Amendment to the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act

†4043. SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI:
SHRI RAMCHANDRA PRASAD SINGH:
Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the amendment Bill seeking to amend the Coal Mines (Nationalization) Act has been pending for last one decade;

(b) if so, the facts in this regard; and

(c) the reasons for the said bill not being converted into an Act despite the lapse of such a long time since its introduction in the Parliament, keeping in view the nation's need for it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI PRATIK PRAKASHBAPU PATIL): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The Central Government decided to amend the Coal Mines (Nationalization) Act, 1973 to allow Indian companies, both in the public and private sectors to mine coal in the country without the existing restriction of captive mining. Accordingly a Bill, namely the Coal Mines (Nationalization) Amendment Bill, 2000, was introduced in the Rajya Sabha on 24.04.2000.

(c) All the major Central Trade Unions raised their opposition to the Bill. Though, I attempts have been made at the level of the Minister of Coal and the Minister of Finance, several times in the past, no positive result could be achieved. The first Group of Minister (GOM) was constituted to sort out the issues with the trade unions in 2001, which decided that until the final decision taken, the said Amendment Bill would not be taken up for consideration in the Parliament. In 2004, it was again decided that the Bill will not be moved in the Parliament without arriving at a consensus with the trade unions. Also, a view was taken in the Energy Coordination Committee that the Bill shall be moved only after a consensus is arrived at. The present GOM under the chairmanship of the Finance Minister was constituted in August 2009, to further carry forward the dialogue with the trade unions.

Coal reserves

4044. SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.