

ment for setting up a Coal Mines Planning and Design Institute; and

(b) if so, the salient features thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI SUBODH HANSDA): (a) and (b). The Central Mine Planning and Design Institute with headquarters at Ranchi has already been set up under the Coal Mines Authority Limited. The Institute at Ranchi will have three Regional Institutes, one each at Asansol, Dhanbad and Nagpur to be set up in two phases, during the Fifth Five Year Plan. The existing Planning and Design Cell of the National Coal Development Corporation Ltd. forms the nucleus of the Central Institute at Ranchi and the Planning and Design Cell of the Bharat Coking Coal Ltd. would form the nucleus of the Regional Institute at Dhanbad.

The Central Institute at Ranchi is carrying out the work of project Planning and designing in respect of mines/minefields under its jurisdiction, as well as those connected with standardisation, typification, coordination and integration of applied research and development of new techniques of coal mining industry, perspective planning and limited coal exploration work. The Institute will in due course undertake planning and designing of new mines and modernisation/reconstruction of the existing mines for the achievement of the coal production targets.

Production Loss to HSL during recent Railway Strike

619. SHRI Y. ESWARA REDDY: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the HSL suffered a huge production loss due to recent Railway strike; and

(b) whether Government succeeded in reaching the required quantity of coal to the steel plants during the Railway strike?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES. (SHRI SUBODH HANSDA): (a) and (b). Taking into account the dislocation in the operations of the Steel Plants due to dislocation in rail movement in the last quarter of 1973-74 and the possibility of a strike by Railway employees, the production targets for the first quarter of 1974-76 were kept low as to build stocks of raw materials before resumption of normal operations. While the production at the plants was restricted throughout April, 1974, the plants had to be operated at the minimum level permissible on considerations of technological safety of plant and equipment from the beginning of May, 1974 to avoid any sudden stoppage on account of the Railway strike and a number of units were blanked or stopped. Consequently, the aggregate production of saleable steel from the Bhilai, Durgapur and Rourkela Steel Plants in May, 1974, came to 1,69,000 tonnes as against 2,10,000 tonnes in April, 1974. The supplies of coking coal to the steel plants were, however, maintained at a satisfactory level during the strike period resulting in appreciable improvement in stocks.

Stages of construction of three Steel Plants in South India

620. SHRI Y. ESWARA REDDY: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) at what stages is the construction of the three steel plants in South India for which foundations were laid in 1971; and

(b) whether these works are progressing according to the schedule and when the production will start in each of these plants?