SHRI S. KRISHAN KUMAR: Sir, a well is abandoned only when it is conclusively proved that it is dry and any further investment will be a waste.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: Sir, I have asked about some specific cases.

SHRI S. KRISHAN KUMAR: Sir, we can make available to the hon. Members the information that we have on this matter.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[*English*]

Availability of Lignite

*306. DR. P. VALLAL PERUMAN: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the places where lignite resources are available in the country;

(b) the quantity available in different places and when these are likely to be mined;

(c) whether the Government have any proposal to set up a National Commission for Lignite Mining and the allied thermal generation at Neyveli; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI P.A. SANGMA): (a) and (b) The important known occurrences of lignite in India, by and large, are confined to Neyveli, Jayamkondam and environs in Tamil Nadu, Bahur in Pondicherry and Tamil Nadu, Panandhro in Gujarat, Palana, Gurha, Barsingsar, Kapurdhi, Jalipu, Merta Road in Rajasthan and Nichahom in Jammu & Kashmir; besides sporadic occurrences reported in certain areas of Tanjore and Ramnad districts of Tamil Nadu, Alleppey, Varkala, Cannanore, etc. in Kerala and Rathnagiri, Sindudurg districts in Maharashtra.

The lignite reserves in the country has been currently estimated at about 6500 million tonnes. The state-wise distribution is as follows:—

State	*Area*	*Million Tonnes*
Tamilnadu	Neyveli	3,300
	Jayamkondam	1,150
	Bahur-Pondicherry	580
Gujarat	Panandhro, Lakhpat, etc.	583
Rajasthan	Palana, Barsingsar, Kapurdhi, etc.	870
Jammu & Kashmir		90
Kerala		100
	(to be proved by detailed exploration)	
	Total	6,473
		say 6,500

The lignite resources at Neyveli are exploited by Neyveli Lignite Corporation, a public sector undertaking, mainly for pit-head power generation. The existing projects of NLC are Mine-I (6.5 m.t. capacity/annum), First Thermal Power Station (600 MW), Mine-II stage-I (4.7 m.t. capacity/annum), Thermal Power Station-II, stage I (3 × 210 MW), a fertilizer plant having an installed capacity of 1.52 lakh tonnes of urea per annum and a Briquetting and Carbonisation plant with installed capacity of 3.27 lakh tonnes of briquettes (leco)/annum. Besides, there are a number of projects under implementation and also new projects in the pipeline.

Detailed geological exploration for lignite in Jayamkondam area in Trichy district and adjacent areas of South Arcot district of Tamil Nadu and Bahur area in Pondicherry is at present being carried out by N.L.C. feasibility report/project proposal can be prepared only after completion of detailed geological exploration and hydrological investigations.

Lignite reserves in Panandhro in Kutch district of Gujarat is being mined by Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation. In Panandhro area, there is total reserve of about 90 m.t. out of which about 60 m.t. have been proposed for effective mining for a mine of 1.5 m.t. for use in pit-head thermal power station of 2×70 MW to be later expanded to 3×70 MW.

Lignite is also mined in Jagadia in Baroach district.

For exploitation of lignite resources in other areas like Akrimota, Umarsar, Bhavanagar, etc., further exploration may be necessary for firming up the reserves.

In Rajasthan, the Barsingsar deposit is already being considered for exploitation by NLC. A lignite mine (1.7 m.t./annum capacity)-cum-power project (2×120 MW) has been sanctioned by the Government of India at a cost of Rs. 828.04 crores in April, 1991. Gurha deposit in the neighbourhood is also likely to be later considered for concurrent mining with Barsingsar for possible expansion of the proposed power project at Barsingsar using lignite.

The lignite deposits at Kapurdhi, Jalipa and Giral in Barmer district. Kashnau-Igiar in Nagaur district and Palana in Bikaner district could also be considered for exploitation using appropriate technology. Palana lignite was mined earlier by underground method and was abandoned because of fire outbreak.

Lignite deposits have been proved in Nichahom district of Jammu & Kashmir. The combustion of the lignite has been tested at Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd., Trichy and the possibility of preparing a feasibility report for the installation of 2×10 MW Thermal Power Station based on the fluidised bed combustion at Nichahom is being considered.

For lignite deposits in Kerala, a task force has been constituted to coordinate the exploratory activities to be taken up with various agencies and to evaluate the data generated and suggest measures for utilisation of lignite deposit.

(c) There is no proposal to set up such a Commission at present. But International Competitive Bids have been invited for preparation of a Master Plan for development of lignite, power generation, other down stream industries, etc. based on it. NLC proposes to commission this study early.

(d) Does not arise.

[*Translation*]

Railways Expansion Programme in Rajasthan

*311. SHRI RAM NARAIN BERWA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken steps to expand and provide