

(b) and (c) The problem of fire which has affected surface and persons living around exists mainly in Jharia coalfield.

Out of 70 fires identified in Jharia coalfield of Bihar at the time of nationalisation of coking coal mines in 1972, 10 fires have been completely extinguished.

With the objective of finding a long-term solution to the problem of Jharia coalfield fires, a detailed diagnostic study was undertaken under the Jharia Mine Fire Control Technical Assistance Project with World Bank assistance. The study has been completed and report submitted. As a follow-up action, two workshops have been held at Dhanbad and Pittsburg, USA with a view to outline and finalise course of action. As per the report, 10,800 families are residing in the high risk zone of environmental pollution.

Government of India has constituted a high level Committee under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of Coal, to look into the problems of subsidence and fires in the Jharia and Raniganj Coalfields and recommend suitable measures to deal with the problems. The Committee has started its deliberations.

Coal Mining Operation

5524. SHRI HARADHAN ROY: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have declared the names of the Mouzas unstable and unsafe for habitation due to coal mining operation;

(b) if so, whether the population of those Mouzas have been shifted and rehabilitated with adequate compensation for their loss of properties and one employment in each affected family;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government for stabilisation, reclamation and protection from all types of environmental hazards?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) Yes, the names of the areas which had become unstable on account of unscientific mining carried out by the erstwhile owners have been declared unsafe.

(b) to (d) The concerned coal companies have been publishing appeals in the local Newspapers informing the residents about the instability of the underground workings below the built-in areas and requesting them to vacate but people are not willing to shift. Regular follow-up and liaison with the District Authorities and local MPs/MLAs is being maintained for evacuating people from the areas declared unsafe. Wherever feasible, action is taken to stabilise the unstable underground workings under the built-in areas adopting the innovative technology of Hydro-Pneumatic stowing.

With a view to solving the above problem in a com-

prehensive manner, a Committee has been constituted on 19/12/1996 with Secretary (Coal) as the Chairman and representatives of Planning Commission, Ministry of Labour, Govt. of West Bengal and Bihar, Director General Mines Safety, Coal India Limited, Central Mine Planning & Design Institute Limited, Bharat Coking Coal Limited and Eastern Coalfields Limited as members. The Committee is expected to submit its report by June, 1997.

[*Transaltion*]

Jute Mills

5525. SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI:

SHRI DATTA MEGHE:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) The number of public sector and private jute mills functioning in the country at present, Statewise;

(b) the State-wise, number of jute mills closed and the number of jute mills running in losses separately out of it;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to revive these mills;

(d) -whether the Government propose to extend assistance to these jute mills under United Nations Development Programme; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA):

(a) and (b) A statement is enclosed.

(c) As per existing status cases of every sick unit are to be referred to BIFR. This quasi-judicial body examines cases of rehabilitation. Revival schemes of the units are being prepared/examined by the Operating Agency appointed by BIFR. On receipt of the scheme BIFR decides cases of rehabilitation of individual unit.

(d) and (e) No such proposal is in the pipeline at present. However, these mills if required may obtain assistance/support under Jute Entrepreneurs Assistance Scheme.

Statement

The number of public sector and private jute mills functioning in the country

State	Private Sector	Public Sector	Total
1	2	3	4
West Bengal	50	6	56
Andhra Pradesh	4	-	4
U.P.	2	-	2

1	2	3	4
Bihar	1	1	2
Madhya Pradesh	1	-	1
Assam	1	-	1
Tripura	-	1	1
Orissa	1	-	1
Grand Total	60	8	68

I Statewise Number of Jute Mills Closed

West Bengal	3
Bihar	1
U.P.	1

II No. of Jute Mills Running in Losses:

All the above 5 jute mills at (I) above were running at losses at the time of closing.

[English]

Recognition to National and Regional Parties

5526. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Election Commission has recommended sweeping changes in the present criteria for recognition of national and regional parties;

(b) if so, the main recommendations made in this regard; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government for implementation of these recommendation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Losses suffered by MMTC as per audit investigations

5527. SHRI UTTAMSINGH PAWAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether audit investigations into deals made in the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation of India Ltd. have unearthed several cases where top officials were involved in either doling out favour to certain firms of causing heavy losses to the public exchequer;

(b) if so, the details of such cases including the losses, suffered in each case; and

(c) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) and (b) The report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India for the year ending 31st March, 1996 has made few observations with regard to anomalies in the operation of gold schemes by MMTC under the Exim Policy. The report inter alia mentioned that foreign exchange amounting to Rs. 57.65 crores remained unrealised in respect of Gems and Jewellery exports.

(c) The Government has initiated action for verification of facts and for remedial measures, with the concerned agencies.

Rehabilitation of Heavy Engineering Corporation

5528. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have approved a proposal for rehabilitation of the Heavy Engineering Corporation (HEC);

(b) if so, whether this is the first sick Public Sector Undertaking for which the Government have provided funds;

(c) if so, the total public sector sick units at present; and

(d) the number of Public Sector Undertakings improving their profitability?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASLI MARAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) 23 public sector undertakings under the Department of Heavy Industry are sick and have been referred to BIFR as per SICA. Out of these sick PSUs, BIFR has sanctioned revival schemes for 7 PSUs including Heavy Engineering Corporation Ltd. and necessary funds are being provided by the Government.

(d) Out of the 7 PSUs where BIFR have sanctioned revival schemes 3 PSUs namely Scooters India Ltd. (SIL), Richardson & Cruddas Ltd. (R & C) and Bharat Brakes & Valves Ltd. (BBVL) have achieved turnaround and have earned profits in 1996-97.

[Translation]

Production of Car

5529. PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA:

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been an increase in the production of cars in the country during the Eighth Five Year Plan period;

(b) if so, the total number of cars manufactured in the country during 1991-92 and the total number of cars manufactured indigenously during 1996-97;