

ह कि यह गलती है, यह "वितरण केन्द्र" होना चाहिए। इसके लिए क्षमा करें। जहाँ तक आपने डीजल केन्द्रों की बात कही है, मैं यह निवेदन कर चुका हूँ कि दूरी उतनी महत्वपूर्ण नहीं है जितनी मांग महत्वपूर्ण है। मांग इतनी महत्वपूर्ण है कि एक तो इसमें पूजी लगती है। उस पूजी का वितरण होना चाहिए, और वह वापस मिलना चाहिए, उसका ब्याज मिलना चाहिए। इस सारी चीजों पर हम अपनी प्लानिंग करते हैं और इन सारी बातों को ध्यान में रखते हैं। हम इनको खोलते जा रहे हैं और हर साल ये बढ़ते जा रहे हैं। लेकिन इसमें हमें देखना यह पड़ता है कि जो पूजी लगती है वह हमें वापस मिल सके। हम उलब्धता बनाये रखने के लिए सतत प्रयास कर रहे हैं ताकि लोगों को सहूलितें मिल सकें।

#### Accidents in coal mines

\*64. SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY:†  
SHRI RAM NARAYAN  
GOSWAMI;

Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently a high level meeting on coal industry was held at Ranchi;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) what is the number of accidents that took place around that period in ECL collieries; and

(d) what were the causes thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COAL IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI C. K. JAFFAR SHARIEF): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Sunil Basu Ray.

#### Statement

(b) There were wide ranging discussions on improving capacity utilisation and productivity; determining norms for consumption of stores; stream lining purchase procedures and inventory control; improving sales realisations by greater attention to quality and consumer satisfaction; proper maintenance of records of fixed assets and manpower; preparation of crisis management plans and evolving of a new and better work culture.

(c) and (d) There was no fatal accident on 14, 15 and 16th June 1988 in the mines of ECL when the high level meeting was being held at Ranchi. However, there were 4 fatal accidents in Eastern Coalfields Ltd. during the month of June, 1988 in which 7 persons died. 7 cases of serious accidents were also recorded during the month, involving injuries to 9 persons. During July, 1988; 2 fatal accidents, killing 2 persons took place. Details of fatal accidents during June and July, 1988 are given in the Annexure. [See Appendix CXLVII, Annexure No. 23]

SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY: Hon. Chairman, the reply that has been given is not satisfactory. It does not answer the questions which are vital to the industry and its workers. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether at the Ranchi meeting, the senior officials and the hon. Minister did find time to discuss the two most vital issues, namely, the question of safety from the point of view of the increasing number of accidents in the coal mines resulting in a number of casualties and serious injuries to many others which cause impediment to production and productivity and, secondly, the question of industrial relations which rests on a satisfactory solution of the wage and other related questions which are pending for a long time. I would like to know whether this high-level meeting did find time to devise ways and means for settling these questions.

Sir, the hon. Minister had said that there were accidents which preceded the meeting, there were accidents which occurred

after the meeting and there was one major, fatal, accident, which took place at Rati Bati colliery under the ECL on the 4th May, 1988. The remarks which have been made in the reply on the causes of these accidents are the most insulting to the workers. In every case, the usual reply has been given that the diseased workers were responsible for the accidents. But in the report of the DGMS, in the performance report of the Labour Ministry, you will find that it has been pointed out that most of the accidents take place due to the neglect of the management and no effort has been made as yet, after nationalisation, to find out how much man-hours, how much machine-hours, and what amount of production has been lost as a result of these accidents. Therefore, these questions have a direct bearing on the safety and welfare of the workers in the coal industry and I hope the hon. Minister will reply to these questions.

**SHRI C. K. JAFFAR SHARIEF:** Sir, before the Ranchi meeting, I had been to the ECL and I was there for two days. I met not only the officials of the company but the representatives of the trade unions also. In regard to the knowledge of these accidents, it is not that we are not aware of it.

In regard to the Ranchi meeting which the hon. Member referred to, it is not that the deliberations with the various disciplines are complete. What the hon. Member is referring to is the safety aspect. Sir, I joined this Coal family only about four months back and I have been trying to understand the various problems of this industry. I was at Ranchi which is the headquarters of the CMPDI, where I had a meeting with the officials of the Coal India Limited and its subsidiary companies. In regard to industrial relations, the hon. Minister of Energy had a meeting at his level. The question of industrial relations was also discussed at the Ranchi meeting. For the information of the hon. Member, I would like to say that it is not that the administration or the Director (Personnel) on the management side should wait for the trade unions to raise their demand, to raise the issue, about the welfare of the workers. We have

emphasised on the administration that they should themselves become the leaders, they should lead the workers in motivating them about their welfare and take care of other aspects also so that their standard of living could be improved. On this question, I would like to inform the hon. Member that Government is not going to lag behind or Government will not wait for anybody to champion the cause of the workers because we are more concerned about welfare of the workers more than anybody else in this aspect.

**SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY:** I will welcome the Government if it really becomes the champion of the workers but it has yet to prove so because your remarks on the accidents prove that you are not the champion of the cause of the workers, you are championing the cause of others.

My next point is, I would like to know whether you have discussed that equipment will be hired on lease basis and whether you have earmarked Rs. 50 crores for this lease operation. What is the purpose of this lease if it is true? Will it not undermine the safety measures in the mines? This is what I want to know.

**THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI VASANT SATHE):** As far as the safety aspect is concerned, we have been concerned with the safety aspect. The fact that even the rate of accidents since nationalisation has progressively come down, will show that there has been a concern for reducing the accidents. Sir, if you take the rate of accidents from 1978 it came down from 1.71 to 0.85 per cent; serious accidents, from 2.43 to 1.42 per cent. This shows the concern, but I am not satisfied with this. I have been holding regular meetings for safety and I have been saying that percentage does not satisfy me. A man who dies even if the is one, he dies hundred per cent. So, how can percentage satisfy anybody? We want to reduce the number of accidents, but if you look at the nature of the two accidents that we have mentioned in the ECL, we do not want to lay the responsibility on the workers but to a certain extent, yes, a worker also can be responsible. For example, take the conveyor belt accident.

When the conveyor belt is moving, people have been told not to clean the coal, but to save their energy and time, instead of switching off the main switch and stopping the conveyor, they try to clean it when it is moving. This is just to save their time and energy. Very often the shovel that they are using gets stuck up on the conveyor belt rotators and they get pulled in. This is how accidents are caused. We are keen that all round must know that they should not take such risks. We are trying to ensure that minimum number of accidents are caused. We are very much concerned about it.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Shri Ramnarayan Goswamy. Not there. Shri Yashwant Sinha.

**SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY:** Sir, I want to ask one more question.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** You have already put two supplementaries. There are other important questions also. Yes, Mr. Yashwant Sinha. (*Interruptions*)

**SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY:** At present there is no balance between safety and production. That is why workers are getting trapped in accidents and they are dying. That aspect has to be considered by the Ministry.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** They are considering all the aspects.

**SHRI YASHWANT SINHA:** Sir, the Minister has just now made some high-sounding claims regarding safety measures. I would like to point out that whatever instructions might have been issued from here, they are all falling on deaf ears when it comes to the conditions on the ground. I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister that there is a colliery under CCL, called North Tapin, in the district of Hazaribagh. I am a witness to it myself. I had gone there in order to find out about a great scandal about missing coal stocks. In the process of that, I noticed that bags of dynamite were just lying scattered without any care as to their safety and the danger to which these were exposing all

those who were around. I also noticed that none of the colliery labour who was working at that point of time and who was going to blast the mine in order to get coal had helmets on. Further we noticed that they were handling high tension wires and none of the workers who were handling it had gloves or boots on. Now I am bringing this to the notice of the Minister to point out that nothing of what they might consider to be safety measures is being applied in practice on the ground. I challenge him to go and find out because I had newspaper men with me and this has been published in the Bihar newspapers.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** You will take all those steps, I hope.

**SHRI VASANT SATHE:** We will take all those steps and I will thank the hon. Member if he had noticed anything particular at a particular place and if he had informed me of that, I would have been highly obliged to him. I would have immediately taken some steps to see that things are corrected.

**PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA:** I would like the Minister to refer to parts (a) and (b) of the question and the answers thereto. Answer to part (b) is an omnibus answer. If we want to have details, we want to have concrete details as to what those steps are that have been taken or that have been suggested. He says, improving capacity utilisation and productivity. Any seminar can talk about improving capacity utilisation and productivity. We would like to know what were the specific suggestions given with regard to improving capacity utilisation and productivity.

Similarly, norms for consumption of stores. What are those stores? There will always be norms. But they must have some suggestions with regard to these norms.

Thirdly, streamlining of purchase procedure and inventory control. In every organisation there will be streamlining, but we would like to know the specific measures that have been suggested in

this particular meeting at Ranchi. And so on and so forth.

Therefore I would like to know from the hon. Minister not an omnibus answer but the concrete suggestions that have come forth in that meeting which could go to make these points effective. Therefore I would like the Minister to give those details.

**SHRI VASANT SATHE:** It is an obvious thing in a question like this. As Prof. Lakshmanrao knows these are not new things. These are routine matters of day-to-day discussion, consideration and improvement. On capacity utilisation, inventory control and store management no new details are going to be placed. These are matters in which ultimately we have to see results. I am sure he would be interested more in results. Even a small book can be prepared on details of instructions that have been given many times up till now. If he wants, we can send the details to him and he can examine them. But I do not think that is going to satisfy him. What will ultimately satisfy you is the results that we have obtained. There in the matter of OMS there has been an improvement from 0.89 to 1.2 in just one year. This is the result of all the actions that were taken and such things we will carry on.

**SHRI E. BALANANDAN:** The Minister has said in his reply that mistakes of the workers are very much there with regard to accidents. May I ask him, can any foolproof arrangement be made with regard to the moving machinery in coal mines so that the workers cannot expose themselves to any accident? This is the modern method accepted throughout the world to avert accidents. Is the Minister aware of that and will the Minister take such kind of steps in the coal mines?

**SHRI VASANT SATHE:** Sir, this will mean total mechanisation of coal-mining. Wherever in other countries complete mechanisation is introduced human element is reduced and that is what reduces the accidents. But in Indian conditions it would not be possible, nor would it be desirable because that will mean reduc-

tion of so many employees which we do not want to do. The best thing is to educate our workers, make them aware of the safety needs, as one honourable Member has said.

**MR. CHAIRMAN.** Question Hour is over.

## WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

### Rise in the prices of drugs

\*62. **SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:** Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that following Government's decision to decontrol the prices of certain drugs, there has been a sharp rise upto 250 per cent in the prices of drugs including some life saving drugs making the drugs beyond the reach of common man; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto and the measures being taken by Government to check the abnormal rise in the prices of drugs and to make these available to the users at reasonable prices?

**THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J VENGAL RAO):** (a) As per the provisions of Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1987, most of the life saving drugs are price controlled. Manufacturers of decontrolled drugs are free to revise the prices. However, Government is keeping a watch and has intervened, wherever necessary.

(b) The increase have not gone unnoticed. On Government's intervention, 15 manufacturers have brought down the prices of 55 packs of formulations/bulk drugs to reasonable levels.

### Central investment in Orissa in the industrial sector

\*65. **SHRI BASUDEB MOHAPATRA:** Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) what is the annual Central investment in Orissa during the last three years in the industrial sector;