

**WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS**

**Environment friendly mechanism for coal mining**

\*83. SHRI A.W. RABI BERNARD: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is working on a mechanism that would augment coal mining without damaging the environment, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Ministry and the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change have come together and are working on a mechanism whereby natural resources could be extracted with minimum damage to the environment; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL): (a) The mechanism to safeguard the environment is already in place. The project planning is carried out by integrating environmental concerns. Coal mining projects are operated after obtaining environmental clearance and submit compliance report at regular intervals. The coal mining projects also obtain consent to operate from concerned State Pollution Control Board. In addition, the mine closure plans are being prepared and approved with requisite escrow fund for sustainable post-mining land reclamation and usage for the benefit of the local population. Environmental monitoring is being carried out to assess the efficacy of the environmental protection measures undertaken and if required, additional measures are taken to keep the environmental attributes within prescribed limits.

(b) and (c) Both the ministries mutually interact very closely at regular intervals and view point of Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) is taken care of in the environmental planning and implementation of the mitigation measures. This ensures least intervention into environment and minimum displacement of population thus minimizing resettlement and rehabilitation issues. For each of coal mining projects, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)/ Environmental Management Plan (EMPs) are prepared that encompass all the environmental aspects, their impacts, mitigation measures proposed and cost of implementation. The EIA/EMP reports are submitted to MoEF&CC for obtaining environmental clearance. The mining operations are started only after obtaining environmental clearance from MoEF&CC.