

SHRI P. SUNDARAYYA : I am putting a specific question : whether Government is aware that in the district of Nalgonda, where famine conditions prevail, *jowar* is needed ?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA : After taking all considerations into account, a particular State Government will come to a conclusion as to whether that particular State is surplus or deficit.

TALCHER COALFIELDS IN ORISSA

*32. SHRI S. N. DWIVEDY : Will the Minister for LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that many accidents have occurred during the course of the last five years in the Talcher Coalfields in Orissa ;

(b) whether there was any sinking down of a big area on the surface due to irregular pillar-cutting without proper sand-stowing thus leaving wide spaces underground ;

(c) whether the Talcher Coalfields Workers' Union have sent any representation to the Ministry of Labour in this matter ;

(d) whether they have suggested that the management of the mine may be taken over by the Government of India ; and

(e) what action Government propose to take on that representation ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR LABOUR (SHRI ABID ALI) : (a) The mines in Talcher were brought within the purview of the Mines Act only on the 1st January 1949. Since then, 3 fatal and 5 serious accidents have occurred resulting in loss of 3 lives and injuries to 5.

(b) Presumably the question refers to the subsidence of a portion of the public road to Ghantapara which occurred in October last and which it is understood, was due to irruption

of water. Apart from this Government have no information in regard to subsidence of any other area.

(c) and (d). Yes.

(e) Due consideration has been given to the points raised in the representation. Government do not propose to take over the management of the mines.

SHRI S. N. DWIVEDY : Was this incident which took place in October investigated by the inspector ?

SHRI ABID ALI : Yes.

SHRI S. N. DWIVEDY : Was it due to natural causes, or to any defects in the running of the mines by the proprietors ?

SHRI ABID ALI : As I have said in reply to part (b), it was due to irruption of water. The reason as stated is correct.

SHRI C. G. K. REDDY : If such accidents take place frequently, is the Government to leave it to the proprietors to do what they wish in the matter, and is the Government to leave the lives of the workers there to the mercy of the proprietors ?

SHRI ABID ALI : No Sir. Our Inspectors go for inspection regularly and make suggestions to the proprietors for necessary changes. In this case, warnings were given to the colliery management and prosecution was threatened, and it is reported that the colliery management has taken appropriate action.

SHRI B. GUPTA : Is the hon. Deputy Minister aware that most of these colliery owners are against introducing safety devices because they want to save money ?

SHRI ABID ALI : We are not concerned with what they think ; we are concerned with what we do. We do compel them to take appropriate action and adopt safety devices.