated tools for this purpose probably will have greater relevance.”

2.34. The Committee are alarmed at the substantial number of wagons supplied to the collieries being “left behind” or “drawn empty”. In 1982-83, out of an average of 12548 wagons per day supplied for loading, the actual loading averaged 11011 wagons per day and the balance of 1537 wagons per day were either left behind o

drawn empty for one reason or the other. This wastage of loading capacity is indeed alarming. Obviously, it is due to inadequate coordination between the Railway authorities and the collieries. The Committee desire the Ministry of Railways to maintain better coordination with the collieries to minimise the wastage of loading capacity caused by wagons left behind or drawn empty.

2.35. The programme for large scale mechanisation of loading operations embarked upon by the collieries should elicit immediate attention of the Railways to arrange for a corresponding increase in the availability of open wagons for movement of coal. The Committee trust that the Railways are aware of the likely change in the demand pattern of wagons for movement of coal and have already initiated action to meet it in close coordination with the collieries/Coal India Ltd.

(v) *Coal Movement by Rail for long distance only*

2.36. In a memorandum furnished to the Committee it has been stated that at present the Railways are moving roughly 50% of the coal produced. In this connection, it has been suggested that capacity and productivity of the Railways can be augmented if as a matter of policy, wagons for coal movement are provided only to those consumers who are located far-off from a Colliery. Industries and Consumers situated around collieries, say within a radius of 300/400 Kilometres or so, may be asked to lift all their requirements of coal from the collieries by the Road Transport only.

2.37. Commenting on the aforesaid suggestion, the representative of the Ministry of Railways stated during evidence that :—

“I think the percentage moved by rail is more than 70%. The only point I would like to make is that for nearby consumers and also less quantum of coal movement, road transportation would be economical. If the movement of coal is to be done in bulk quantity whether it is required for washeries or steel plants, the economies of scale would definitely weigh in for moving them by Railways. We have already put in certain infrastructure in this respect. Therefore, the distance is not the criterion. Where the bulk movement is required the railways should step in; where the long distance movement is there, there also the railways should get priority. For piecemeal traffic to nearby areas the movement of coal can take

place by road which could be more economical. The other thing is that in order to sustain level of loading in a cyclical order, we need to have certain number of captive empty wagon for easy and quick distribution of coal to those areas where difficulties are faced. From that point of view also, it is necessary that we do not go by distance limitation. But by and large bulk movement of coal which cannot be linked up by road movement even though it is for shorter distance, can go by rail."

2.38. When it was enquired by the Committee as to whether a minimum tonnage or distance was fixed for the movement of coal by rail, the representative of the Ministry of Railways stated that :—

"There is no such hard and fast rule."

2.39. The representative of the Deptt. of Coal also clarified the position in this regard to the Committee as under :

"Coal India has given an option to the Consumers who are situated within 250 Kms. of the Coal field to have their coal by road if they so desire. Broadly, the economics also even out at 250 Kms. beyond that it will have to be moved by rail."

The witness continued :

"The basic thing is that whatever coal can be moved by railway will be moved by it. There are some collieries where there is no rail outlet. There are quite a few collieries where the production is large and the railway siding capacity is not that large. Partially the movement will be by road. Now, there cannot be any movement of coal to UP, Haryana etc. by road. The strategy in opening the dumps is that there should be off take from the dumps; the coal can be moved there by rail."

2.40. Keeping in view the heavy social burden on the Railways, the Committee enquired of the representative of the Deptt. of Coal whether any statutory provision had been made fixing the tonne Kilometrage for movement of coal by Railways the representative of the Deptt. of Coal replied :

"In principle, whatever the railways can carry will be offered to them. Only the residuary quantity will go to the road that is the basic principle."

Pressed by the Committee further that tonne kilometrage for railways should be fixed, the witness submitted that "We can always review this."

2.41. The Railways claim that at present they are moving "more than 70 per cent" of the coal production in the country. As rail transport of coal is comparatively cheaper, there is considerable pressure on the Railways on this account. Some part of the Railway's capacity for movement of coal is tied up in transporting coal in placement for short distances. Thus, bulk consumers at places far distant from the centres of coal production have to compete with small consumers nearer to coal-fields. This is not fair as transport of coal by road to distant places would be clearly uneconomical for the consuming units. The Committee would like the Ministry of Railways and the Department of Coal to lay down an agreed policy in regard to movement of coal by rail specifying the distance within which the facility of movement of coal by rail would not be permissible subject to such exceptions as may be considered desirable.

(vi) *Movement of Coal in Damaged Wagons*

2.42. In a non-official memorandum furnished to the Committee it has been pointed out that often dilapidated wagons are used for loading of coal and pilferage takes place enroute through the holes. It has been urged that the Railways must check that only proper and fit wagons are used for coal transportation. It has also been represented that "these days we have observed that stones, dust and shales are mixed with coal to increase the weight. One cannot assess at the receiving end as to how this mixture of dust, stones and shales come in the wagons. They may be either due to cheap type of loading at the colliery and where no hand picking or proper screening of coal is carried out or such material is mixed on the way by miscreants in transit."

2.43. Stating the factual position in this regard, the representative of the Ministry of Railways explained to the Committee during evidence that :

"When the health of the wagons was bad, due to a large number of over-aged wagons, such cases used to be frequent. With

our gradual replacement most of the wagons are in a fit condition, fit for loading. If they are not fit for loading, collieries themselves reject it. These are drawn back as empty. Normally, no such wagon which has got this kind of discrepancy is used. If there is small percentage, we will check that. Mixture of shale, dust, etc. whatever is loaded, we transport it and the transit is fairly quick. In respect of these loads complaints have come from the power houses. But there is no chance for any body to mix dust or shale."

2.44 When pointed out by the Committee that due to large scale pilferages during transit, the possibility of mixing dust and stones with Coal could not be ruled out, the witness replied :—

"I would respectfully beg to differ on this point. While taking some coal from a wagon may be easy, to put dust, stones and shales in a wagon, during transit, is next to impossible. It has been accepted that this kind of a thing is taking place only at the loading point. Nobody is going to take the trouble of putting dust, stones and shales in the wagon during transit."

2.45. In this connection the representative of the Deptt. of Coal supplemented the view of the representative of the Ministry of Railways as follows :—

"I must admit that there have been some complaints from time to time, particularly from the power houses of an admixture of stones and shales in the coal supply. If we look at the percentage, it is a very small percentage. It may not be even 1 per cent. But even one or two big stones can cause lot of problems. I would not like to say that this happens in transit. May be, on some rare occasions, it may have happened during transit. But certainly it is a problem essentially relating to the loading of coal. Wherever coal is supplied from underground mines, this problem is not there. But in the case of certain open cast mines which have come up since nationalisation where we have not been able to simultaneously set up coal handling facilities and picking of coal, to segregate stones and shales, sometimes, because of the mechanised methods of mining and mechanised loading also, some portions of stones and shales get mixed up in the coal. If these stones and

shales are not picked up before despatch, this is also despatched to the consumers. We cannot deny that such coal has reached power houses and we have received complaints from them. They have kept stocks of stones for display and even photographs are shown to us.

Now, in order to solve this problem, we are doing two things. Firstly, in the case of all open cast mining projects which are now being sanctioned by the Government simultaneously a provision is being made for the installation of coal handling facilities for crushing the coal so that the size problem is not there and passing that coal through slow-moving picking belts so that pickers can eliminate stones or shales that may have got mixed up with the coal. In the case of underground mines, there is no such problem. But in the case of open cast mine where this problem is there, we have a crash programme to set up coal handling facilities. Similarly, mini plants are also being set up. In a few years time, this problem will be totally eliminated. It has been contained to a great extent. The complaints are going down."

2.46. The Committee's attention has been drawn by a private party to the adulteration of coal by mixing dust, stones and shales. According to the representative of the Ministry of Railways such adulteration could not take place during transit. However, the representative of the Department of Coal admitted that "there has been some complaints from time to time, particularly, from power houses of admixture of stones and shales in coal supply." The problem has been traced either to coal loading from the open cast mines where coal handling facilities and picking to segregate stones and shales have not been provided or to mechanised methods of mining and mechanised loading. The Committee were further informed that a crash programme to set up coal handling facilities at open cast mines had been undertaken. While sanctioning new mines, provision is being made for installation of coal handling facilities. The Committee hope the crash programme of providing coal handling facilities at open cast mines will be pursued vigorously so that the assurance given by the Deptt. of coal to the Committee that "in a few years, this problem will be totally eliminated" becomes a reality.

(vii) Transit Losses

2.47 It has been represented to the Committee that most of the

coal moved by Railways is moving under "owners risk" and therefore Railways are not responsible for the transit losses which have been very high in case of most of the bulk consumers in the country.

2.48 Some of the suggestions made in a non-official memorandum in order to minimise the transit loss of coal are as under :

- (i) Railways should be held responsible for carrying coal without any sizeable transit loss.
- (ii) to install weighbridges at all the collieries and it should be a precondition of booking of coal that all wagons should be weighed before depatch and weighment jointly observed by CIL, Railways and Consumers' representatives.
- (iii) while giving delivery, wagons should be weighed and the delivered weight accepted by the Railways. Where there is no railway weighbridge at destinations, Railways should accept weights recorded on consumers' weighbridge provided of course it is properly maintained and certified by the concerned authorities.

2.49. Explaining the position in this regard, the representative of the Ministry of Railway stated during evidence that "as far as the responsibility of the railway is concerned, whether it is the owner's risk or railway's risk, the main difference lies in the onus of proof. If it is booked at owner's risk, it has to be proved that such loss or damage was due to negligence or misconduct on the part of the railways. That is the only difference between owners' risk and the railways' risk. Legally and technically, as carriers the responsibility is that of the railway depending on whether the misconduct is proved. Even in the case of owner's risk, we cannot escape from that liability.

2.50 As far as the suggestion contained in item 2 is concerned, it is also our effort to have a weighing machine installed at the loading point. When coal India go in for modernisation of the coal handling project, it has a built-in-provision. At the time of loading this weighment will be done, which will be recorded. Our aim is to see that in the next few months 100 percent of the coal wagons loaded are weighed.

2.51 As far as the third suggestion is concerned. I am afraid it will raise very serious operating problems because with the level of loading we are operating, it would be impossible to weigh again at the time of

Railway. It will add to detention and congestion. If coal is weighed at the loading point and it is moved in rakes loads, detention en-route being very limited, by and large, it should be able to ensure a satisfactory transit without much of a loss en-route."

2.52 When it was pointed out by the Committee that "at least in the dumps it should be weighed," the representative of the Department of Coal informed the Committee that "at each dumps we have installed a weigh bridge; we have arrangement for weighing."

2.53 Reacting to a suggestion during evidence that to avoid pilferage from the wagons particularly at the transshipment points, the Ministry of Railways should introduce container system, the representative of the Ministry of Railways informed the Committee that "during the Seventh Plan introducing container system is one of the questions."

2.54 It has been represented to the Committee that most of the coal moved by the Railways is moving at the owners' risk and hence railways are not responsible for transit losses which are very high in the case of most of the bulk consumers in the country. To cut these transit losses, it has been suggested that weighing machines should be installed at the loading points as well as delivery points.

2.55 So far as the providing of weighing machines at the loading points is concerned, the Committee learn that Coal India Ltd. will install them while implementing the project for modernisation of coal handling facilities. However, the Committee find the Ministry of Railways reluctant to provide weighing machines at the delivery points on [the ground of detention and congestion of wagons. The Committee appreciate the difficulties of the Ministry of Railways in installing weighing bridges at all points of deliveries. However they feel that start should be made by the Ministry to provide weighing machines at places where bulk deliveries of the coal are made.

(viii) *Setting up of Coal Dumps*

2.56 One of reasons affecting Railways capacity to meet the demand of wagons in full is stated to be :

"Sharp drop in offers from the collieries during summer and monsoon months leading to wastage of transport capacity which cannot be recouped."

2.57 During the evidence, the Chairman, Railway Board clarified the position further, as follows :

“During slack season, between the months of May and September or October, the capacity which is available for the coal movement is not fully utilised because of various reasons like the pit-heads and mines flooding and things like that. During that season, the capacity available with the Railway is not fully utilised. Then during busy season, we have to use much more wagons. Obviously, the solution would be that each of the States, at the nearest rail-head towards the collieries must open the dumps. The reason for the dumps not working so far is the poor quality of coal now kept in the dumps; Therefore, the off-take is very poor. These dumps should keep three grades of coal—grade I, grade II and grade III. Then only the dumps would start working which would be under the control of the State Government. So, the State Government which is the sponsoring authority can ask for sponsoring from their own dumps and clear the stocks. Instead of doing this, burden the railways with this job of allotment or allocation for the purpose of distribution will create a lot of complications for us. To my mind, we should be allowed to run trains and attend to the supply of wagons rather than its distribution. Distribution should be the Coal India’s forte. If the dumps are not going to be taken over by the State Governments the Coal India can own dumps in each of States with five or six varieties of coal and distribute coal from there.”

2.58 Clarifying the position in this regard, the representative of the Department of Coal informed the Committee during evidence that :—

“The Coal India Ltd. has opened 83 dumps. It is not as if the Coal India is not opening dumps. We will use all the wagons that the Railways are giving to us for sending coal to the dumps.”

2.59. Commenting upon the utility establishing Coal dumps in the country, the representative of the Railways stated that :—

“If coal dumps are established and buffer stock is created even at these places I feel it should be cheaper than buying it from the black market.”

The representative of the Department of Coal stated that :—

“I entirely endorse his views.”

2.60. At present, a lot of transport capacity is wasted due to sharp drop in offers of coal by the collieries during summer and monsoon months (May to October). This is ascribed to various reasons like flooding of mines and pit heads. To make up this loss of wasted capacity, a lot more strain is put on the Railways during busy season. To overcome this difficulty the Coal India has opened 83 coal dumps at various rail heads where coal is stored for distribution to indentors. The Committee are of the view that 83 dumps may not be sufficient to meet the demands of the users in full during the lean seasons when due to flooding of pit heads and mines the movement of coal by rail is substantially reduced. The Committee recommend that Coal India should open more dumps so that the assurance given to the Committee by the representative of the Department of Coal that “we will use all wagons that the Railways are giving to us for sending coal to dumps” is redeemed in letter and spirit. Such dumps will prove to be a boon to the users and industries. However, they feel that while opening a dump, the proximity of the railhead to the collieries should not be the only criterion. Another criterion should be to set up such dumps at places which are nearest to industrial establishments and well connected by road so that even small consumers in the remote areas are able to take the benefit like Bhiwani in Haryana Ludhlana in Punjab, Kanpur and Ghaziabad in U.P. In fact eventually coal dumps should be set up in all the District Headquarters and other suitable places in remote areas of the country. The Committee would await the plan in this regard.

NEW DELHI ;
April 9, 1984
 Chaitra 20, 1906 (Saka)

BANSI LAL,
 Chairman,
 Estimates committee.

APPENDIX

Statement of Recommendations/Observations

Sl. No.	Para No.	Recommendations/Observations
1	2	3
1	1.13	<p>The projected demand of wagons for transportation of coal is linked with the target of production of coal and the Railways share in the movement thereof. During 1982-83 against a target loading of 99 million tonnes out of a total production of 130.61 million tonnes of coal and indent for 12,404 wagons (in terms of 4 wheelers) per day, Railways supplied 12,548 wagons but the actual loading was confined to a little over 11,000 wagons. Similarly in 1983-84, against a target of 147 million tonnes, the actual production of coal is estimated to be 140 million tonnes out of which 102 million tonnes was to be carried by Railways for which a demand of 11,822 wagons (in terms of 4 wheelers) per day has been made but upto December, 1983, the average utilisation of wagons has been 11,342 wagons per day. The Committee desire that effective steps should be taken to achieve optimum utilisation of wagons.</p>
2	1.14	<p>In 1984-85 out of an estimated production of 155 million tonnes, Railways are supposed to carry 117 million tonnes of coal. However, the representative of the Ministry has informed the Committee that it will not be possible for them to carry more than 106 or 107 million tonnes with the present infrastructure. The matter is under discussion with Planning Com-</p>

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mission to find ways and means to bridge the gap between demand and availability of wagons for coal transportation. Coal being one of the most essential ingredient for the industrialisation of the country, the Committee expect the Ministry of Railways to impress upon the Planning Commission, the urgent need for allocation of more funds to augment the coal carrying capacity of the Railways not only to meet the present needs but also the future needs.

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According to the present practice, unlike in the case of general goods traffic, for coal loading the indents are placed on day-to-day basis. Indents not accepted for loading for any reason, are treated as lapsed at the end of the day and have to be repeated. This is obviously a very cumbersome procedure. Moreover, under this system it is not possible even for the Railway Administration to assess as to what part of the demand for wagons remains unsatisfied. The Committee would like the Ministry of Railways to review this system keeping in view the difficulties experienced by the consumers and the need of the Railways to plan the availability of wagons according to demand.

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The Railways at present bear the responsibility for distribution of non-coking coal. Whereas supplies to core sector are determined by priorities, elaborate system has been devised for meeting the demand of non-core sector. The system at present in vogue is that first the coal loading programme is determined by the Railways in consultation with the collieries. This, from the railway side is in the basis of the likely availability of wagons and on the collieries' side on the basis of the likely loading

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capacity. The loading programme (ceiling limits) is then communicated to the sponsoring authorities. The sponsoring authorities thereafter sponsor the demand of various units which is, according to the Railways, always much more than the "ceiling limits" fixed by them. This necessitates pruning of demand to bring it within the "ceiling limits". The system is reverse of what it should be. In fact, the Railways should first collect the sponsored demand and then, in consultation with the collieries, earnestly attempt to meet it.

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2.12

The representative of the Ministry of Railways has confessed before the Committee that there is a need for change in distribution system. He informed the Committee that sometimes the sponsorships by States leave much to be desired and proves to be the breeding ground for malpractices like black-marketing. Cases have been detected where names of industries which have not taken coal at all find a place in sponsorship to the detriment of genuine consumers. Supplementing the views of the representative of the Ministries of Railways, the representative of Department of Coal informed the Committee that cases had come to notice where names of many small scale industries which had been closed down or did not exist were sponsored by States. They got the coal and black-marketed it. To check such malpractices, Coal India Ltd, has started insisting on the consignees to furnish affidavits giving various details irrespective of the supplies being made through road or rail. Such affidavits have to be supported by certain documentary evidence regarding the genuineness of their coal requirement. Even parties sponsored by State Govern-

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ments have to give affidavits. Twenty-five per cent of the ghost indentors drop out at this stage. Coal India is considering the verification of the affidavits submitted by private parties through their own agency and for this purpose to utilise the services of their regional offices. In the affidavits, it is made clear that misuse of coal will not only result in stoppage of coal supplies but shall render the culprits liable to prosecution. The Committee desire that it should be ensured that the steps taken are such as would eliminate malpractices in the distribution of coal.

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The Committee are surprised that even the allotment of wagons is sanctioned by the Director Movement (Railways) on the recommendation of the sponsoring authorities and consent of the collieries for loading, this sanction does not have any assurance or guarantee of allotment/supply or movement so sanctioned. They are informed that while priority is accorded to movement on account of core sector, the sanctioned allotments of wagons for non-core sector is subject to cuts varying from 25 to 50%. This is highly unsatisfactory state of affairs. The Committee would like the Ministry of Railways to so plan the system of allotment of wagons that once the allotment is sanctioned by the Director Movement (Railways) it is fully honoured and no difficulty is experienced by the non-core sector units in this regard.

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During the evidence of the representatives of Ministry of Railways before the Committee, it transpired that the possibility of diversion of coal wagons cannot be ruled out, both for *bona-fide* and *mala-fide* reasons. The Com-

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mittee can understand the deliberate diversions by Railways when a power house or loco-shed is in distress. However, the Committee will like to draw the attention of the Ministry to the recommendation contained in para 3.63 of the 17th Report of the Committee on Public Undertaking (1980-81) that "should such diversions become necessary, the consignor should invariably be consulted and the consignee should also be consulted in case payment of the coal has been made."

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What really disturbs the Committee is the *mala-fide* diversions when high quality coal meant for power houses is clandestinely diverted to some private parties. The representative of the Ministry of Railways confessed before the Committee that much *mala fide* diversions had recently taken place at Ahmedabad. The Committee are certain that *mala-fide* diversions cannot take place without the collusion of Railway Staff. They urge the Ministry to streamline the procedures with the aim of plugging the loopholes that enable such diversions. Further, when any such case comes to notice, it should be investigated in all seriousness and those found guilty should be suitably punished.

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The Committee are alarmed at the substantial number of wagons supplied to the collieries being "left behind" or "drawn empty". In 1982-83, out of an average of 12548 wagons per day supplied for loading, the actual loading averaged 11011 wagons per day and the balance of 1537 wagons per day were either left behind or drawn empty for one reasons or the other. This wastage of loading capacity is indeed alarming. Obviously, it is due to inadequate coordination between the

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Railway authorities and the collieries. The Committee desire the Ministry of Railways to maintain better coordination with the collieries to minimise the wastage of loading capacity caused by wagons left behind or drawn empty.

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2.35

The programme for large scale mechanisation of loading operations embarked upon by the collieries should elicit immediate attention of the Railways to arrange for a corresponding increase in the availability of open wagons for movement of coal. The Committee trust that the Railways are aware of the likely change in the demand pattern of wagons for movement of coal and have already initiated action to meet it in close coordination with the collieries/Coal India Ltd.

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2.41

The Railways claim that at present they are moving "more than 70 per cent" of the coal production in the country. As rail transport of coal is comparatively cheaper, there is considerable pressure on the Railways on this account. Some part of the Railways' capacity for movement of coal is tied up in transporting coal in piecemeal for short distances. Thus, bulk consumers at places far distant from the centres of coal production have to compete with small consumers nearer to coal-fields. This is not fair as transport of coal by road to distant places would be clearly uneconomical for the consuming units. The Committee would like the Ministry of Railways and the Department of Coal to lay down an agreed policy in regard to movement of coal by rail specifying the distance within which the facility of movement of coal by rail would not be permissible subject to such exceptions as may be considered desirable.

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12.	2.46	<p>Committee's attention has been drawn by a private party to the adulteration of coal by mixing dust, stones and shales. According to the representative of the Ministry of Railways such adulteration could not take place during transit. However, the representative of the Department of Coal admitted that "there has been some complaints from time to time, particularly, from power houses of admixture of stones and shales in coal supply." The problem has been traced either to coal loading from the open cast mines where coal handling facilities and picking to segregate stones and shales have not been provided or to mechanised methods of mining and mechanised loading. The Committee were further informed that a crash programme to set up coal handling facilities at open cast mines had been undertaken. While sanctioning new mines, provision is being made for installation of coal handling facilities. The Committee hope the crash programme of providing coal handling facilities at open cast mines will be pursued vigorously so that the assurance given by the Deptt. of Coal to the Committee that "in a few years, this problem will be totally eliminated" becomes a reality.</p>
13	2.54	<p>It has been represented to the Committee that most of the coal moved by the Railways is moving at the owners' risk and hence railways are not responsible for transit losses which are very high in the case of most of the bulk consumers in the country. To cut these transit losses, it has been suggested that weighing machines should be installed at the loading points as well as delivery points.</p>
14.	2.55	<p>So far as the providing of weighing machines at the loading points is concerned, the</p>

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Committee learn that Coal India Ltd. will install them while implementing the project for modernisation of coal handling facilities. However, the Committee find the Ministry of Railways reluctant to provide weighing machines at the delivery points on the ground of detention and congestion of wagons. The Committee appreciate the difficulties of the Ministry of Railways in installing weighing bridges at all points of deliveries. However they feel that start should be made by the Ministry to provide weighing machines at places where bulk deliveries of the coal are made.

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At present, a lot of transport capacity is wasted due to sharp drop in offers of coal by the collieries during summer and monsoon months (May to October). This is ascribed to various reasons like flooding of mines and pit heads. To make up this loss of wasted capacity, a lot more strain is put on the Railways during busy season. To overcome this difficulty the Coal India has opened 83 coal dumps at various rail heads where coal is stored for distribution to indentors. The Committee are of the view that 83 dumps may not be sufficient to meet the demands of the users in full during the lean seasons when due to flooding of pit heads and mines the movement of coal by rail is substantially reduced. The Committee recommend that Coal India should open more dumps so that the assurance given to the Committee by the representative of the Department of Coal that "we will use all wagons that the Railways are giving to us for sending coal to dumps" is redeemed in letter and spirit. Such dumps will prove to be a boon to the users and in-

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dustries. However, they feel that while open a dump, the proximity of the railhead to the collieries should not be only criterion. Another criterion should be to set up such dumps at places which are nearest to industrial establishments and well connected by road so that even small consumers in the remote areas are able to take the benefit like Bhiwani in Haryana, Ludhiana in Punjab, Kanpur and Gaziabad in U.P. In fact eventually coal dumps should be set up in all the District Headquarters and other suitable places in remote areas of the country. The Committee would await the plan in this regard.

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6.	The Current Book House, Maruti Lane, Raghunath Dadaji Street, Bombay-1.	14.	J.M. Jain & Brother, Mori Gate, Delhi.
7.	M/s. Usha Book Depot, Law Book Seller and Publishers' Agents Government Publications, 585, China Bazar, Khan House, Bombay-2.	15.	Oxford Book & Stationery Company, Scindia House, Connaught Place, New Delhi-1.
8.	M & J Services, Publishers, Representative Accounts & Law Book Seller, Mohan Kunj, Ground Floor, 68, Jyotiba Fuele Road, Nalgaum-Dadar, Bombay-14	16.	Bookwell, 4, Sant Nirankari Colony, Kingsway Camp, Delhi-9.
		17.	The Central News Agency, 23/90, Connaught Place, New Delhi.
		18.	M/s. Rajendra Book Agency, IV-D-59, IV-D-50, Lajpat Nagar, Old Double Storey, New Delhi-110024.
		19.	M/s. Ashoka Book Agency, BH-82, Poorvi Shalimar Bahg Delhi-110033.
		20.	Venus Enterprises, B-2/85, Phase-II, Ashok Vihar, Delhi.