



Coal Supply to Punjab Power Plants Remains Adequate; Timely Lifting from CIL and Higher Captive Coal Utilisation Key to Sustained Generation

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Media reports today, including one titled “Punjab power crisis deepens as 14-hour cuts hit factories, farms,” have attributed reduced power generation at Punjab's thermal plants towards plant outages and inadequate coal supply. The Ministry of Coal clarifies that this does not present the complete picture. Adequate coal has been made available to Punjab's power plants, and Coal India Limited (CIL) remains fully committed to ensuring uninterrupted coal supply for power generation across the country, including in Punjab.

The Central Government has already taken steps to enable coal movement to Punjab's Independent Power Plants (IPPs) from PSPCL's captive mines. Higher utilisation of PSPCL's own plants, monitoring breakdowns at IPPs, together with timely lifting of coal already offered by CIL subsidiaries, would help optimise power generation and address the State's requirements.

Central Government and CIL's Support to Punjab's Coal Supply Chain

The Central Government has proactively facilitated coal movement to IPPs in Punjab since the commencement of captive mine production:

- Supply of coal from PSPCL's captive Pachhwara Central Coal Mine to IPPs has been enabled, subject to fulfilment of the statutory payment obligation to the State of Jharkhand.
- Utilisation of coal from the Pachhwara Central Coal Mine by IPPs not owned by PSPCL, including Nabha Power Limited (Rajpura) and Talwandi Sabo Power Limited (Mansa) is already permitted up to 50% of annual production, after meeting the requirements of Specified End Use Plants.

CIL supply to Punjab's IPPs remains adequate

Against NPL's average consumption of around 4.3 rakes/day over the last three days, rake supply has averaged around 5 rakes/day; against TSPL's consumption of around 3.8 rakes/day, supply has averaged around 5 rakes/day. Through September 2026 so far, average supply has been around 4.9 rakes/day for NPL and 4.1 rakes/day for TSPL, which is higher than the average consumption of these IPPs.

Punjab needs to Improve Offtake from Captive Mines of PSPCL

At the Pachhwara Central mine of PSPCL, for the period April 2026 to 11.09.2026, production stands at 83.67% of the annual target, while despatch stands at only 68.44% of the target. This gap points to a build-up of unevacuated stock at the mine of around 3.21 lakh tonnes, which the State should evacuate to generate more power at PSPCL's own plants.

Lower PLF at PSPCL's Plants and Breakdowns at IPPs

PSPCL operates three thermal power plants i.e., Guru Hargobind TPS (Lehra Mohabbat), Goindwal Sahib TPP, and Ropar TPS with a combined capacity of 2,300 MW. As on 11.09.2026, coal stock at PSPCL's plants stood at around 114% of the normative requirement, reflecting more than adequate coal availability.

Despite this comfortable stock position, the tentative Plant Load Factor (PLF) of PSPCL's plants during September 2026 was only around 59%. The low generation during the month therefore cannot be attributed to inadequate coal availability at the plant end.

Separately, breakdowns have been reported at IPP power plants, which the State of Punjab may wish to closely monitor to sustain power generation.

IPPs Need to Improve Lifting of Coal Already Offered by CIL

CIL subsidiaries have proactively offered additional coal to Punjab-based IPPs; however, booking and lifting have remained below the quantities offered:

- CCL offered 5.0 lakh tonnes (LT) of coal to NPL and TSPL on 30.03.2026 under the RCR mode, against which around 4.1 LT has been booked and 3.2 LT lifted so far.
- BCCL offered 3.5 LT of coal to NPL, against which around 1.7 LT has been booked and 1.1 LT lifted so far.
- Considering the surge in power demand, CIL has additionally allocated 2.30 LT of coal to NPL from BCCL and 3.0 LT to TSPL from CCL under the Flexibility Policy in Q2; lifting against these allocations is yet to commence.

Thus, additional coal has continued to be made available to Punjab-based IPPs, and timely lifting of the allocated/offered coal would be important for augmenting coal availability at the plant end.

While CIL and its subsidiaries are taking measures to augment coal availability through RCR, the Flexibility Policy and additional rail-based arrangements, timely booking and lifting of coal already offered by CIL along with optimal utilisation of available rake supply, remains critical for improving coal receipts at NPL and TSPL.

The Ministry of Coal and Coal India Limited remain committed to supplying coal to the State of Punjab under existing fuel supply arrangements, covering PSPCL as well as all IPPs in the State. Timely lifting of coal by IPPs, improved offtake from PSPCL's own captive mines, and better generation performance at PSPCL's plants are equally important for optimising power generation in Punjab.

Shuhaib T

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