

[The Deputy Chairman]

For the whole day we are discussing Calling-Attention... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE: **

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat.

SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE: **

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If this is the threat of Mr. Hegde, I think...

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI SYED SIBTE RAZI (Uttar Pradesh): It is shameful that the Opposition should be walking towards the Chair and to say that they will not allow the House to run properly. It is very shameful. If this threat has to be taken seriously, that they do not want that the House should be run properly from tomorrow...

(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Kalyan Roy, please read your notice.

SHRI HUKMDEO NARAYAN YADAV: Point of order... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SYED SIBTE RAZI: They are wasting the time of the House. They should not be permitted like this on points of order. There are many important things to be done.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI SHIVA CHANDRA JHA (Bihar): Point of order... (*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What is the point of order? Wasting ten minutes... (*Interruptions*)... Yes, Mr. Kalyan Roy.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI PILOO MODY: He cannot call the attention of the Minister unless you restore silence, Sir... (*Interruptions*)... Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I am being accused of not restoring silence in this House. So, I want to know who is responsible for restoring their silence. The Prime Minister is not here, your Leader is not here, the

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Minister of Parliamentary Affairs is sitting quietly and you go on saying whatever you like. Then, why should not he? Is he a lesser Member than you are?

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI HANSRAJ BHARDWAJ (Madhya Pradesh): Nobody will tolerate intimidation and pressure tactics.

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Accident in TOPPA colliery on the
16th July 1982

SHRI KALYON ROY (West Bengal): Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Energy to the accident in the Toppa Colliery of Hazaribagh District of Bihar under the Central Coal-fields Limited on the 16th July, 1982, resulting in the death of sixteen workers and injuries to several others and the action taken by Government in this regard.

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI): Sir, it is with profound regret that I have to inform the House about the unfortunate accident which occurred in Topa Underground Colliery of Central Coalfields Limited in Hazaribagh District on 16th July, 1982 at about 2.45 P.M.

It has been reported that the accident was caused as a result of fall of roof of shale measuring in thickness from 6" to 12" in a depillaring area where about 50 workers were engaged. Thirty of them were able to escape to safety. Of the remaining 20, 16 were killed and four were injured.

Senior Officers of the Company, DGMS and the State Government visited the site and rescue and relief operations were undertaken with expedition. It has been ensured that the best possible treatment is given to the injured workers. Arrangements have

been made to disburse Rs. 15,000 as *ex-gratia* relief to the families of each of the deceased workers and Rs. 5,000 has been sanctioned to each injured workers. The Management of the Coal Company have been directed to work out and deposit as soon as possible the amount of compensation due to the next of the kin of the deceased workers. One dependent member from each of the families of the deceased is being given employment in Central Coalfields Limited.

I understand that an internal enquiry into this accident has been ordered by Chairman, Coal India Limited and accordingly a Board of Enquiry including *inter alia* the representatives of the two major trade unions has been constituted. Minister of State for Labour has already announced in the House that a Court of Enquiry headed by a serving or a retired High Court Judge will conduct an enquiry into this accident. I would like to assure the Hon'ble Members that the findings of the Court of Enquiry will be implemented according to a time-bound schedule and anyone found responsible for this tragic accident will be suitably punished. Two officers, namely, the Manager and the Assistant Manager of the Colliery have been placed under suspension pending enquiry.

Finally, I would like to state that it is our constant endeavour to improve the safety standards in our coal mines. We are going in for mechanisation in our Underground Mines principally with a view to reduce the mining hazards for the workers. The recommendations given by the Committee on Coal Mines Safety are being implemented in the Coal Companies and this is closely monitored by the Coal Companies and the Government. We hope to progressively achieve very high standards of safety in our Nationalised Coal mines.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Sir, let us not make it a party issue, let us make it a national issue. The issue is simple, whether the management have a right to slaughter the workers who are

working under it. To use a very mild language, what happened in Topa Colliery can be described as sheer, deliberate murder. The tragedy, unfortunately, is that the miners are never discussed in this House when they are alive. Miners are always discussed when they are dead; and one or two dead are not sufficient enough to have a Calling Attention; so they have to die in a large number to shake the Ministry. So these kinds of accidents and disasters and deaths in occupational disease are inevitable because of calculated, deliberate negligence of the Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Energy and the Coal India and the Central Coal India Ltd. To them, safety has a very low priority. That is why they continue to disregard the Mines Act, the Mining Regulations, the circulars of the Director-General of Mines Safety; and to cover up the violation, deliberate violation, they resort to, I regret to say, utter lies and blatant falsehood and create an impression that everything is all right, nothing is to be done, we are taking all steps. If this is the attitude, what can we do?

I am placing before you two reports. One report is the 1981-82 Report published by Mr. Ghani Khan Chaudhuri, the Minister of Energy. And what he has to say about accidents, I quote from page 21:

"The record of coal mining industry relating to fatal and serious accidents in the subsidiary companies of CIL in recent years has shown improvement. It would be observed that the fatality rate per million tonne of coal produced has declined."

This is what he said, Sir. What has the Labour Minister stated? The 1981-82 Report, at page 29, says:

"It would appear from Appendix 5 that the number of fatal accidents and the number of persons killed during the year 1980-81 went up compared to the corresponding figures for the year 1979-80."

[Shri Kalyan Roy]

What were the figures? On the mining industry the Energy Ministry did not give any figures. The Labour Ministry in its 1981-82 Report states that in 1980 there were 140 fatal accidents and deaths 160, and that in 1981 the fatal accidents in coal were 164 and deaths 183. Sir, I have just read from page 21. As per the Minister of Energy, the deaths per million tonnes have declined. The Labour Ministry Report at page 150 states that the deaths per million tonnes of coal production was 1.43 in 1980 and that in 1981 it went up to 1.63. Sir, this is the total production. If you take the underground production, Sir, the underground production which in 1977-78 was 64.05 million tonnes, went down in 1981-82 to 63.42 million tonnes as per the reply of Mr. Gargi Shankar Mishra on the 3rd of May. If you exclude the surface production, the figure of deaths of the underground workers per million tonnes of coal raised, would be 3.1, the highest in the world. What are we to do? Who is stating the truth? Is the Labour Minister telling the truth that the accidents have gone up, the deaths per million tonnes of coal production have gone up, or is he telling the truth? He did not give the facts. The Labour Minister has given the fact that the number of accidents were going up. And deliberately they are raising the bogies that everything is all right. They have no alternative but to resort to falsehood and lies to hide the grave facts.

No use of blaming the officers. The Minister has to take the blame. And I want to know when he is going to quit, how many workers will have to die before he quits, because the situation is so abnormal there. Sir, I quote from the *Times of India* of 19-7-1981:

"...Dr. Wadhera's visit to Topi Colliery yesterday. They (the workers) complaint that adequate safety precautions had not been taken and they had urged to work in an unsafe area. They even heckled and allegedly tried to surround his car."

This is the temper of the workers you are dealing with.

Sir, Mr. Minister has given the statement that the recommendations made by the Committee on Coalmines Safety, are being implemented by the coalmines. What are the main recommendations, Sir? I do not want to quote all the details but only two, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Put some questions. Otherwise, time will be up.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: These are questions, Sir. Do not stop me like that.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN No. I will stop. After seven minutes you will have to stop.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: I will take the same time Dr. Bhai Mahavir took on the jail question. You can stop me, but you cannot stop the mine accidents. I am not shouting as others do. (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am not going to give more than seven minutes.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: We will see.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You have already taken five to six minutes.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: One of the recommendations was that they will be... (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please put some questions. Otherwise, time will be up. You cannot discuss the whole matter. Because of time I have to do it.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: I know, Sir. I am conscious of it, I am conscious of the subject.

One of the recommendations was that the timber supports should be replaced by steel supports. May I ask the hon. Minister, since 1979 to 1982

in how many mines the timber supports have been replaced by steel supports? Sir, we have got figures. An amount of Rs. 101 crores has been given to the timber merchants for supplying defective timber, sub-standard timber, which is the real cause of the accidents.

Sir, seven days' work continued in mine after mine in violation of section 28. For the violations the managers had to be prosecuted. And Coal India is paying all the money. Secondly, safety boots are not supplied. Two pairs of safety boots per miner are to be supplied. They are not supplied. I would like to know whether in the Toppa colliery, safety boots were supplied to the workers.

Then he has talked of the workers' inspectors. There are 600 mines and there are only 30 workers' inspectors. Sir, as per the agreement every colliery will have to be provided with an ambulance. Even one-third of the collieries do not have an ambulance. The worst thing is the discrimination between a worker and an officer, after an accident. Sir, this is the reply given by Mr. Vikram Mahajan on the 4th May, 1981. After each accident, the Director-General of Mines Safety conducts an enquiry and finds the officers or the workers responsible. And a question was asked as to what action had been taken. I would only give two examples. In the Saddom colliery, there was an accident on the 7th February, 1981. The investigation by the Director-General of Mines Safety found the Manager responsible. What action was taken? The Minister of Energy says "None". In the Rotibati colliery an accident took place on the 26th February, 1981. The investigation by the Director-General of Mines Safety found the Agent and the Manager responsible.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: What action has been taken by Coal India? No action has been taken. I will finish.

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MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have already given nine minutes. The Minister will reply now.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: I will take only two minutes.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: All right, strictly two minutes.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Regarding the court of enquiry, this has become a farce and a laughing stock. There has been a court of enquiry in Keshargurh, there has been a court of enquiry in Silwara, there has been a court of enquiry in Central Saunda and there has been a court of enquiry in Sudamdih. In all these cases, the court of enquiry found that the officers were responsible. They have mentioned the names. But instead of taking action against them, each of those officers has been promoted, excepting in Chasnala where they had been dismissed because of Biju Patnaik. Will the fate of this court of enquiry also be the same?

The last point is about compensation. In this House on the 16th June, 1980, the Minister stated:

"Mr. Vice-Chairman, I reciprocate the sentiments of the hon. Members. As I have already assured the House, with regard to compensation we are going to talk with the trade union leaders and others to see how best this can be done. We will announce this soon."

That was in June 1980 and now, July 1982 is going to be over. Has any step been taken? The report is that because the miner was getting more than Rs. 1,000, in 130 cases they have been denied compensation as per the law.

So, in conclusion I want to say that this callousness, this deliberate negligence has led to this disaster. He is not alone to be blamed. The Labour Ministry which controls the Director-General of Mines Safety has been neglecting to strengthen this

[Shri Kalyan Roy]

department. The inspectors are supposed to inspect the mines twice a year. Would you please state how many times this particular mine has been inspected by the Director-General of Mines Safety? Was there any single steel prop there? Was there any ambulance in the colliery? A sum of Rs. 30,000 is paid to the workers when he dies. You are sending some people by plane to the Jaslok Hospital. Do you know that in the Central Coalfields, half of the hospitals of Coal India have no doctors? Do you know that in the case of the Bharat Coking Coal Limited, two-thirds of the hospitals have no doctors?

In E.C.L. fifty per cent of the doctors are not there. Why this gimmickal stand? You cannot increase the compensation. The whole attitude of your Ministry is callous. You don't take any action when they do not implement the recommendations of the Safety Committee. You do not implement the recommendations of the court of inquiry. You are cost conscious in relation to worker's safety. But the contractors in Coal India have been paid Rs. 700 crores in six years. That is why I entirely blame the Ministry, the Minister's attitude. Has he ever been underground in a mine? My question to the Minister is: In his 2½ years he has never cared to go underground for a single day. Can you ensure mine safety in the hands of these people—murderers? Is there any sense of shame. I ask Mr. Ghani Khan Chaudhuri, if you want to have safety in Coal India, first tender your resignation.

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: Mr. Deputy Chairman, the honourable Member stated that he is taking the whole issue as a national issue. I thought he is giving some concrete suggestions and all that. Instead of that, in his own way he went on blaming Coal India, also blaming me, etc. etc. Well, he is at liberty to say what he wants. So I would like to point out certain

factors. There are important mine safety provisions under the Mines Act and regulations, functions of the Director General of Mine Safety, and his organisation consisting of Deputy Directors General, Regional Directors and Inspectors, and so on. They make periodical inspection and ensure that the provisions of the Indian Mines Act and the regulations made thereunder are implemented in each mine. Before opening any new mine or a new district in an existing mine, permission of DGMS is sought; a new mine or a new district in an existing mine can be opened only with his permission. So it is not a question of slaughtering...

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Murder.

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: Mining is a hazardous profession. Now, this has to be admitted. With the passage of time and advance of science and technology...

SHRI KALYAN ROY: He is not answering my specific questions. I asked specific questions. Why does he talk about Mines Department?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: First let him reply.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: I asked a specific question about the Labour Ministry's report...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: But allow him to reply. He cannot go into all the details. And then, if you don't want to listen to his reply, then you can go ahead. You don't listen to his reply first. Let him reply. He has not finished yet.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: I asked a specific question to which there is no answer from him...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If you go on interrupting him, how can he answer any question?

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: With the passage of time and with the advance in science and technology and the mechanism

and all that, the hazards have obviously become less and less. Now, the question is to what extent we can totally eliminate these hazards...

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Did I ask that question? Mr. Deputy Chairman, tell me, did I ask that question? My specific question was...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Why don't you listen to him completely?

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: The hazards may not be totally eliminated unless the mines can be completely mechanised. Unfortunately in our country it has not been possible today. It is a matter of investment, it is a matter of time. We are moving in that process and in due course total mechanisation will take place...

SHRI KALYAN ROY: I am sorry, Sir; the facts state otherwise. On 14th December, 1981 it was stated that mechanisation...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Kalyan Roy, please don't interrupt him like this time and again. I am sorry, I cannot allow this to go on...

SHRI KALYAN ROY: But what is he answering? He is not answering my specific question...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no, please. Don't record what Mr. Kalyan Roy says. Please sit down, Mr. Kalyan Roy.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: **

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: This will not go on record. This cannot go on. If you do not agree with the Minister, you note down and discuss with him. You cannot disturb him when he replies.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: **

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: I did not disturb him. He should not disturb me.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Have some patience.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: I have enough patience.

AN HON. MEMBER: Not at all.

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: With regard to safety measures, so far as Coal India is concerned...

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Did I ask a single question about safety measures? What he is replying?

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: ...I would like to point out, Mr. Deputy Chairman, there is a Safety Board. The Safety Board also monitors the various measures with regard to safety of the coal miners. I am not going into details of the composition and contribution of the Safety Board.

There is another thing. There is a Committee on Safety in Coal Mines. Mr. Deputy Chairman, this is a broad-based Committee appointed by the Government which submitted its report in August 1979. There have been several recommendations and out of those several recommendations fifteen recommendations have been implemented. With regard to some other recommendations I am not going to name them because that will take only the time of the House. Only one thing I would like to mention. This is about one recommendation, namely, fatality rate, per million tonne of coal raised, of 2 should be achieved by 1983 and 1 by 1992. This we are trying to achieve for 1992.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: How?

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: I can give you figures to indicate how we have achieved that. Accident rate should be calculated per 3,00,000 man-shifts worked as recommended by the ILO in addition to 1,000 persons employed and per million tonnes of output. Serious

[Shri A. B. A. Ghani Khan Chaudhuri]

injury rate per 1,000 persons employed should be brought down to 3.5 by 1980 and 3 by 1987 and that the rate per million tonnes of output to be 15 by 1980. This is the recommendation of the Committee...

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR (Madhya Pradesh): There is some contradiction.

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: ...on Safety in Coal Mines. They have given some other recommendations and we are trying to implement them.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: On a point of order. My name is not there. I would like to submit to you that when a pointed question is raised about a contradiction in two official reports of two Ministries, let the hon. Minister say which one is correct. The House is entitled to know that.

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: I will certainly come to that. One by one let me finish. I will reply in my own way and as I understand things. If you dictate to me, then I am sorry I will not be able to reply.

There are 43 other major recommendations. Out of these, we are trying to implement some, but we have not been able to implement all.

And, Sir, there are other eight recommendations relating to the other agencies like the Labour Department and some relate to the Education Department and some relate to the Department of Electronics and some relate to the Department of Mines and others. This is being looked into by the other agencies; it is not our responsibility.

Then, Sir, with regard to the charge that in 1982, till now, the number of persons involved, fatal, is 57, I cannot give and I cannot say, Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, about what the Labour Department has given. But Coal India has given the figure and that figure is

with me and, unfortunately, that figure does not tally. If the honourable Member sends it to me, I will certainly compare and let him know where the discrepancy is and why that discrepancy is.

श्री लाडली मोहन निगम (मध्य प्रदेश):

बिना पढ़े हो रिपोर्ट छपवा देते हैं।

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: Then, about the accident rate per million tonne of output, it is 1.13 and serious injuries 0.43. So, you will see that in 1981, it is 140 fatal and 994 serious injuries. According to our figure, according to production year by year, the accidents are declining and are not increasing. But, Sir, by that there is nothing to rejoice and by that I do not mean that we should take full credit. We should take the full credit only when we would be able to mechanise the whole thing and the fatal accidents come down to zero, almost to zero.

Then, Sir, with regard to the other charge that Mr. Wadhwa visited this spot and he was gheraoed by an angry mob and all that, I asked Mr. Wadhwa and he said, "Nothing like that has happened." But, Sir, if it happens, there is nothing unnatural in it because, after all, so many people have lost their lives and the Chairman, Coal India, must be given congratulations and credit because, at the very first moment, I told him over the telephone, "I am preoccupied with Parliament and I cannot visit; so, you go and visit", and he did go and visited the place. So, this is the state of affairs.

Then, Sir, he wanted some other clarification.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: I asked a specific question: In how many mines the timber props, which are the source of accidents, have been replaced by steel props as per the recommendations of the Safety Committee? He has not answered that specific question of mine

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: That is the recommendation of the Safety Committee. We have not been able to do that, as the honourable Member has said, and we have not been able to implement that everywhere.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: In how many mines have you been able to do it?

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: That figure is not with me; I cannot give that figure now.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Sir, because of these timber props, the roofs are falling and are causing accidents. But you are not implementing that recommendation. You will never implement those recommendations. Those people who supply timber are in league with you and your officers and they get Rs. 101 crores every year by supplying you defective timber. (Interruptions). Sir, this has not been replied to. The Labour Ministry has given the figures. There are 183 injuries.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He has said about it.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: He has not replied at all.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He has said about it and also said that you can send the figures to him.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: I will be satisfied if he gives only the figure of fatal accidents.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He has given the figures.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: The Labour Ministry has given the figures in detail. (Interruptions). The Labour Ministry has given them: 160 people killed in 1980 and 183 in 1981. What is his figure. Sir? (Interruptions). What is your figure?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He has already told you.

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: One minute, Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir. Because of the seriousness of the situation, a court of inquiry has been instituted. Never in the entire history of Coal India has a retired or a sitting High Court Judge presided over a court of inquiry. But, because of the seriousness, because some new points might be brought in, this has been done. If we are to be blamed, certainly we will take rectifying measures and implement them and I assure the House that whatever is the finding of that court of inquiry, we will implement it.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Another false statement. (Interruptions) Why should he be allowed? (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is not a discussion between you and the Minister. Others are also there. Mr. Malik. (Interruptions)

SHRI KALYAN ROY: But why... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: This will not be recorded. (Interruptions) Don't record Mr. Kalyan Roy.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: **

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Malik will go on record. (Interruptions)

श्री सत्यपाल मलिक (उत्तर प्रदेश) : मान्यवर, यह बहुत दूर तक सच है कि राज्य सभा विलाप सभा में तबदील हो रही है और हफ्ते में एक या दो दिन हम इस तरह की मौतों की चर्चा करते हैं। आगे के लिये आश्वासन देते हैं लेकिन बदलता कुछ नहीं है। मैं सहमत हूँ कल्याण राय जी से कि यह जो दुर्घटनाएँ हैं, यह दैवी दुर्घटनाएँ नहीं हैं। यह स्वतः हैं। जब मैं यह बात कहता हूँ मान्यवर, माननीय मंत्री जी को मैं बताना चाहता हूँ कि स्टेट्समैन का खबर है कि 15

**Not recorded.

[श्री सत्यपाल मलिक]

जुलाई की सेंट्रल कोल फील्ड के जो जनरल मैनेजर माईस सेफ्टी, मिस्टर बोस है उन्होंने इस इलाके को विजिट किया था उन्होंने यह बात वहाँ लिख कर लगा दी थी कि यह प्रोहिबिटेड एरिया है नये सिरे से कोई खुदाई नहीं करें। वहाँ अफसरों के सामने और अखबार वालों के सामने मजदूर जो बचे है महतो ब्रदर्स उन्होंने दोनों ने इस बात की गवाही दी कि जो सरकार वहाँ मारा गया है ए० के० श्रीवास्तव, उसने जबरन हम लोगों को वहाँ पर खुदाई करने के लिये भेजा। तो इस तरह के मामले है। यह साफ जाहिर करते हैं कि लापरवाही से, बदइत-जामी के कारण लोगों की हत्याएं होती हैं जो एक तरह से हमारे और आपके द्वारा किये गये कार्य है। जब मैं यह बात कहता हूँ मान्यवर, देखिये पिछले ब्यान में डायरेक्टर जनरल आफ माईस सेफ्टी के जो आंकड़े हैं वे बताते है कि 183 लोग मारे गये, 48 को गंभीर चोटें आई, 164 फीटल एक्सीडेंट्स में। इसके अलावा 1884 एक्सीडेंट्स हुए जिनमें 1926 लोगों को चोटें आई, यह स्थिति हमारी खानों की है। इसके अलावा गैर-कानूनी तरीके से कोयला खनन होता है, इन जगहों पर जो लोग मरते हैं उनके आंकड़े नहीं है। मान्यवर, मैं मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि हिन्दुस्तान की सरकार ने पोलैंड के एक्सपर्ट्स की टीम हिन्दुस्तान की कोयला खानों की सुरक्षा करने की बाबत इन्क्वायरी कमेटी बैठाई थी। उस इन्क्वायरी कमेटी ने 6 साल का पूरा रिकार्ड लेने के बाद जो रिपोर्ट दी है उसकी क्या सिफारिशें हैं, आप उन सिफारिशों को कहां तक लागू करने वाले हैं। मेरी जानकारी के अनुसार मान्यवर, उस कमेटी ने हिन्दुस्तान के अन्दर जो कोयला खानें है उनमें सुरक्षा स्थिति को बहुत खराब बताया और कोल इंडिया का

जो यह दावा है कि हम कैपेसिटी यूटी-लाइजेशन 95 प्रतिशत कर रहे हैं इस पर भी उन्होंने शंका जाहिर की उन्होंने कहा कि 60 प्रतिशत के करीब यह है। जो कोयला खोदने के तरीके हैं उनको आधुनिक करने के बारे में सिफारिशें दीं लेकिन मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहूंगा कि इस कमेटी की वास्तविक सिफारिशें क्या हैं और उनको आप कितनी दूर तक लागू करने वाले हैं। जो अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय श्रम संगठन हैं उसने हिन्दुस्तान में कोयला खानों की जो स्थिति है उसके ऊपर कमेंट दिया है कि बहुत खराब स्थिति है और करीब सिर्फ एक फीसदी सीरियस एक्सीडेंट्स ऐसे है जिनमें डायरेक्टर जनरल माईस सेफ्टी के लोग जाकर इन्क्वायरी करते है, यह इंटरनेशनल लेबर आर्गनाइजेशन का कहना है। यह जो आपकी तरफ से कमेटीयां बैठती हैं इन्क्वायरी करने के लिये मैं सिर्फ एक घटना आपको बताना चाहता हूँ। केसरगढ़ कोलियरी की जो रिपोर्ट आई है उसमें भारत कोकिंग कोल जो सरकारी संस्था है उसके खिलाफ यह कमेंट किया गया है कि हम जब इन्क्वायरी करते है वहाँ पर जो तथ्य हमको मिलने चाहिये वे नहीं मिलते। इसलिये सारी इन्क्वायरी बेमतलब हो जाती है। मेरा दूसरा प्रश्न यह है कि यह सारे अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय संगठन, आपकी कमेटीज आफ इन्क्वायरीज हैं यह सब कहते हैं उसको देखते हुए सिफारिशें बार-बार की गई है, आप, जो पुराने तरीके कोयला खनन के हैं, उनके आधुनिकीकरण के लिये क्या कर रहे हैं। इसके अलावा लांग-वैल माइनिंग की जो सिफारिश की गई है उसको लागू करने के लिये आपने किन-किन खानों में लागू की है और कहां-कहां आप करने जा रहे है। दूसरा मान्यवर, एक बहुत खतरनाक स्थिति यह है मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि माननीय मंत्री जी कितनी ऐसी बड़ी कोयला खानें हैं जहां पर कोयला खानों से बड़े

अस्पताल और रेस्क्यू सेंटर कितने किलोमीटर की दूरी पर हैं। अंतर्राष्ट्रीय स्टैंडर्ड हैं कि 40 किलोमीटर की दूरी पर होना चाहिये लेकिन यहां पर पांच सौ किलोमीटर की दूरी तक रेस्क्यू आपरेशन के लिये कोई स्टेशन और बड़ा अस्पताल नहीं है। मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि कितनी कोयला खानों के पास रेस्क्यू स्टेशन 40 किलोमीटर की दूरी में हैं और कितनी में नहीं हैं? और आखिरी जो मान्यवर, मेरा प्रश्न है वह मैं माननीय मंत्री जी में जानना चाहता हूं कि जो 1981 को पांच मार्च को आपने राज्य सभा में श्री कल्याण राय साहब के एक सवाल का जवाब दिया है उसमें आपने फॉरिस्त दी है कि ये ये दुर्घटना हुई; उसमें इतने इतने लोग मरे, ये ये वायोलेशन थे और ये ये अफसर उसके लिये जिम्मेदार पाये गये, ज्यादातर मामलों में मैनेजर, सेफ्टी अफसर, डिप्टी मैनेजर वगैरह वगैरह दोषी पाये गये, लेकिन सारे मामलों में बिना नागा आपने लिखा है कि वार्निंग दे दी गयी और वार्निंग देकर छोड़ दिया गया, परन्तु जो नीचे के तबके के थे उनको सजा दी तो मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि सन् 1981 में जितने बड़े बड़े एक्सीडेंट हुए उनकी जांच के बाद ये जो बड़े बड़े अफसर दोषी पाये गये इसमें कितनों के खिलाफ वार्निंग के अलावा आपने इक्वायरी की?

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, the hon. Member has said that the DGMS had prohibited working in the mine where the accident took place. According to our information it is not correct. Unless the Inquiry Committee's report is published and I place it before the House I cannot say anything definitely. But so far as my information goes, it is not correct. The D.G.M.S. had given permission to work this mine. (Interruptions).

SHRI LADLI MOHAN NIGAM: Sir, I have a straight question to ask, namely, whether a board was put up there that this is a dangerous mine.

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: I have said that there is nothing like that. So far as the departmental information is concerned, I cannot vouchsafe from that. I am saying all this from the record that I have got. So far I have not been to the site and the inquiry is going to be held and they have also instituted a departmental inquiry. Only after all these things come to me can I give the details. This is the first hand information that I have got.

श्री लडली मोहन निगम : आप इसका फैसला तो कीजिये। जो सूचना दी गयी है इस सूचना की खातिर तो करेंगे? यह सूचना उनको देंगे ना... (व्यवधान)

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: The news that appeared in the newspapers is being contradicted by the department and the department is saying that it is not correct and that the mine had been working regularly from 1st July onwards and producing approximately 200 tonnes per day. On the day of the accident the production was only 63 tonnes before the accident took place. The hon. Member has said that the workers had protested in writing that the mine was unsafe. No such protest was made. Actually they were showing me a letter written by some workers. Nothing like that is in that letter. No such protest was made by the workers in writing to the mine manager or to any other authority.

श्री सत्यपाल मलिक : मेम्बरों के सामने गवाही दी है, उन लोगों ने जो बचे हैं दुर्घटना में।

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: Then another question asked was that the workers were pushed to work in the danger zone against their will. The supervisor, mining sirdar, himself accompanied the workers to the working place and was with them. In fact, the supervisor himself died in the accident. The supervisor had declared the working site as safe. (Interruptions). As I have already said the mine was producing about 200 tonnes per day. In regard to the illegal mining, the point that you have raised, in some of the coal mines, illegal mining is going on. We are appealing to the State Government to stop it. For example, in the Central Coalfields and in the E.C.L. it is reduced to a great extent but we have not been able to eliminate it totally. This is all that you wanted to know.

श्री सत्यपाल मलिक : जो पोलैण्ड की एक्सपर्ट कमेटी थी ?

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: I do not have this information with me and I do not know about the Polish Experts report. I will look into that.

SHRI SHRIDHAR WASUDEO DHABE (Maharashtra): Sir, it has been reported in *Indian Express* of 18th July about this colliery accident and it says: "132 miners were inside the colliery when the roof collapsed. However, 32 of them managed to escape unhurt according to reports available here till Friday night." This was the report in the press which they have not contradicted. There were 132 miners, not 20. I would like to know what happened to the other miners who were working in the mines when the roof collapsed, whether they were rescued or not.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He said 16 persons died.

SHRI SHRIDHAR WASUDEO DHABE: And 4 injured, but the report says that there were 132 miners

working there when the roof collapsed. The statement is only restricted to the 4 injured and 16 died. What does it mean? What happened to remaining about 110 miners?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He said there were 50 miners who were engaged.

SHRI SHRIDHAR WASUDEO DHABE: Therefore, there is a contradiction in the figures pointed out by him and the press report, and I am pointing out this contradiction. You should allow us to develop our question.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You are only saying what he has already stated. All right; put the next question now.

SHRI SHRIDHAR WASUDEO DHABE: I am putting it; but you kindly don't interrupt.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am not interrupting; but he has replied it.

SHRI SHRIDHAR WASUDEO DHABE: If you say the reply is correct, we, having nothing to ask them, I have only to ask a clarification which is very material. Secondly, I would like to know whether any Safety Officers are appointed in that mine whose job is to see that safety regulations are adhered to, and whether a diary was maintained so that the workers would know whether the roof was all right, or damaged or was likely to fall, and when did the Safety Officers and the management come to know about the dangerous condition of the roof and at what time, and whether it was a sudden collapse. This is a very material question because safety regulations are involved.

Thirdly, I would like to know whether the Minister has visited the site. I can understand that he could not visit; but we have got 3 Ministers; there are two State Ministers and it

is very unfortunate that such an accident takes place and it is taken callously and ignored by the Ministers. When there is a railway accident, the Railway Minister visits the site. This was such a serious accident after Chasnala. Why could not a Minister visit the place? At least that would have expedited the whole enquiry. Then, the statement is very peculiar. This is how the management avoids the reports of the safety conferences. I was on the Sillewart Inquiry Committee and the officers who had been found guilty were promoted. One Mr. Balram was appointed Adviser in the National Thermal Corporation and he is advising on construction work. Under the Mines Act, there is provision that DGMS has to make a preliminary enquiry and submit his report before the court of inquiry. But now another committee has been appointed. What for? The statement says that the Chairman has appointed a Board of Inquiry. What is this Board of Inquiry? There is a statutory provision for a court of inquiry to be preceded by the enquiry by DGMS. I would like to know it. How are they avoiding safety regulations and why should a separate Board of Inquiry be appointed when a retired High Court Judge is going to decide in a court of inquiry? There-

1 P.M. fore, Sir, this is how the management is acting. I would like to say one last word. This is how they are behaving, in regard to the Court of Inquiry. I would like to give an example. Last time, a reply was given in this House. This was on 25th July, 1980. This was Unstarred Question No. 101. This was answered by the then Labour Minister, Shri Anjiah. What is the reply which has been given? The Department says that they are appointing a Court of Enquiry. But, Sir, kindly see the reply which has been given here. It says:

"Following an accident in the Industry Colliery under the BCCL in April, 1979, the Central Government had appointed a Court of Enquiry under regulation 25 to determine the fitness of the mana-

gers and surveyor of the colliery to continue to hold their certificates.

The enquiry has not been withdrawn. Following an assurance from the management to take suitable action against the officers held responsible for the accident, the enquiry was discontinued. As no suitable action was taken by the management against the officers, it was subsequently decided to pursue the matter with the Court of Enquiry."

On an assurance from the management, the enquiry is withdrawn. Then, when no action is taken against the officers by the management, it is decided to pursue the matter with the Court of Enquiry. This is how the management is hoodwinking in relation to the safety regulations. Hence, I would like to know, what is the basis of appointing a Board of Enquiry when the Court of Enquiry is appointed statutorily?

Finally, I would like to say that a Joint Select Committee was appointed in 1973, to amend the Mines Act, Mr. A. P. Sharma, now Minister, was the Chairman. I had also appeared before that Committee. This Committee had made very wide and important recommendations about safety measures and in relation to amendments to be made to the Mines Act. May I know from the Minister whether he will take steps to bring forward a Bill, so that up to date amendments can be made for the safety of the workers and the safety of the workers can be guaranteed?

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: Mr. Deputy Chairman. Sir, the correct position is that 132 miners were working in the shift. However, in the place where the accident occurred, there were only 50 miners.

SHRI SHRIDHAR WASUDEO DHABE: What about the report which says that there were 132 miners?

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: They were in the other inclinations and not on this. Here, there were only 50 workers. Out of this, 30 came out safely, sixteen were killed and four were injured. The Board of Enquiry is a departmental enquiry. Now, when we make...

SHRI SHRIDHAR WASUDEO DHABE: How can it be?

SHRI KALYAN ROY: How can the Court of Enquiry be a departmental enquiry? (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SHRIDHAR WASUDEO DHABE: This is how the management is avoiding the regulations and this is against the interests of the workers. This Board of Enquiry should be withdrawn. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: I thought, this will be able to inspire enough confidence in the minds of the miners. If this is done by a High Court Judge, he will be impartial and he will be able to go deep into the matter. Now, I am not making any reflections here. This is just my mental attitude. I thought, they will be able to bring more facts before us so that suitable action can be taken. This is a Court of Enquiry presided over by the...

SHRI SHRIDHAR WASUDEO DHABE: I have not asked that question. I welcome the fact that you have appointed a Court of Enquiry to be presided over by a retired High Court Judge. But you are also appointing a departmental committee, not a Court of Enquiry. How can there be a Board of Enquiry, when the Court of Enquiry is appointed statutorily? You should withdraw this committee.

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: This will cease to function as soon as the Court of Enquiry starts functioning.

In regard to the Mines Act, this has to be done by the Ministry of Labour,

SHRI SHRIDHAR WASUDEO DHABE: You must recommend, because safety measures are involved.

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: I will talk to them. But this has to be done by them. Even then, I will certainly talk to them on this.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Calling Attention will continue after lunch.

सदन की कार्यवाही 2 बजे तक के लिये स्थगित की जाती है।

The House then adjourned for lunch at four minutes past one of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at three minutes past two of the clock. Mr. Deputy Chairman in the Chair.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Shiva Chandra Jha.

SHRI SHRIDHAR WASUDEO DHABE: Sir, I had asked about the Safety Officer, but no reply was given whether there was any Safety Officer at the mine.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Have you anything to say about the Safety Officer? All right, in reply to Mr. Jha's questions, he will say this.

श्री शिव चन्द्र झा (बिहार) :
उपसभापति जी, यह कहना गलत नहीं होगा यदि कहा जाये कि नरक यदि कहीं देखना है अपनी आँखों से तो कोल माइन्स में देखा जा सकता है, खदानों को देखा जा सकता है। हकीकत में नरक की फिजा इन खानों में है जिस रूप में मजदूरों का शोषण होता है। वहाँ भ्रष्टाचार है, ठकेदारों का बोलबाला है। इन सबों को देखने से साफ है कि

नरक की दुनिया वहां बसी हुई है। टोपा कोलियरी में यह प्लान्ड मर्डर है। यह मजदूर जो मारे गये खदान में छत को जबरदस्ती ऐसे इलाके में भेज दिया गया जिस को एक दिन पहले 15 तारीख को जांच करके प्रोहिबिटेड जोन बना दिया गया था। मंत्री जी ने खंडन किया, कहा कि मैं खंडन करता हूं। यह तो जब इनक्वायरी रिपोर्ट आयेगी तो साफ हो जायेगा कि हकीकत क्या है, लेकिन यह बात अखबारों में आयी है प्रोहिबिटेड जोन में उन लोगों को धकेला गया। किस के आदेश पर ऐसा किया गया? मंत्री महोदय ने जैसा कहा, यह आर्डरनी है कि जो सरदार श्रीवास्तव था वह भी खत्म हो गया। बड़े विरोधाभास वाली परिस्थिति है कि आर्डर पर हुआ और आर्डर देने वाला भी साफ हो गया। ये सब बातें आयेगी, लेकिन एक बात नहीं साफ हो सकी। क्या यह बात सही नहीं है—मेरा सवाल बड़ा टु दो प्वाइन्ट है—कि 1975 में इसी तरह की घटना हुई थी? यह मेरे पास अखबार है टाइम्स आफ इंडिया 8 जुलाई का उस में ठीक इसी तरह की घटना के बारे में है पेज 7 कालम 1 पर। 1975 के बाद ऐसी कितनी घटनाएं हुई हैं वहां पर इस खान में और दूसरी खानों में और उन को रोकने के लिए आप ने कौनसा कदम उठाया है खास कर टोपा कोलियरी में? क्योंकि यह सवाल परटीनेंट हो जाता है इसलिए कि वहां पहले भी ऐसी घटना हो चुकी है और फिर दुबारा यह घटना हुई है। तो इस से साफ हो जाता है कि वहां के अफसरों ने सुरक्षा के लिए कोई काम नहीं किया।

दूसरा सवाल है कि सेफटी के बारे में बहुत सी रिपोर्ट्स हैं जिन को आप इम्प्लीमेंट कर रहे हैं। यह बताया गया है।

फिर इंटरनेशनल स्टैंडर्स भी बताया गया कि उस का यह मापदंड है कि इतने सीमित हिस्से पर चिकित्सा की सुविधा और प्रबंध होगा, वगैरह, वगैरह। तो इन सब बातों को मद्दे नजर रखते हुए आप का जो माइन्स सेफटी ऐक्ट है उस में आप संशोधन करने का विचार रखते हैं या नहीं इन सारी बातों को कॉम्प्रेहेंसिव रूप में उस में लाने के लिए? मैं मान सकता हूं कि प्रिवेशन तो भगवान के भरोसे होता है लेकिन जहां तक कानून का सवाल है वह कॉम्प्रेहेंसिव होना चाहिए और हमारा माइन्स सेफटी ऐक्ट पूरा हो इन सब बातों को मद्दे नजर रखते हुए। तो क्या आप उस में संशोधन करने जा रहे हैं?

तीसरे, मंत्री महोदय ने जवाब दिया कि हम माइन्स का माडर्नाइजेशन करने जा रहे हैं। हमारी 'माइन्स' फुल्ल मेकेनाइज्ड नहीं हैं। उन के काम करने वालों के लिये जो हथियार वगैरह चाहिए वे आधुनिक स्टैंडर्ड के मुताबिक नहीं हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि वह हम कर रहे हैं। तो क्या इसके लिये आप की कोई टाइम लिमिट है कि यदि यह काम छठी योजना में न किया जा सके तो इस को आप सातवीं या आठवीं योजना में पूरा कर लेंगे। कब तक आप उन को पूरी तरह माडर्नाइज कर लेंगे? दो साल बाद, चार साल बाद क्या सब ठीक हो जायगा यह बात आप साफ तौर से बतायें।

उपसभापति महोदय, इसी से संबंधित सवाल है कि इस तरह की घटनायें मध्य प्रदेश में, वेस्टर्न कोलफील्ड्स में हुई हैं और हो रही हैं और वहां मजदूरों का शोषण हो रहा है। वहां प्रसाद नाम का एक अफसर है और पिछले 15 साल से वह वहां ही कायम है। वह अफसर 5 हजार से ले कर 15 हजार रुपये तक

[श्री शिव चन्द्र झा]

धूम लेकर लोगों को नौकरी पर बहाल करता है और इससे उसे क्या मिलता होगा इस का आप हिसाब लगा लें। दादू नाम के व्यक्ति का सारा केस एक बहाना का बीकली है उस में आ गया है। वहां कई लोग मिल कर बंगलिया कर लिये और उस के नाम पर दूसरे को बहाल कर दिया। इस के अलावा वहां पर एक विधवा है। नाम है भगवती। उस को बहाल करने के लिए हजारों रुपए लिये गये। तो यह सारी धांधली वेस्टर्न कोलियरी में चल रही है। वहां मजदूरों का शोषण होता है और उन को बड़े पैमाने पर मत्ताया जा रहा है और इस तरह का भ्रष्टाचार वहां जारी है। उन के बीच एग्जीमेंट भी होते हैं और जब मजदूर बोलते हैं तो उन को गिट्टेच कर दिया जाता है। उन को नौकरी से हटा दिया जाता है। अभी भी वहां दस, पन्द्रह मजदूर हटाये गये हैं। उस के लिए एग्जीमेंट हुआ था। तो यह मेरा सवाल है यह जो नरक का जीवन वहां बना हुआ है उस को कम से कम मानव की दुनिया में उतारने के लिए आप कौन-कौन से कदम उठा रहे हैं यह आप साफ तौर से बतायें।

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, we do not have details of the alleged accident in 1975. Whether it is the same mine or not, actually I do not know. Now, about the area where the accident occurred, it was not a prohibited area. This is a completely wrong concept, wrong idea. The note of the Department which I have got says that it is not a prohibited area as appeared in some of the newspapers. According to the

information we have been given by the DGMS, there was nothing unusual there. But the accident has happened and I think we should wait till the inquiry reveals the truth. Now with regard to mechanisation...

SHRI SHIVA CHANDRA JHA: Mines Safety Act.

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, as I have said, 15 recommendations of the Safety Committee have been implemented and 43 recommendations are under implementation. Mechanisation or modernisation is covered under those 43 major recommendations. But it is a long process. I cannot just spell out how much time it would take, whether it would be done in the Sixth Five-Year Plan or the Seventh Five-Year Plan.

श्री शिव चन्द्र झा : श्रीमन्, पर्स-पेक्टिव प्लानिंग में काम करते हैं तो 15 साल की रूपरेखा आप बनाते हैं कि नहीं? (व्यवधान)

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: But an attempt is being made to do it as quickly as possible. It is a question of investment; the question of technical knowledge, know-how is also there. All those things are there. Now, with regard to the question of doing away with the services of the contractors' labourers and others, I am making special efforts on that thing. Actually, we had passed an order in the Bharat Coking Coal that all this work has to be done departmentally. Departmentalisation is to be introduced. Now that is carrying of sand, carrying of coal, including civil works. The same method we will introduce in other coal areas also. But there is some difficulty because the department cannot own so many trucks in such a small period of time. One thousand or twelve hundred trucks are required by each company. We are trying to procure trucks and as soon as we are able to procure the trucks, we will try to do away with

the services of the contractors. I can assure the House, I can personally assure you, that I will do it quickly as possible.

श्री शिव चन्द्र झा : झगड़ा खान मध्य प्रदेश में, वैस्टर्न कोलफील्ड्स में घाघली हो रही है।... (व्यवधान)

श्री उपसभापति : वह दूसरा झगड़ा है, उसको यहां क्यों लाते हैं आप?

SHRI SHRIDHAR WASUDEO DHABE: He wants to know whether safety officers are being appointed in that mine where the accident took place.

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: Well, no mine can be operated without the DGMS's orders or inspection. This is the basic thing. So that must have been there. I have got the report that that was there. I am repeatedly saying that there was no prohibitory zone or anything like that.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Prof. Sourendra Bhattacharjee.

SHRI SHIVA CHANDRA JHA: Why did you not go there personally?

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE (West Bengal): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, various questions have been put to the Minister, but unfortunately the replies have not been as desired by the Members.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: There was no reply.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You put your own supplementaries.

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE: That is an under-statement perhaps. Now certain questions do arise. The Minister has referred to certain targets regarding safety. My specific point is about the system of

monitoring the safety measures existent in mines. Now, for example, this particular colliery, Topa Colliery, is a mining coalfield belt. That area is full of open air collieries with sprinkling of underground collieries. These overground collieries in many cases function without any proper authorization from the Government of India and perhaps adequate steps are not taken. So far as the underground collieries are concerned, and this particular colliery, I want to know whether there was any periodical checking on the timber working that was there, its condition. I know from my own experience of getting down that in some places the seeping of water that takes place serves as an indication of the condition of the timber working. I want to know whether such periodical checks were there; if not, who are responsible for it and whether in addition to the Manager and the Assistant Manager who have rightly been suspended, there are some others also coming into the picture from the side of the organisation, from the side of the Ministry, and whether the system of monitoring was introduced. At the same time, number two, there is the Directorate of Mines Safety. How far does the Directorate of Mines Safety keep a tab on such work? What is the periodicity? Are all the rules conformed to by the management? One particular difference from the earlier position must be kept in view. Earlier it was a private management. Now it is a state undertaking, it is a public undertaking. Is the Minister in a position to tell that the Government of India exercises all the requisite precautions or whether he will take steps to close down the colliery which is hazardous to life and limb?

You did not allow me even three minutes. The running commentary of interruptions puts us into great difficulty.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Do not worry. Now you have concluded. He will reply.

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I have replied to this question. The first thing is that before opening any new mines or the existing mines, the permission of the DGMS is sought. A new mine or a new pocket in the existing mine can be opened with his permission. The DGMS and his subordinate staff conduct the following functions:

Working conditions of any mines, ventilation, health, safety, welfare of workers, if considered necessary they keep a record of the mine laid down in the instructions of working, of any river banks, water courses, public roads and buildings.

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE: These are all on paper, Sir. Are they actually enforced? That is the point.

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: These are the DGMS's instructions, and they are followed.

There is another organisation, the Coal Mines Safety Committee. Its recommendations are that each company should have an Internal Safety Organisation, known as the ISO. By 1980, this, we have implemented. An Internal Safety Organisation with the General Manager as the head and four to six senior mines engineers, exists in each coal company headquarters, and they have to make a visit to these mines and give a report. Another recommendation is that each colliery should have a Superintendent of Mines and various Security Officers and it should have staff laboratories and facilities. All this we have implemented. Another recommendation is that each colliery should have a Safety Officer. This is also being implemented. From time to time instructions of ISO officials....

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE: All this infrastructure is there. Is it operating?

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: That is what I am saying, it is being done.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is being done, he says.

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: Continuously it is being implemented.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That will do. Mr. Nirmal Chatterjee.

SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE (West Bengal): How many minutes, Sir?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You will have five minutes.

SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE: Five minutes?

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE: Including interruptions or excluding them, Sir?

SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE: In reply to an earlier question, the hon. Minister denied that the workers had complained about it before the disaster took place as per the newspaper reports. Now, my question is very simple. Supposing the workers did complain, what actions would have been taken? Is there any procedure built into the system which takes into account any worker's refusal or complaint about any such disastrous conditions. Sir, I am raising this question for a very simple reason. For 16 lives. I will be speaking for five minutes. None of them are Members of Parliament, and these five minutes should be adequate.

You have also mentioned that after hearing the news, the top officials reached that place, and you have mentioned that it was a case of courage. I do not know, Sir, really. Sometimes it is callousness which permits them to appear on the spot of disaster.

Now you have also mentioned in your statement that the Manager and the Assistant Manager have been pena-

lised. I am somewhat surprised because in reply to an Unstarred Question by Mr. Kalyan Roy, who has spent his entire adult years in the coal mine area, several lists were given of the accidents which took place and the steps which were taken after the guilty were identified. In all such cases, it was seen that—I can mention one such case—those who were indicted....

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Which colliery?

SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE: Chindwa. The persons who were indicted included the Manager, the Safety Officer and the Mining Sardar. Would it surprise anybody here to know that only the Sardar was suspended and nothing else was done to others? I am just giving one example. Here my surmise is that if the Manager and the Assistant Manager have been suspended, the responsibility lies higher up because this is the culture which prevails in that sector. There must be some responsibility higher up whereby only the Manager and the Assistant Manager could be penalised.

On the question of safety measures being implemented, the Minister was kind enough to give an answer which appeared to him to be very positive. And what was his answer? The answer was that some steps are being implemented, some steps they are trying to implement and some other steps they have not implemented. Should I take it to mean that no steps have been implemented? That is my question. I put this question because the accidents are happening in quick succession. Only two months ago, on the 26th May, 1982, in the Krishnanagar colliery—there may not be prohibited areas, but I am told that there are prohibited categories of work where contract labour is banned—three persons died and they belonged to contract labour.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: As a result of whose fault?

SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE: Was that violation of work in the prohibited category? Now such things are happening when the Minister is busy implementing these safety recommendations, and accidents are taking place in quick succession, one two months ago and then another again on the 16th of this month. Now that is what leads us to ask questions to get answers which will satisfy us. These 16 miners are unnamed heroes in your Productivity Year. To satisfy the call of the Prime Minister, they have given their lives. And what we expect from the Minister in reply is not only a court of enquiry but implementation of steps which will really guarantee that these accidents are not going to happen, although production will increase. That is my question.

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, if really a worker complaints of lack of safety, the Manager takes that into account and takes necessary action. In this case, no written complaint was received by the Manager. This is so far as our information goes.

श्री लाडली मोहन निगम : ये लेबरर्स तो कंट्रेक्ट लेबरर्स के तहत आते हैं...
(व्यवधान)

उपसभापति महोदय आप भी फैसला कीजिए कि कैसा उत्तर दिया जा सकता है।

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him complete his reply.

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: The Manager and the Assistant Manager in this particular case were suspended because prima facie they were considered to be responsible. However, only after the enquiry can responsibility be finally fixed and then the wrong-doers obviously will be penalised. With regard to the other questions, in June 1980, Coal India Limited and the subsidiary companies were directed to institute

[Shri A. B. A. Ghani Khan Chaudhuri]

immediately, in the case of any fatal accident, the following action:

"To institute a preliminary departmental inquiry to be completed within one week; on the basis of the findings of the preliminary inquiry a decision should be taken for immediate suspension or transfer of officers... (Interruptions)... found responsible for the incident." That means, we are taking action, we have started taking action. Maybe, there are lapses here and there. If they are brought to our notice, we shall certainly take action.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Where there are any contractor's labourers involved...

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: Even in the case of contractor's labourers...

SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE: ... prosecutions of which 21 were convicted and the magnificent sum of Rs. 1405 was inflicted as penalty. This is the situation prevailing. Is this what you expect?

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: ...the same principle applies and as per our instructions today we do not encourage contractor's labourers. But even with regard to the contractor's labourers, the same principle applies.

श्री रामलखन प्रसाद गुप्त (बिहार):
उपसभापति महोदय, मंत्री जी ने इस सवाल को बहुत ही अहम बताया है और उन्होंने बहुत अफसोस भी जाहिर किया है परन्तु यह कितने घड़ियाली आंसू है कि 16 तारीख को घटना हुई, 17-18 को छुट्टी थी, पार्लियामेंट सेशन में नहीं था और यह कहकर वे वहां नहीं गये कि पार्लियामेंट का सेशन था। यहां तक कि अपने स्टेट मिनिस्टर जी कोल के इंचार्ज है श्री मिश्रा, उनको भी नहीं भेजा। इसमें यह साबित होता है कि यह इसको कितना आसानी

से ले रहे हैं और इसको कोई महत्व नहीं देते हैं और यही कारण है कि आज ये जितना जवाब दे रहे हैं आफिसरों द्वारा भेजे जाने वाले पर्चों के ऊपर दे रहे हैं। कौन प्रोहिबिटेड एरिया, कौन नहीं है, कैसी खान है, क्या है इसके बारे में उन्होंने के पर्ची के आधार पर बता रहे हैं बहुत अफसोस है कि कालिग अटेंशन होने के बाद भी एक रोज के लिये भी नहीं गये कि हम देखकर आये ताकि उसका हम ठीक से जवाब दे सकें। पार्लियामेंट 17-18 को बन्द रही पर इसके बावजूद भी आप या आपके दूसरे मिनिस्टर वहां क्यों नहीं गये यह मेरा पहला प्रश्न है।

दूसरा सवाल मेरा यह है कि वे कहते हैं कि कोई 16 लोग मरे हैं। मैं पूछना चाहता हूं कि यह शिफ्ट 9 बजे से 3 बजे तक थी और घटना होती है 2.45 पर, तो उस शिफ्ट में कौन लोग थे जो काम कर रहे थे?

श्री उपसभापति : जवाब दे दिया है इसका।

श्री रामलखन प्रसाद गुप्त : वहां जितनी भी डबरी थी सबको हटाया नहीं गया इस लिये कैसे कह सकते हैं कि ये डेड बाडी...

श्री उपसभापति : जवाब दिया है इन्होंने।

श्री रामलखन प्रसाद गुप्त : ...जब कि ट्रेड यूनियन लीडरों ने साफ कहा है कि उसमें कुछ कोजुअल वर्कर्स होते हैं जो जाते हैं और जिनकी हाजिरी नहीं होती है। तो इस विषय में इनका क्या कहना है?

तीसरा प्रश्न मेरा यह है कि जो रेस्क्यू आपरेशन हुआ तो जो रेस्क्यू आपरेशन के इंचार्ज हैं वह कितने बजे आये और उन्होंने क्या किया। क्योंकि अखबारों में जो आया था उसके आधार पर इन्होंने अपना बयान पढ़ दिया। जितना स्टेटसमैन ने लिखा है उस नारे बयान का जवाब पहले से आफिसरों ने तैयार कर दिया और उन सब का इन्होंने जवाब दे दिया और वही पढ़ दिया और उनके सभी एक-एक प्वाइंट का बिना पूछे ही जवाब दे दिया। जो यह रेस्क्यू आपरेशन आया तो यह कब आया और उसने क्या किया उससे यह पता लगेगा कि वास्तविकता क्या है। अखबार में यह आया है कि माइंस वालों ने खुद आपरेशन किया। इसलिए मुझे लगता है कि शायद ये रेस्क्यू आपरेशन भी नहीं कर सके।

अन्त में मेरा सवाल है कि ये कहते हैं कि प्रोहिबिटेड एरिया नहीं था लेकिन सभी अखबारों का कहना है कि यह प्रोहिबिटेड एरिया था, और यह भी क्लियर और साफ साफ लिखा अखबारों ने लिखा है कि एस० एन० सहाय, कोयलरी मैनेजर और आर० एन० सिंह, ऐक्टिंग प्रोजेक्ट आफिसर इन्होंने कहा है कि इसमें स्पोट था, खम्भों और पिलर्स का सपोट था। लेकिन जो सर्वेडवर्स हैं, जो बचे हैं उन्होंने कहा है कि बिल्कुल इसमें सपोट नहीं था। तो महोदय, खानों में हमने देखा है, तो-तीन नई, साइंटिफिक खानों में हमने देखा है 3 हजार फीट भीतर जाकर... और पुरानी कुछ खानें भी हैं। यह तो होता है कि जो इसके पिलर्स छाड़े जाते हैं या टनल निकाले जाते हैं उसमें से अधिक से अधिक कोयला कैसे निकाला जाए इसको यह इच्छा रहती है इस इच्छा से चाहे जो भी अधिकारी हो वहां पर या उसके ठेकेदार हों उन्होंने किया हो लेकिन यह

बात सही है कि सर्वाइवर्स कहते हैं कि कोई रूफ नहीं था लेकिन यह कहते हैं कि वह प्रोटेक्टिड एरिया भी नहीं था उसके अन्दर पिलर्स भी थे। मैंने जो यह तीन बातें पूरी हैं उनका जवाब मंत्री जी दें।

SHRI NAND KISHORE BHATT (Madhya Pradesh): It is really very sad that we are having series of accidents in our mines. I do concede that there is some awareness of the seriousness of the situation, but the fact remains that there are certain obligations on the part of the officials to see that the rules and regulations pertaining to safety are not violated. It is incumbent on the part of management where extraction or reduction of pillars are going on before commencement of such operation for securing roof and sides of the working frame, systematic timbering rules in the Form as specified in the Third Schedule and submit a copy to the Joint Director of Mines Safety who approves after due modification, addition, alteration, which he may think fit. The systematic timbering rule is the approved rule for application for the mines. In this background, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether it is true that in 2-D incline of Topa Colliery where the accident has taken place systematic timbering rule as was stipulated in the permission of Mines Department was not followed and adequate roof support was not visible in the depillaring face where the accident took place? Is it also true that the preliminary enquiry has proved that the mine officials were negligent and guilty of violating safety rules for which they have been placed under suspension?

I would also like to know whether the targets of coal production for the mine are raised without keeping in view the capacity of the mine and the safety aspect of production with the result the production managers are

[Shri Nand Kishore Bhatt]

forced to go for more and more production and the safety aspects are neglected.

I would like to have a categorical assurance from the hon. Minister that safety measures will be observed as firmly as possible and where there are cases of negligence, strict action will be taken against those found guilty. After all it is a matter of human life and, therefore, all possible and maximum care has got to be taken.

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: To most of these points I have already replied. It is true that we are giving much importance to production in this productivity year. But that does not mean that we are neglecting safety aspects. We are doing our best to implement the recommendations of the DGMS. The roof was supported by timbering. The support was perhaps dislodged leading to the fall of roof. The precise cause will only be known after the enquiry. At this moment I cannot, therefore, give the precise cause, but this may be one of the reasons.

SHRI SADASHIV BAGAITKAR (Maharashtra): Sir, on a point of order. (Interruptions). Only one point, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Calling Attention Motion is over now.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Sir, he has not answered properly. (Interruptions).

SHRI SADASHIV BAGAITKAR: Sir, I am on a point of order. He has not answered a single question. (Interruptions).

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Sir, he is on a point of order and it has to be heard. (Interruptions).

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, Calling-Attention Motion is overhead

we shall take up the next item. There will be no Special Mentions today; Special Mentions will not be taken up today because the time is short and we have to proceed.

SHRI SADASHIV BAGAITKAR: Sir, I shall just take half-a-minute only. (Interruptions).

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No. We will proceed with the Government Motion now.

SHRI SADASHIV BAGAITKAR: He has not given any reply to any of the points raised. (Interruptions). He has said that the Court of Inquiry is a departmental inquiry. (Interruptions).

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARTEJEE: Sir, what about Special Mentions?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Tomorrow.

SHRI SADASHIV BAGAITKAR: Sir, he has not replied to any of the points raised. We strongly protest against his totally unconvincing reply and assurance and we walk out on this. (Interruption).

SHRI KALYAN ROY: I am also walking out. (Interruptions).

SHRI SHRIDHAR WASUDEO DHABE: Sir, I am also walking out. (Interruptions).

SHRI RAM LAKHAN PRASAD GUPTA: Sir, I am also walking out. (Interruptions).

(At this stage, the hon. Members left the Chamber).

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, we shall take up the Government Motion. Yes, Mr. Laskar.