

Fixation of Royalty on Lignite

SHRI S. SIVASUBRAMANIAN (Tamil Nadu): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to raise the matter of fixation of royalty on lignite. The royalty for lignite of Neyveli was fixed by the Government of India for the first time; and the rate was fixed for both lignite and coal of grades F and G at Rs.2.50 per mt with effect from 21st July, 1990. The royalty for coal was enhanced to Rs.2.50 per tonne with effect from 1st August, 1991, while for lignite, it remained at Rs.2.50 per tonne without any increase. The royalty for Group V coal was again increased to Rs.50 per tonne with effect from 11th October, 1994. Revision of royalty for major minerals has to be effected once in three years. The next revision was due from 1997. But this has not been done so far. Based on repeated representations from the Tamil Nadu Government for refixing of royalty on lignite on par with Grade V coal (F&G), the Government of India constituted a study group to examine the question of revision of royalty on lignite. The State Government reiterated its view for treating lignite on par with the Grade V coal F&G, as had been accepted by the Ministry of Energy in 1990 itself. The Central Fuel Research Institute had confirmed that lignite in Tamil Nadu has to be grouped with F-grade coal. The outcome is not known. The matter was taken up by the hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu with the hon. Prime Minister, as far back as in July, 1999. The Government of Tamil Nadu was given to understand that it has been agreed to enhance the rate and that it is pending for approval of the Cabinet. The Tamil Nadu Government is facing a huge loss of revenue due to payment of low royalty on lignite. We request an early approval of the Cabinet and release of funds to the Government of Tamil Nadu. Thank you.

Menacingly Rising Incidents of Diseases Particularly T.B.

SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA (West Bengal): Mr. Chairman, Sir, my Special Mention pertains to a very serious issue -- the menacingly rising incidence of diseases, particularly, tuberculosis. It has been reported by the most authentic sources that the menacing disease, tuberculosis, has assumed horrendous proportion in our country. This is no doubt a disease of poverty, malnutrition and unhygienic living condition of the people. It is also being reported that the medicines essentially required for treatment of the disease, like Rifampicin, Ethambutol INH, etc., are either in short supply, since the production is not up to the requirement; or, the prices