

(c) whether Government has recently withdrawn the ban on futures trading in wheat and rice; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor including the impact of such a withdrawal of ban on the prices of foodgrains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) No Sir. As of now, only suspension of futures trading in rice, tur and urad by the Forward Markets Commission is in force since early 2007.

(c) No Sir. Futures trading in rice continues to remain suspended since 27th February, 2007. However, futures trading in wheat has been resumed since 21st May, 2009.

(d) Futures trading in wheat and rice was suspended only as a measure of abundant precaution in the wake of rising prices to curb inflationary expectations. *Ex post facto*, it is observed that there was no causal relationship between the rise in prices of these commodities and the futures trading. This was borne out from the analysis of data by the expert Committee appointed by the Government, under the Chairmanship of Prof. Abhijit Sen, Member, Planning Commission. The Committee, especially set up to examine whether futures market was responsible for rise in prices of essential commodities, submitted its report in April, 2008. This has also been corroborated by the RBI in its Annual Report of 2009-10 (July, 2010) on the basis of detailed analysis of the futures market data of essential commodities since 2004, *i.e.* when the market opened up. It has attributed the price rise mainly to structural constraints in augmenting supplies in the face of rising demand in a rapidly growing economy. It has also noted that the inflation in essential commodities not traded in the futures market, *viz.*, vegetables and fruits is much higher than the modest rise in exchange-traded commodities.

As regards wheat, the prices are very stable since resumption of futures trading due to adequate production and availability and stockpiling with the Government through market operations. The futures market reflect these ground realities and price trends.

#### **Import of coal**

\*257. SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that import of coal is expected to go up considerably during the next fiscal year due to fall in domestic production of coal;

(b) if so, the details of domestic production and requirement of coal and the shortfall met by import during 2009-10 and 2010-11 and projection for 2011-12; and

(c) the steps being taken to increase the domestic production of coal?

THE MINISTER OF COAL (SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) and (b) The production of coal in the country has increased over the past several years but due to the increasing requirement, particularly of the power sector, the gap between domestic availability and projected requirement of coal has also increased. This gap is being bridged through imports. The domestic production, requirement and import of coal during 2009-10, 2010-11 (upto January, 2011) and projections for 2011-12 are given below:-

(Figures in Million Tonnes)

Year	Production	Import/Gap	Requirement
2009-10	532.06 (prov.)	73.26 (actual)	605.32 (actual)
2010-11	424.16 (prov.) (upto Jan '11)	82.89 (estimated)	656.31 (projected)
2011-12	559.00 (BE)*	137.03 (projected)	696.03 (projected)

\*including 5 MT stocks to be liquidated during the year.

(c) In addition to the measures initiated by CIL & SCCL, Government has allotted 208 coal blocks to private/public companies to increase the domestic availability of coal. Some of the important steps taken by CIL & SCCL in this regard are as under:-

#### CIL

- High capacity equipment matching with bench height and stripping ratio are being introduced. For dumpers, upgradation from 35/50 tonnes to higher capacity ranging upto 240 tonnes is being undertaken.
- Old and surveyed off equipment being substituted with higher sized equipment.
- Several small and economically viable open cast patches in some of the subsidiaries, particularly, ECL and BCCL are being operated through the outsourcing mode.
- A few high capacity greenfield underground mines have been identified for developing through Mass Production and Long-wall Technology with private-public partnership on risk gain sharing basis.
- High-Wall Mining Technology is planned in underground mines where geo-mining conditions permit.

- Manual loading is being replaced by deployment of SDL/LHD and re-organization of transport system wherever feasible.
- 18 abandoned mines with estimated reserves of over 1600 MT of high quality coking coal and thermal coal have been identified for developing under a joint venture agreement with association of global underground mining companies.

#### **SCCL**

- Two high capacity (2.0 MTPA) Long-Wall projects are under construction.
- Two continuous miners are working to liquidate the standing pillars and virgin coal seams.
- 100 tonnes capacity dumpers and 12 cubic meter shovels have been introduced in open cast mines.

#### **Mining Tribunals in the country**

**\*258. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA:** Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- the number of Mining Tribunals in the country;
  - their locations and objectives;
  - who are the *ex-officio* members of the respective benches;
  - how often the Tribunals meet;
  - whether it is a fact that there are long delays in getting hearings at the Tribunals;
- and
- the steps proposed by Government to utilize Tribunals to regulate and control the monopolies recently created in the mining sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) Section 30 of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act) confers powers on the Central Government to revise any Order made by the State Government or other authority in exercise of powers conferred on it by the Act or under the Rules made thereunder for minerals other than minor mineral, of its own motion or on an application made within the prescribed time by an aggrieved party. Thus the power of Revision lies with Central Government as per the MMDR Act, 1957. There is no Tribunal prescribed under MMDR Act or any Rules thereunder.

(b) to (f) In view of (a) above does not arise.

#### **Needless drug delivery device of IISc.**

**\*259. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN:** Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state: