

Free education upto class VII in schools run and aided by the Delhi Municipal Corporation was introduced with effect from 1st July, 1960.

Shri Subodh Hansda: May I know whether any age limit—upper or lower—has been fixed for admission of students?

Dr. K. L. Shrimali: As far as I am aware, there is no age-limit. Education is imparted free up to the VIII class.

Shri Subodh Hansda: The Minister has said just now that free education is introduced in Government—and Government-aided schools. May I know whether this free education has also been introduced in all the institutions managed by the Delhi Corporation?

Dr. K. L. Shrimali: I have already said that in institutions which are run by the Corporation, the New Delhi Municipal Committee or which are aided by them, education is free. I am not speaking of private institutions which are not receiving any grant-in-aid from Government.

Shri Ansar Harvani: Are Government aware that due to shortage of seats for admission of students in the Delhi schools, they have to go to the educational shops which charge fabulous amounts as fees? Do Government propose to put a ceiling on the fees charged by them?

Dr. K. L. Shrimali: No. This is absolutely incorrect. In Delhi, there is no shortage of admission. In fact, I had publicly announced that if there was any difficulty felt by any parents regarding admission, they should report to us. We have not received any complaints from anywhere, and all the boys have been given admission.

Shri S. C. Samanta: May I know whether any amount is sanctioned as deficit grant to those institutions which have established free education schools?

Mr. Speaker: Private agencies.

Dr. K. L. Shrimali: With regard to aided schools, I do not have the information with me at present. But I expect the Corporation may have some arrangements with those institutions.

Shortage of Drinking Water in Jharia and Raniganj

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*314. { **Shri Subodh Hansda:**
Shri R. C. Majhi:
Shri S. C. Samanta:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a shortage of drinking water in the coal fields of Jharia and Raniganj; and

(b) if so, what steps Government are taking for providing good drinking water to these fields?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Steel, Mines & Fuel (Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha): (a) and (b). Shortage of drinking water in the coalfields of Jharia and Raniganj is felt sometimes, particularly during summer months. Both the State Governments and the Central Government are, however, seized of the problem and necessary steps are taken to relieve the water shortage to the extent possible. In Bihar, the Jharia Water Board has been set up and the West Bengal Government are contemplating to set up a similar Board in the Raniganj field. The Jharia Water Board is already implementing in integrated water-supply scheme at a cost of Rs. 75 lakhs. The West Bengal Government are similarly considering an integrated scheme costing about Rs. 4.22 crores. Financial assistance to these water supply schemes is also sanctioned from time to time from the Coalmines Labour Welfare Fund.

2. Besides the above major schemes, there is also a scheme of sinking of wells in the coalfields under which subsidy at the rate of 50 per cent of the cost of construction is paid out of the Coalmines Labour Welfare Fund, and the rest of the cost is generally met by the colliery-owners.

Shri Subodh Hansda: Since when the shortage of water is faced by the coal fields?

Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha: Whenever there is good monsoon, the difficulties are less. Whenever there is insufficient monsoon, difficulties are there.

Pandit D. N. Tiwari: How long will it take Government to supply drinking water in Jharia?

Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha: I have stated in the answer that as far as Jharia is concerned, there is already a Board which is making all arrangements for supply of water. It is already being done.

Mr. Speaker: Water is being supplied.

Shri S. C. Samanta: May I know whether the colliery-owners also make some arrangements for supply of drinking water to the workers?

Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha: In the latter part of my reply, I have said that subsidy upto 50 per cent is granted to colliery owners who make arrangements for water supply.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: It is said that the West Bengal Government has submitted a scheme costing about Rs. 4.22 crores. May I know whether 50 per cent of this amount would be borne by the Government, whether the Labour Welfare Fund Organisation is in a position to give that subsidy?

The Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel (Sardar Swaran Singh): That will be considered. That appears to be a suggestion for action. When State Governments undertake schemes, there are well-known criteria for bearing the cost.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: Are Government aware that in the majority of coal field areas, they can have deep tube-wells but very few employers take advantage of the 50 per cent scheme outlined here? In view of the acute shortage of water in the

coal fields, pending this Rs. 4.22 crore scheme coming into working order—which will be in three or four years—do Government propose to force the colliery-owners to open these deep tube-wells?

Sardar Swaran Singh: For one thing, there is some shortage felt.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: Acute shortage.

Sardar Swaran Singh: But it will not be correct to describe it as acute shortage. This scheme is an integrated one and I think that when it is implemented, the supply position will materially improve. In the meantime, if any other temporary steps can be taken and they are practicable, they could also be considered.

Shri Indrajit Gupta: Does any of these schemes envisage the supply of pipe water to the collieries where the workers live or only tube-wells and wells are going to be sunk?

Sardar Swaran Singh: That is a matter of detail, as to what is going to be the source of supply.

Shri Indrajit Gupta: But it is very important for the workers.

Mr. Speaker: Those details are not available with the Minister.

Shri Indrajit Gupta: A sum of Rs. 4 crores has been sanctioned.

Mr. Speaker: Does it include distribution also?

Sardar Swaran Singh: Of course; where pipes can be laid, they would be laid.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Since the subsidy to the West Bengal Government scheme would come to about Rs. 2 crores and since there is no such big amount with the Welfare Board, may I know whether Government will draw from other sources for this scheme?

Sardar Swaran Singh: I will pass on this difficulty, which the hon.

Member is pointing out, to the Labour Ministry.

Underground Fire fighting Machines

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*315. { Shri S. C. Samanta:
Shri Subodh Hansda:
Shri Anirudh Sinha:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Coal Development Corporation has purchased underground fire fighting machines;

(b) if so, how many such machines have been purchased;

(c) whether any contribution has been asked for from the private owners of coal mines for purchasing these machines; and

(d) if so, the amount of contribution given by them?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Steel, Mines and Fuel (Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha): (a) The National Coal Development Corporation Ltd. have not purchased any underground fire fighting machines. Fire fighting apparatus and equipment are maintained at the rescue stations set up under the Coal Mines Rescue Rules. Collieries generally have only fire extinguishers.

(b) to (d). Do not arise. In any case, there is no question of the National Coal Development Corporation asking for contribution from private owners of coal mines for purchasing any equipment.

Shri S. C. Samanta: Is it not a fact that in other countries there are fire fighting instruments which are different from those which are kept at the rescue stations at present? If so, is there any attempt to import such equipment?

Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha: I have not got detailed information about such equipment in other countries.

But as I have already stated there is equipment here in the important coal centres.

Shri S. C. Samanta: In the newspapers we often read that nearabout Asansol there is some colliery which is burning and which, sometimes, also rises up. May I know whether the fire fighting equipment which we have would go to extinguish that?

Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha: It is a fact that some collieries near Dhanbad and Asansol are on fire. Every effort is being made to see that it does not spread; it is just checked.

श्रीमती कृष्णा मेहता : लगभग तीन वर्ष हुए हमारे कुछ संसद् सदस्य झरिया गये थे तब वहां बड़े जोर की आग लगी हुई थी । वे वहां उन लोगों से भी मिले थे जो नजदीक के रहने वाले थे और जिन की बहुत नुकसान होता था । मैं जानना चाहती हूं कि सरकार ने क्या कदम उठाया है जिस में कि नुकसान होने से पहले इस चीज का इलाज हो सके ?

श्री गजेंद्र प्रसाद सिन्हा : झरिया में जो आग लगी है वह कोई नई नहीं है, पुरानी है, और पूरी कोशिश है कि यह आग बढ़ने न पाये । इस के लिये सदन के सामने हमारे मिनिस्टर साहब ने कई बार जवाब दिया है ।

Shri Anirudh Sinha: May I know whether it is a fact that when the underground fires in the Jharia coal-fields were detected first there was not sufficient equipment to fight them and as such they were allowed to spread? I want to know how far the Coal Board has been able to check the spread of fire with the acquisition of new equipment.

Sardar Swaran Singh: These underground fires in the Jharia coalfields started several years ago—about 2 decades ago. I think that the steps that have been taken by the Coal Board from time to time have significantly prevented the spread of these fires to the adjoining area. It should be remembered that when these