

Mr. Speaker: Next question.

New Coal Deposits in West Bengal

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 *576. { Shri Subodh Hansda:
 Shri R. C. Majhi:
 Shri Nek Ram Negi:
 Shri S. C. Samanta:

Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel be pleased to state:

(a) whether the new deposits of coal and iron found in the districts of Midnapur and Bankura, West Bengal, have any commercial value; and

(b) if so, what steps Government are taking to exploit them?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel (Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha): (a) Coal deposits were proved in Bankura District some years ago, but they are not suitable for commercial exploitation. Moreover, better quality of coal is available in the neighbouring Raniganj field.

Occurrence of iron ore has been recorded at Katachua, Siarbinda and Churimari in Midnapur District, but its potentialities will be known only after further investigation planned for during the current year is completed.

(b) Does not arise.

Shri Subodh Hansda: May I know whether chemical analysis has been made as to the percentage of iron content?

Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha: I have said that further investigation is essential. Before that, I am not in a position to give the chemical analysis of the iron ore.

Shri S. C. Samanta: May I know how many times the Geological Survey of India surveyed these two districts and whether material deep below were also extracted and examined?

Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha: It is a continuous process. In 1960-61 investigation was carried out by the

GSI and the information that I have given is on the basis of that investigation. Further investigation will be carried out.

Discovery of New Minerals

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 *577. { Shri Shree Narayan Das:
 Shri Radha Raman:

Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel be pleased to lay a statement showing:

(a) the number of persons who have been granted rewards for supplying information leading to the discovery of new mineral deposits of economic importance during 1961 so far;

(b) the nature of finds of such deposits so discovered; and

(c) whether this kind of incentive has proved effective?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel (Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha): (a) No person has so far been granted any reward. The information furnished by applicants so far is being examined to determine, in the first instance, whether the alleged discoveries of new mineral deposits are in fact new finds. It is only after this examination is completed that the question of rewards will be considered.

(b) In the applications that have been received, the claims include finds of a variety of minerals like Kyanite, Iron Pyrites, Corundum, Beryl, Graphite and Mica etc.

(c) Yes. The response has been encouraging and as many as 232 claims have been received so far.

Shri Shree Narayan Das: May I know the number of persons who have claimed the awards so far?

Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha: I have already said that nearly 232 claims have been put before the Ministry.