

lead to lowering the final bid price. However, after examining the workings and results of the electronic auction, the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi observed that it could not find any such indication or evidence, even though in some of the auctions, there have been multiple bids submitted by the same company in respect of its different specified end use plants.

Hon'ble High Court of Delhi also observed that apart from the empirical data of the auction process in respect of the 11 electronic auctions held so far, the process by itself does not appear to be arbitrary or irrational. The Hon'ble High Court of Delhi also added that there is, of course, no allegation that the auction process is designed to favour any particular bidder.

Further, Delhi High Court *vide* its common judgment dated 05 October, 2016 has dismissed the Writ Petitions No. (1) W.P. (C) 1501/2015 (Monnet Ispat and Energy Ltd. *Vs.* Union of India and Anr); (2) W.P. (C) 1496/2015 (Utkal Coal Limited and Anr. *Vs.* Union of India and Ors.); (3) W.P. (C) 2381/2015 (Jayaswal Neco Industries Ltd. *Vs.* Union of India and Anr.); and (4) W.P. (C) 6302/2015 (Bhushan Power and Steel Ltd. and Anr. *Vs.* Union of India and Anr.) wherein, the petitioners had *inter alia* raised similar objections on allowing companies to submit multiple bids through joint ventures and group subsidiaries. In the said common judgment the High Court held that the said issue has already been decided in favour of the Government in its earlier judgment.

Setting up of JBCCI

1290. SHRI K. T. S. TULSI: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Joint Bipartite Committee for Coal Industry (JBCCI) has been set up by Government to negotiate with workers demanding a salary hike; and

(b) if not, by when Government would set up JBCCI to meet the demands of coal workers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL): (a) and (b) Government has not constituted JBCCI. However, Coal India Limited (CIL) has informed that it has constituted JBCCI on 18.11.2016 to negotiate Wage Agreement for non-executive employees of CIL and its subsidiaries and Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL).

Excess coal stocks

1291. SHRI K. T. S. TULSI: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the coal stocks are overflowing and there is no place to store excess coal so much so that Government has directed to stop further mining of coal; and

(b) if so, the steps, if any, taken by Government to eliminate import of coal and boost its export?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL): (a) The pithead coal stock at mines of CIL was 57.64 MT as on 01.04.2016 which has decreased to 40.16 MT as on 20.11.2016.

(b) As per the current import policy, coal is kept under Open General license and consumers are free to import coal from the source of their choice as per their contractual prices on payment of applicable duty. However, due to persistent efforts made with individual Thermal Power Plants (TPPs), the coal import was reduced to 28.57 MT for the period of April-August 2016 as compared to 37.80 MT for the corresponding period of the year 2015-16. Further, it is not possible to fully eliminate import of coal completely due to less availability of good quality coking coal and the fact that a few power plants are designed on imported coal. Also in case of the coastal power plants, the inland transportation cost of coal makes it costly as compared to landed price of imported coal through the ports. As regards export of coal, the non coking thermal coal available in India is of lower calorific value and high ash content compared to the coal which is usually traded in internationally. However, because of the cheaper price of Indian thermal coal in comparison to coal from other countries there is a demand for such coal in the neighbouring countries like Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh. Since domestic coal demand for thermal grade coal is picking up with depletion in stock and CIL is augmenting thermal coal supply to domestic power plants to reduce imported coal consumption, exporting lower grades of coal in the current market scenario is not contemplated. CIL is exploring possibilities to export high grade, albeit with high ash content, to the neighbouring countries as domestic demand for this type of coal is limited. Presently, a very small quantity of such coal is exported to these countries.

Status of SBM

1292. SHRIMATI VANDANA CHAVAN: Will the Minister of DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of States and cities within them which have been declared as Open Defecation Free (ODF) under the Swachh Bharat Mission;

(b) the number of toilets constructed under the scheme, State-wise;

(c) the amount collected and transferred as Swachh Bharat Cess from the beginning of its launch till 2016, State-wise; and

(d) the monitoring mechanism to ensure efficient utilization of funds provided?