

ment in the mining districts? If so, in what respects?

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI: Sir, we are very much conscious about the hazards and degradation in the environment which is being caused by the mining projects. Therefore Sir, we take special care while granting mining leases and we put many conditions before clearing the mining projects. Sir it is true that open cast mining is more hazardous as far as the degradation of environment is concerned and we are discouraging open cast mining. But there are certain circumstance where it is possible to have any other system except open cast mining. Otherwise we insist and ask them to take many steps for the rehabilitation and afforestation of the mining areas, such as taking certain soil conservation measures. All these steps are being taken and are being insisted upon before mining leases are granted. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY: Sir, my question has not been answered.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has already answered your question.

He has said, he is taking precautions.

SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY: Sir, he has said that the Ministry is pressed for giving leases for open cast mining and as a result of open cast mines in high density population areas like the Raniganj Coal Field area, the problem is that the top soil will go away and the villages will suffer.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has agreed with you.

SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY: But they have not taken any steps. An open-cast mine lasts for sixty years. My question is, in a tropical country like ours, how the top-soil will be protected for sixty years? (*Interruptions*)

*483. [*The questioner (Shri M. A. Baby) was absent. For answer, vide col. 27-28...infra.*]

WELCOME TO PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION FROM GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, I have an announcement to make.

We have with us, this morning, seated in the Special Box, Members of a Parliamentary Delegation from German Democratic Republic which is currently on a visit to our country under the distinguished leadership of His Excellency, Mr. Horst Sindermann, President of the People's Chamber of German Democratic Republic. The other members of the delegation are:

1. Mr. Herbert Ziegenhann, MP
2. Mr. Manfred Scheler, MP
3. Dr. (Mrs.) Baerbel Schindler, Saefkow, MP
4. Mr. Lutz Ahnfeld, MP
5. Mr. Gerhard Holtz-Baumert, MP

On behalf of the Members of the House and on my own behalf, I take pleasure in extending a very hearty welcome to the Leader and other Members of the delegation and wish our distinguished guests a very enjoyable and fruitful stay in our country. We hope that during their stay here, they would be able to see and learn more about our Parliamentary system our country and our people and their visit to this country will further strengthen the friendly bonds that exist between us. Through them, we convey our greetings and best wishes to the Members of the People's Chamber and the friendly people of German Democratic Republic.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS— contd.

Exploitation of MODVAT by big business houses

*484. **SHRI DHARAM CHANDER PRASHANT†**
SHRI KAPIL VERMA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what steps Government have taken to contain the exploitation of MODVAT by big business houses;

(b) whether some cases have come to the notice of Government in this regard; if so, what are the details thereof; and

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Dharam Chander Prashant.