

[Shri Ram Nah Kovind]

Then, you go to Connaught Place. We have beautiful sub-ways which are not maintained. I would request the Government to take this matter very seriously.

Recently, we had the problem of plague. It is a shame for a developed country like ours. We call ourselves as the tenth most industrialised country in the world and we can't even maintain our cities.

Therefore, I request the Government that they should take a serious view of the matter which I have raised—and, Sir, I have been raising this matter repeatedly—and see that a House Committee is appointed which should visit these places throughout the country and see to it that the health of the nation does not deteriorate.

Implementation of 7th report on the Ministry of Mines—Bharat Gold Mines Limited

SHRI S. MUTHU MANI (Tamil N.du): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, through this special mention I wish to raise the issue about the present state of affairs of the Bharat Gold Mines Limited (BGML), Kolar, Karnataka. Mining at Kolar Goldfield was started way back in 1850 and with the formation of the Bharat Gold Mines Limited, the Staff strength went over to 30,000. Thereafter, in a systematic manner, the management of BGML reduced the staff to 15,000 and then to 7,000. The present staff strength is about 6,700 only. This well-planned reduction in the staff strength indicates one thing that the management of BGML was not interested in the exploration of vast gold deposits available at Kolar.

As you are all aware, India is the largest consumer of Gold in the world and its domestic requirement of gold is 200 tonnes per year. Indians are very fond of gold but India's domestic production of gold is only 2 per cent of its requirement. Our country is rated as the fourth largest producer of gold

among the six gold-producing nations. In order to meet the domestic requirement we have to import about 198 tonnes of gold every year which involves huge foreign exchange. However, I am very pained to note that so far the Government of India has not taken any serious action to revive the company. The Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Industry submitted its 7th Report on Bharat Gold Mines Limited on 19th April, 1994. Especially the people of Kolar and the rest of the country expected that the Government would take immediate action with regard to the said report, but the Government's action is yet to be known.

The Sub-Committee of the Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committee, after visiting Kolar, recommended that the revival of BGML is only possible if the Government takes the following steps, i.e. to declare in unequivocal terms that the Company will not be allowed to close down and every effort at the apex/national level will be made to revive it; that the reference of BGML, Kolar to BIFR be revoked forthwith and it be taken out from the purview of BIFR; that to bring the company on rails requisite funds should be made available to establish a plant for recycling the huge stock of tailing so as to extract gold therefrom, for which the Government should make available 41 crores of rupees as budgetary support or soft loan to the company or should stand as guarantor to enable the company to get loans from banks and financial institutions and that the Government should allow the company to hypothecate its surplus land to raise funds. Sir, if proper investments are made in BGML, the company can run smoothly for the next 50-60 years.

On the advice of the hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, I had been to Kolar recently and got a lot of information. I was told that the company was running on profit till the year

1982. However, certain diversification programmes initiated by the management invited trouble for the company and it added a loss of about 150 crores of rupees to the company. While taking up the diversification programme, the management expected a profit of 40 crores of rupees from these diversification works. The Government did not view it seriously and allowed the present management to continue. The present CMD of the company takes his own decision without consulting anyone in the company. Even the above referred diversification programme was initiated by him and invited trouble for the company. For carrying out project diversification the BGML purchased unwanted machines and it was the main reason why the company made losses. Similarly, for the engineering diversification the company purchased seven machines, out of which 6 are of no use. The management under the present CMD purchased machines worth over rupees eight crores and what is painful to point out here is that after spending crores of rupees these machines are lying unutilised and are in a stage of dilapidation. The present management are even unable to process the 45,000 tonnes of ore extracted from the goldfield and the ore is lying unutilised after a huge amount of money was spent for its extraction. Sir, I may be permitted for two minutes only.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): Please conclude.

SHRI S. MUTHU MANI: Sir, we have so far extracted gold ore up to 1,500 feet below the ground but it is considered that we can do extraction up to 3,500 feet below the ground. As far as Kolar is concerned, at present we need not think of mining at deep level since we have not touched the other parts of Kolar which are spread over 300 kilometres. So far we have concentrated mining at Kolar within a radius of 14 kilometres.

Sir, I would like to point out that BGML has got about 12,000 acres of land, out of which only 200 acres of

land has been earmarked for mining and other purposes. It has been scientifically proved that agricultural activities on this land are economically viable with water coming out while mining and also with electricity available at Kolar. This land is most suitable for sericulture. The BGML should also undertake to build houses for the retired employees, utilise this land for agricultural purposes and rehabilitate its retired employees. 6.00 P.M.

Sir, during the last visit of the hon. Prime Minister to Karnataka, he assured the public that the BGML will not be closed down. In this connection I want to know from the Hon. Prime Minister whether the Government has taken out the case of Bharat Gold Mines Limited from the purview of the Board for Industrial Finance & Reconstruction since the case of BGML has referred to BIFR very long back and whether the Government has allocated funds to BGML as demanded by it and other concerned. What are the constructive measures taken by the Government before the announcement by the hon. Prime Minister. In view of the above said facts and circumstances, I, as per the advice of the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, urge upon the Government to implement the recommendations submitted by the Parliamentary Committee.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): Shri Ram Nath Kovind.

Hunger-strike by SC/ST employees of Nationalised Banks

SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, Mr. Vice-Chairman, I beg to rise to express my concern to the plight which the bank employees belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes are facing today. Sir, all the nationalised banks have got the SCs & STs welfare associations. They formed a national federation. All these organisations had some departmental problems with regard to the harassment, victimisation and non-provision of promotional avenues and for that matter, the federation gave a due notice to the Central Government, particularly the Finance Minister as well as