

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

(c) whether it is a fact that there has been no increase in the basic wages of the mines and employees in the coal industry since 1967?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI SUBODH HANSDA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The last increase in the basic wages of the miners and employees in the coal industry was based upon the recommendations of the Wage Board effective from August, 1967. From 15th November, 1973, an interim increase of Rs. 39 per month in the basic wages has been allowed as per decision of the Bi-partite Wage Negotiating Committee, which is considering the revised wage structure.

#### Labour contract system in coal mines

123. SHRI KALYAN ROY: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made so far to abolish labour contract system prevailing in the Bharat Coking Coal, Coal Mines Authority, National Coal Development Corporation and the mines belonging to Indian Iron and Steel Co.;

(b) the number of mines where overburden work, tub-repairing work etc. are still being carried on under the contract system and the number of workers engaged under the system and the names of the contractors; and

(c) the number of workers employed by ex-contractors and were later on absorbed?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI SUBODH HANSDA): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

#### Reimbursement of expenditure incurred on Pakistani POWs

124. SHRIMATI KUMUDBEN MANISHANKAR JOSHI:

SHRI SALILKUMAR GAN-GULI:

SHRI SUHRID MULLICK CHOUDHURY:

SHRI SASANKASEKHAR SANYAL:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to the answer to Starred Question No. 426 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 30th November 1973 and state:

(a) the progress so far made with regard to the question of reimbursement by Pakistan of the expenditure incurred by India on advances of salary given to POWs; and

(b) what is the amount spent on POWs, including advances to them towards pay upto the 31st December, 1973?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH): (a) Government had requested Pakistan, in accordance with the Geneva Conventions to reimburse expenditure incurred by it on account of advances of pay disbursed to POWs and monthly allowances disbursed to civilians under protective custody. Pakistan has, however, not so far agreed to fulfil its obligations in this regard. Government have, once again, taken up this matter with Pakistan.

(b) The total amount spent on Pakistan POWs as well as civilians under protective custody including the advances of pay given to prisoners of war works out to Rs. 31,18,27,000 upto 31st December, 1973.