

Allowing private players in commercial mining space

47. SHRI K.R. ARJUNAN: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether private players will be able to bid for mines with about 100 million tonnes of coal reserves in the initial phase of auctions for commercial mining rights;

(b) whether the Coal India Limited (CIL) is gearing up to compete with private companies for the first time since 1973;

(c) whether allowing competition in the commercial mining space will create a positive disruption in the market;

(d) whether CIL is closing 37 unviable mines this year; and

(e) whether CIL will close several more mines in the next two years?

THE MINISTER OF COAL (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL): (a) to (c) The methodology for auction of coal mines/blocks for sale of coal under the provisions of the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015 and the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 is under consideration of the Government.

(d) and (e) CIL has envisaged and action has been initiated for closing 37 unsafe underground mines in 2017-18. Risk assessment is a continuous process. As soon as a mine is declared unsafe and it is apprehended that its geominig condition is such that it is not in a position to be run safely, then the mine closure decision is taken.

NOC for coal block allocation in Southern India

48. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the coal block allotment for ultra mega power project is pending with Government for No Objection Certificate (NOC) and other observations in South Zone of the country;

(b) if so, the details and present status thereof; and

(c) by when Government proposes to issue approval in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COAL (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL): (a) No proposal for allotment of coal block for Ultra Mega Power Project in South Zone of the country is under consideration in Ministry of Coal.

(b) and (c) Does not arise in view of the reply to part (a) above.