

(b) if so, the action taken by the Ministry in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL): (a) and (b) Proposals from the State Government of Gujarat for prior approval on GMDC's mining lease application in the district of Bharuch were received.

Coal and lignite blocks were earlier allocated in pursuance of Section 3 of the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973 whereas the prior approval of the Central Government for grant of mining lease of the allocated coal/lignite blocks are given under the relevant provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957. Allocation of a lignite block under Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973 is a prerequisite before the prior approval of the Central Government is accorded for grant of mining lease under the relevant provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957. Since the above mentioned lignite bearing area in Bharuch District was not allocated by the Ministry of Coal to the Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation Ltd. (GMDCL), the question of prior approval of the Central Government for grant of mining lease for this area does not arise.

Under the amended provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Development & Regulation) Act, 1957 and the Rules made thereunder, the Central Government on 29.07.2013 has invited applications for allocation of 5 lignite blocks to the State Government companies/corporations located in the State of Gujarat and Rajasthan.

Coal regulator mechanism

3383. SHRI DEVENDER GOUD T. : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently the Cabinet has approved the coal regulator mechanism;

(b) to what extent setting up of the regulator helps in infusing transparency in coal pricing, mining operations, etc.;

(c) whether it is also a fact that in spite of regulator finalizing the price, the Ministry would have the final say; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL): (a) After detailed consultations with various stake holders as well as concerned Ministries/Department, the proposal of draft Coal Regulatory Authority Bill, 2013 was

approved by the competent authority on 27.06.2013 and the same was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 13.12.2013 to regulate and conserve resources in the coal sector, protect the interest of consumers and producers of coal and for matters connected therewith. The Bill, introduced in the Lok Sabha lapsed with the dissolution of the 15th Lok Sabha.

(b) to (d) The functions of the Coal Regulatory Authority proposed in the aforesaid Bill were as under:

Specifying the methods of testing for declaration of grades; monitor & enforce mine closure plans; ensure adherence of approved mining plans; specify principles and methodologies for price determination of raw coal, washed coal and any other by-product generated during the process of coal washing; specify procedures for automatic coal sampling & weighment; specify by regulations the standards of performance and norms of operational efficiency except in the area related to mines safety; adjudicate upon disputes between the parties. The Coal Regulatory Authority will also have an advisory role on formulation of policies in coal sector.

The pricing of coal has been fully deregulated by the Government *vide* the Colliery Control Order, 2000 dated 1st January, 2000 in supersession of the Colliery Control Order, 1945. Under the said order, the coal companies themselves fix the coal price based on input costs, inflation index, market trends etc. and notify the same periodically.

Selling of stake in Coal India Limited

3384. DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is planning to sell a stake in the State owned company, the Coal India Limited to increase financial support of Government to compensate the deficit and bring it under control;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the association of coal workers has requested the Government not to sell its stake;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the apprehensions of the workers; and

(e) the remedial measures being taken by Government to address the apprehensions of the workers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL): (a) and (b) Government is proposing to disinvest 10% GoI's equity in Coal India Ltd. (CIL) out of its holding of 89.65%.