

LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Wednesday July 29, 1992/ Sravana 7,
1914 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

(MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

11.00 hrs.

OBITUARY REFERENCE

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I have to inform the House of the sad demise of one of our former colleagues, Shri Kalyan Singh Kalvi.

Shri Kalvi was a Member of the Ninth Lok Sabha during 1989-91 representing Barmer constituency of Rajasthan. During 1990-91, he was also a member of the Union Council of Ministers and held the portfolio of Energy.

Before entering this House, Shri Kalvi had served with distinction his home state of Rajasthan. He was a member of Rajasthan Legislative Assembly during 1978-80 and again in 1985-89. He served on various Committees of the Legislative Assembly. As Minister, he held the portfolio of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Dairy Development in the State Government during 1978-80.

An active social worker, he always cared for the sick and the needy.

A widely travelled person, Shri Kalvi took keen interest in sports.

Shri Kalyan Singh Kalvi passed away at Bombay on 27 July, 1992 at the age of 59 years due to a massive heart attack.

We deeply mourn the loss of this friend and I am sure that the House will join me in conveying our condolences to the bereaved family.

The Members may stand in silence for a short while as a mark of respect to the deceased.

11.02 hrs.

(The Members then stood in silence for a short while)

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

11.04 hrs.

[English]

Short supply of Coal to Industries

* 305. DR. G.L. KANALJIA :
SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR :

Will the Minister of COAL
be pleased to state :

(a) whether due to short supply of

coal to industries there is heavy shortfall in their production;

(b) if so, the names of these industries; and

(c) the steps being taken to restore the supply of coal to the affected industries?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (Shri S.B. Nyamagouda) :

(a) to (c) : A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) to (c) The revised demand for coal for the year 1992 was fixed at 235.2 million tonnes. Against this, the actual supplies have been 222.85 million tonnes, which work out to a satisfaction of 94.4 per cent. Thus there was a shortfall of 5.6 per cent in meeting the revised demand during 1991-92. Similarly pro-rata demand for the period April-June '92 has been worked out at 58.31 million tonnes against which the supplies have been 53.98 million tonnes indicating a satisfaction of 92.5 per cent and a shortfall of 7.5 per cent. The shortfall in 1991-92 was mainly confined to steel and cement industries.

Coal companies have taken several steps to enhance supplies of coal to consumers. The systems and procedures for supply of coal are being streamlined. Consumers can obtain their coal requirements by road upto 1000 m.t. at a time from specified collieries without any sponsorship. In addition, 20 million tonnes of pithead stocks are also being offered to customers with preference to actual users. Coal stockyards are being activated. Further, Consumer Councils have been set up at national and regional levels to look into specific grievances of coal consumers.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in part (a) of my question I have asked about the total percentage of shortfall in the production of industries due to short supply of coal. This part of my question has not been answered.

The hon. Minister has admitted that the supply of coal has been reduced by 7.5 per cent. Now will the hon. Minister be pleased to state the total loss of production due to short supply of coal?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINISTER OF STATE THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (Shri A. Sangma) :

Mr. Speaker, Sir, actually there is no shortfall, as the hon. Member has said, in the industrial production because of the short supply of coal. The year 1991-92 was not a very good year for us. It is true that there has been a shortfall in the industrial production; in fact, when we took over in June, 1991, the industrial production was -3 per cent, but by February this year, there has been a sign of increased growth rate in the industrial production. Therefore, the trend has been arrested now. I have not specifically mentioned the heavy shortfall in coal. It is very difficult to quantify the percentage of shortfall in the industrial production because of the short supply of coal.

Therefore, I have admitted that there has been a shortfall in the supply of coal. But it is very difficult to quantify what would be its contribution towards the industry. (Inter-ruption)

[Translation]

SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR : Mr. Speaker, Sir, in his reply the hon. Minister as made a mention of introduction of certain reformative measures in the procedure. Will the improved procedure of movement

of coal **serve the purpose of ensuring adequate supply of coal?** Is it not necessary to increase the production? Per capita production in U.S.A., Germany and Australia is 17% while in India it is only 6%. In view of this fact, will we make some attempts to increase the production? Besides, a report states that the Railway Deptt. could not be able to transfer the coal in time causing short supply of coal to the industries. Will your Deptt and the Deptt of Railways make attempts to work in close coordination in the matter of supply of coal.

{ *English* }

SHRI A. SANGMA: The hon. Member is very right that there has to be increase in production of coal. This is precisely what we are trying. In 1991-92, there has been a growth rate of more than eight per cent in the production. We hope to produce more. I also agree with the hon. Member that there has to be a close coordination with the Railways, which is our prime mover of this commodity to the consumers.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: The question is carrying coal to Newcastle. There is a great demand of coal but production of coal is not being increased to that extent. We are also importing coking coal. We have adequate reserves of coal in our country in Assam and Bihar.

In order to reduce the import of coal for which we are spending crores of rupees every year, whether there is any programme to modernise the coal washeries so that the ash cont of coal can be reduced - the imports of coal are now taking place - so that the import can be reduced to save scarce foreign exchange resource of our country?

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: The import of coking coal to the tune of four million tonnes to five million tonnes has to continue for some time. It cannot be reduced drastically. Our main coking coal reserves are in Bihar, in Jharla area which unfortunately has been faced with a tremendous trouble of underground fire, which for the first time, we are

tackling it very systematically. We have got the technology already for tackling it. We are now trying to mobilise resources to tackle it. I am very hopeful this underground fire which is in existence for more than 18 years can be now tackled.

Secondly, huge coking coal reserve has been found in the Northeastern states, particularly in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Meghalaya. We are going ahead with new projects in those areas. The latest one being Bodgoloi coking coal project in Assam. We are also trying to open up coal mines in Arunachal Pradesh in a place called Nampung.

Unfortunately Meghalaya coking coal is in the private hands. But we are trying to organise that also.

I agree with the hon. Member, in order to ensure the supply of quality coal, whether it is coking coal or non-coking coal to our consumers, beneficiation is a must. It is our intention to have, in future, more and more washeries and also to modernise the existing ones. Since the Government has some financial resource constraint, we have decided to involve the private investment in setting up of washeries. To that effect, the coal Nationalisation Act is being amended. It has been passed in the Rajya Sabha and it has now come before this House.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister through you, how it is that although there has been an increase in growth rate of about 8.5 per cent, the demand has not accordingly increased to that level. But still there is shortage.

What has been the impact of the newly introduced cash and carry system in the coal sector on the working of different industries?

I would like to know whether it has come to the notice of Government that because of inability of certain industries even in public sector like the power plants and fertiliser plants as Talcher Fertiliser plant and others

and electricity and thermal power stations, there has been a situation where because of their inability to pay in advance or to pay before carrying coal to their power plants, there has been a situation wherein some industries have been closed.

MR. SPEAKER : Please come to be question.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : It has come to notice that some industries have been closed because of their inability to pay in cash before carrying coal. What has been the demand because of this system in industrial sector for coal, category-wise, grade-wise B. Grade, S. Grade, low grade coal etc. ? Higher grade and better grade coal is not available.

MR. SPEAKER : Please come to the question. The hon. Minister knows all those things.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : I am sorry I do not have the figure of grade-wise demand. But the demand for coal has been increasing. For example, in 1991-92, the total demand was 239 million tonnes. For the current year of 1992-93, the demand is 247.3 million tonnes. So, there is an increase in demand and correspondingly we are also increasing our production. As hon. Member himself has submitted, in 1991-92, we have a growth rate of 8.3 per cent. We hope to achieve the target during the current year also. Now as far as the cash and carry system is concerned, it has been introduced from 1st of October and it is continuing. May be, there are Electricity Boards which are facing some problems. But I think they are managing. The same system is working and continuing and we intend to continue it and, as a result of this, the liquidity position of coal India has improved to a great extent.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : At the time to power shortage, coal should be supplied liberally. (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI BRISHIN PATEL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, despite adequate coal deposits in our country, our production is less. In foreign countries 80 per cent coal is mechanically excavated from coal mines, while in our country 80 per cent coal is manually excavated. This is the main cause for short fall in production of coal. I would like to know from the Government whether it would consider modernisation of coal excavation in view of all these facts.

(*English*)

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : There are two types of mining. One is open-cast mining where you use maximum equipment and machinery. We have underground mining where we employ more human resources that it is in the open cast mines. It is a fact today that India is producing more in the open-cast mine and, to be very frank, 32 per cent of our work force in the Coal India today is working in open cost mine producing 68 per cent of the total production. Therefore, it is the machinery which is producing more. But we will have to keep the unemployment position of all those in view.

What we are trying now is to improve our production in the underground mines which has stood at about 60 million tonnes for the last 20 years and we are unable to increase it. I agree with the hon. Member that this is an area where we must utilise our human resources and produce more.

[*Translation*]

SHRI SURAJ MANDAL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this question has two aspects. One is related to the production of coal and other is related to the short supply of coal to the industries. The coal India Limited does not implement the designs and plans which are formulated and provided by the C.M.P.D.I. about the project. It cause shortfall in the coal production. So far as the supply of coal to the industries is concerned, I would like to state that the annual target of the coal pro-

duction fixed for the year is not achieved. While the officials show stones and earth as coal in their records and show it as several lakh million tonnes; and when the demand increase....

(*English*)

MR. SPEAKER: What is your question, Shri Mandal?

[*Translation*]

SHRI SURAJ MANDAL: I would like to know from the Government whether the coal is being supplied to industries on priority basis; whether the vigilance wing of coal India Ltd. investigates these matters and whether irregularities have been found or not; if so, the efforts being made by the Government to improve the situation? I would also like to know whether the Government is giving any thought to the work project on the basis of Design and plan submitted by C.M.P.D.I.

(*English*)

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: There is no shortage of availability of coal as such. Even today, as on 1st of July, we have 43 million tonnes of coal at our pit-heads. So, availability is not much of a problem. What is the problem is the despatches, what is the problem is the transportation. Our Railways are trying their best to move it. But they have their own priorities. There are other sectors of higher priorities like movement of foodgrains and all such things. All these things have to be taken into account. But it is not only because of shortage of Railway wagons, sometimes, that the supplies are disrupted but there are other reasons for disrupting the supply of coal to the consum-

ers. Here, I would seek the cooperation of the hon. Member because he is the person who can help the consumers in our country, in reaching coal. so, I would placed with him: 'Do whatever you like but do not do economic blockade in future.'

[*Translation*]

Public sector undertakings in Maharashtra

*306. **Shri Vilasrao Nagnathrao Gundewar: will the Prime Minister**

be pleased to State:

(a) the details of those Central Public Sector Undertakings in Maharashtra in which capital investment has been decreased during the last three years;

(b) whether the efficiency and profits of these undertakings have increased as a result thereof;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to further increase the efficiency and profits of these undertakings?

(*English*)

(DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY AND DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ENTERPRISES) THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (Shri P.K. Thungon) :

A statement is laid on the Table of the House.