

(d) steps being taken by Government to meet the galloping coal demand by the power sector to the tune of 30 million tonnes every year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) to (c) The target of domestic coal production, as recommended by the Planning Commission, for the year 1996-97 is 288.65 million tonnes.

In consultation with the Planning Commission a total plan investment of Rs. 2681.97 crores has been proposed for Coal India Limited and Singareni Collieries Company Limited during the year 1996-97.

(d) Steps being taken to augment indigenous production of coal include the following:—

(i) Opening up of new mines and increasing efficiency and productivity in existing mines by modernisation, application of new technologies and ensuring timely availability of inputs and infrastructural facilities.

(ii) Partial de-regulation of coal prices is likely to improve internal resource generation of coal companies which will enable new projects to be taken up. It will also improve the financial viability of new mining projects.

(iii) The capital base of Coal India Limited has been restructured to enable it to raise additional financial resources from the capital markets, which are required to add new coal production capacity.

(iv) Steps are being taken in co-ordination with the Railways to remove the transportation bottlenecks in such coalfield areas which have potential for enhanced production.

(v) Steps are being taken to remove the bottlenecks in land acquisition.

(vi) Private sector companies engaged in production of iron and steel, cement and generation of power have

been permitted to take up coal mining. This is expected to increase domestic coal production.

Benefit of Social Security to Agricultural Labourer

793. SHRI NAGENDRA NATH OJHA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that agricultural labourers at present are not provided any benefit of social security except in a few cases;

(b) whether question of extending benefits of social security to these vast sections of India's workers has been considered by Government; and

(c) if so, concrete steps being contemplated by Government in this respect?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (c) The Workmen Compensation Act, 1923 is applicable inter alia to certain categories of agricultural labourers. Apart from several anti-poverty and employment generation schemes taken up in the rural sector, the Government have taken up a number of social security schemes. The Group Life Insurance Scheme for Landless Agricultural Labourers has been introduced by the Central Government in the year 1987. Another Group Insurance scheme for IRDP beneficiaries came into force in 1988. The personal Accident Insurance Social Security Scheme of the GIC for poor families has been extended to all districts in the country in August 1988. In addition, the General Insurance Corporation has introduced an insurance scheme for cattle and livestock, agricultural pumpsets, failed wells, fire insurance cover for huts and belongings of landless labourers, small farmers artisans and other poor people in rural areas, dwelling premises and other belongings of IRDP/NREP etc. beneficiaries. Most of the State Governments are implementing old age pension schemes. In some States e.g. Gujarat, Karnataka and Kerala,

maternity benefit schemes have been introduced for landless agricultural women workers.

Recently, a new scheme viz., NSAS (National Social Assistance Scheme) for the poor comprising old age pension @ Rs. 75/- per month to destitutes over 65 years of age, family benefit of Rs. 5,000/- & Rs. 10,000/- in case of natural and accidental death respectively of the primary bread winner of the household below poverty line and maternity benefit @ Rs. 300/- for the first two live births to poor women has been announced over and above the prevailing social security programmes ran by the State Government.

Additionally Government is also contemplating to formulate and introduce a comprehensive Central Legislation to provide for health, safety & Welfare of agricultural workers.

झकती कोयला खानों में आग को नियंत्रित करने के लिए अनुवर्ती कार्यवाही किया जाना

794. श्री गोविन्दराम घिरी: क्या कोयला मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या भारत कोकिंग कोल लि० की कुछ कोयला खानों में पिछले सात दशकों से आग लगी हुई है, जैसा कि 24 जुलाई, 1995 के "इकोनॉमिक टाइम्स" में प्रकाशित समाचार में बताया गया है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो उसका ब्यौर क्या है;

(ग) क्या अग्नि-नियंत्रण के संबंध में विश्व बैंक के सर्वेक्षण का कार्य पूरा हो गया है;

(घ) यदि हां, तो तलसंबंधी ब्यौर क्या है; और

(ङ) क्या इस संबंध में कोई अनुवर्ती कार्यवाही की गई है?

कोयला मंत्रालय की राज्य मंत्री (श्रीयती कान्ति सिंह): (क) जी, हां।

(ख) झरिया कोयला क्षेत्र में पहली बार कोयला क्षेत्रों में आग की सूचना 1916 में प्राप्त हुई थी। कोयला खानों का राष्ट्रीयकरण किए जाने के बाद उपयुक्त रूप में सर्वेक्षण कार्य किया गया था। इसके परिणामस्वरूप

कोयला क्षेत्र के विभिन्न भागों में 70 आगों के लगभग 17 किलो मीटर के क्षेत्र में फैलने संबंधी क्षेत्र को विनिर्दिष्ट किया गया था। इस संबंध में किए गए निरन्तर प्रयासों से 9 आगों को पूर्णतया बुझा लिया गया है और अभी तक उनका परिष्कारण कर दिया गया है।

(ग) से (ङ) झरिया कोयला अग्नि नियंत्रण तकनीकी सहायता परियोजना के अंतर्गत, जोकि विश्व बैंक द्वारा सहायता प्राप्त है, झरिया कोयला क्षेत्र आगों से संबंधित एक वैज्ञानिक अध्ययन को जून, 1996 में पूरा कर लिया गया है। अंतिम रिपोर्ट को तैयार किए जाने संबंधी कार्यवाही शुरू कर दी गई है।

Upgradation and Modernisation of Public Sector Steel Plants

795. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the Government Policy regarding upgradation of technology and modernisation of existing public sector steel plants;

(b) whether the long pendency in the modernisation of Indian Iron and Steel Company (IISCO) of Burnpur, West Bengal, which is since then referred to BIFR has been agitating the trade union movement and Government of West Bengal; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to modernise the IISCO plant and what is its present status?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) Assessment of the need for upgradation of technology and modernisation is made on a number of factors such as technological obsolescence, overcoming production bottlenecks, improving plant and equipment health for optimum utilisation of capacity, improving productivity and enhancing quality of products, improving yield, conserving energy, economising cost of production, improving the techno-economics, abating environmental pollution etc.

(b) Yes, Sir.