

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have not allowed the question. I have called Mr. Pande.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: I am asking this question along with the other questions.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You have asked so many questions along with your main question.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: Sir, if you have disallowed the question you can say so. But you have not.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have not allowed the question, because he wants notice for that. Yes, Mr. Pande.

SHRI C. D. PANDE: Sir, in many countries the closing down of foreign cultural associations and similar bodies has taken place as has happened in the case of these organisations belonging to the USA. I want to know whether the Government of Nepal has taken any cue from our activities in this connection, that is, from our step of closing down similar institutions belonging to foreign countries.

SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH: Sir, how can I answer on behalf of the Government of Nepal?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes, the next question.

SAFETY IN MINES

*385. SHRI KALYAN ROY: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to call the Third Conference on Safety in mines; and if so, when; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR): (a) Yes, a date will be fixed shortly.

(b) Does not arise.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Sir, this is the most important question in this Session. Sir, in a note submitted by the Ministry of Steel & Mines....

SHRI K. P. SUBRAMANIA MENON: Please put the question first.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Don't disturb me. Are you the mine owner?

Sir, in a note submitted by the Ministry of Mines, dated the 16th August, it has been stated that there occurred about 2,500 serious accidents in mines and about 50,000 minor accidents in a year and that with the existing strength of the Office of the Director-General of Mines Safety it is not possible to inquire into all these accidents.

Sir, in 1970, 194 people were killed....

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Kalyan Roy, you have not put the question yet. You put the question first. This is not the way.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Sir, 194 people were killed in the coal mines in 1970 and such accidents shot up to 199 in 1971. Sir, in the non-coal mines, the number of deaths was 59 in 1970 and it shot up to 66 in 1971. The total number of the injured, taking the coal and non-coal mines, is now 2,027. In other words, practically every day sixty to seventy people are being crippled or killed in the mines. But, Sir, the Government of India stated that with the existing strength of the Directorate-General of Mines Safety it is not possible to inquire into all these accidents. How long is this pathetic and tragic situation going to continue? This is my question.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Minister.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Sir, the Labour Minister is here and he is competent enough to answer my question and he need not ask his Deputy Minister to answer who generally misleads the House.

SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR: Sir, since the honourable Member prefaced his question with a short speech, I would request him to kindly repeat his question.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Sir, in a note circulated by the Ministry of Steel & Mines, it has been stated that there occurred about 2,500 serious accidents in the mines and about 50,000 minor accidents in a year and that with the existing strength of the organisation of the Directorate-General of Mines Safety it is not possible to inquire into all these accidents. Now, Sir, what is preventing the Government of India to increase the staff of the Directorate-General of Mines Safety so that this slaughter in the coal and non-coal mines is stopped?

SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR: I do agree, Sir, that the rate of accident, as the honourable Member has mentioned just now, deserves the most serious consideration and, as he has suggested, the organisation needs to be strengthened. But I may point out that because of the nationalization of a part of coal-mines, a part of our staff has migrated to the public sector. So we are finding it difficult, but every effort is being made in this direction.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: I thank the Minister because he appreciates the magnitude of the problem. But three thousand people are being permanently crippled every year and three hundred are being killed in mines. The Ministry of Mines have stated that the responsibility for the accidents rests with the management. In view of that, what steps is the Govern-

ment of India taking to prevent, as the Minister put it, migration of officers of the Department of Safety to the Bharat Coking Coal?

SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR: These are really two parts of the same industry—the mining industry. When the Director General pointed out to me that some of our best people in this organisation have opted out for public sector, as I said, we are taking steps to see how we can prevent it. It is very difficult to answer this question.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Please protect me from this attack....

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He has not attacked you at all....

SHRI KALYAN ROY: There is a migration of staff from the Labour Ministry to the Mines Ministry. Why are they going away? What steps has he taken, because people have been killed? That is my specific question.

SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR: There are two aspects of this question. The hon. Member should realise that such things happen. But his contention that we should take more steps and try to keep more people in the Mines Safety Department—qualified people—and see that the accident rate is lowered, is the main purpose of the question....

SHRI KALYAN ROY: But why is there migration?

SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR: There may be conditions slightly better there.

DR. R. K. CHAKRABARTI: Is it a fact that while laying oil pipelines through the mines in West Bengal the Safety Director of the West Bengal Government was not consulted? There is every possibility of an accident by the leakage in the pipeline which runs very close to the mines field. I understand that on account of the lack of personnel in the Department these mines

were not checked periodically. In view of the fact that we have so much surplus of mining engineers in this country what is preventing the Government of India in recruiting these mining engineers for this periodical check of the mines?

SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR: So far as the first part of the question is concerned, I shall require notice to find out whether it is a fact or not. About the second part, I welcome his suggestion and I can see that no post is left out as long as there is a mining engineer who is capable and is qualified for this job.

SHRI K. P. SUBRAMANIA MENON: The Labour Minister's reply to the question betrays a thorough lack of understanding and also complacency. Sir, every day one person dies and seven men are injured in the mines in this country, in addition to thousands of people being slightly injured, etc. The Government of India takes it for granted that these things happen. This is what Mr. Khadilkar says. What can we do? May I know from the Government of India whether they have taken steps to see that all the provisions in the Mines Act are properly implemented in so far as it relates to the safety of mining operations? Secondly, will the Government of India consider the possibility of associating trade unions in the mines with the question of enforcing safety measures?

SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR: Regarding the accident figures given that every day we have one fatal accident or death in mines, it is not correct. I will give some figures, because the rate is going down slightly—not very much, but slightly. In 1969, the fatal accidents were 211, in 1970, 194, in 1971, 199, and up to June '72, 103. I must admit that even then this is a matter for concern for us. About the second part of this question, I cer-

tainly welcome the trade union leadership not only being associated, but to take active interest also in enforcing the preventive measures that would help us to deal with the situation.

MISUSE OF U.S. RELIEF GRANT BY PAKISTANI MILITARY JUNTA

*386 **SHRI K. C. PANDA †**
SHRI M. K. MOHTA.
SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR
SHRI KOTA PUNNAIAH:
SHRI SUNDAR MANI PATEL:
SHRI LOKANATH MISRA.
SHRI KRISHAN KANT.
SHRI SYED AHMAD:
SHRI CHANDRAMOULI
JAGARLAMUDI.
SHRI D. P. SINGH

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state

(a) whether Government are aware that the U.S. Aid granted to Pakistan during the Bangladesh crisis for humanitarian work in former East Pakistan was used by the Pakistani Government for military purposes;

(b) whether it has come to the notice of the Government of India that the U.S. Administration protested to the Pakistan Government about this misuse, and

(c) what is the reaction of the Government of India in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) On June 8, 1972, a spokesman of the U.S. Government stated that the United States had stopped a contemplated grant to Pakistan finding that an earlier grant had been misused for building fortifica-

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri K. C. Panda.