

‘No shortage of power in country’

NEW DELHI: Power Minister R K Singh on Monday exuded confidence that there will be no power shortage in the country amid the ongoing low coal stocks at power plants and stressed on timely payments by distribution companies to the plants for electricity supplied to them.

The statement assumes significance in view of coal shortage faced by thermal power plants across the country.

After the virtual launch of the green day market for sale of renewable energy on exchanges, Singh assured, “There won’t be any back down...There was no (power) outage yesterday. There was no (power shortage) and it did not happen even before. If there is some outage, then that is because of our own (states’) constraints.”

The minister informed that power plants in the country have more than 8 million tonnes of coal at present. According to the latest report of the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) which monitors 135 plants with over 165GW capacity, thermal proj-



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ects had 8.1 million tonnes of coal on October 23, 2021, which is sufficient for four days (for these 135 plants).

Besides, the report showed as many as 49 non-pithead plants had less than four days or supercritical stock of dry fuel on Saturday compared to 62 such plants a week ago on October 16. This shows gradual improve-

ment in the coal stock situation at thermal power plants in the country.

About huge outstanding towards Coal India, he said, “There is around Rs 16,000 crore which has not been paid to Coal India.. unless and until discoms pays gencos (power generating firms) for the power supplied to them, the gencos would not be able to pay for coal.”

He further informed, “The dues of all generating companies (excluding states owned) are Rs 75,000 crore. How do you expect those generation companies to pay for coal or railways? This is not sustainable. Every state has to understand that electricity is not free.”

About the gas shortage, the minister said, “If you (states or power generators) have an agreement with GAIL (for gas supply) why don’t you renew that.... People should not go scare mongering (about power outages).”

The minister also drew attention towards inefficient management of captive coal mines by the states. PTI