

Productivity level for coal mines

5373. SHRI BHAGEY GOBARDHAN:
Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to State

(a) the productivity level, for opencast and underground coal mines below which exploration of coal becomes uneconomic;

(b) the number of such coal mines with the Coal India Limited and Singareni Collieries Company Limited;

(c) the steps taken to improve the productivity; and

(d) the optimum level of productivity likely to be achieved with modernisation and management techniques in the coal mines?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S.B. NYAMAGOUDA): (a) and (b). During 1991-91, productivity (Output Per Manshift) level was as follows :-

Company	(tonnes)		
	Underground	Opencast	Overall
CIL	0.54	3.34	1.31
SCCL	0.65	4.76	1.18

Although it may not be possible to indicate the productivity level below which coal mining operations become uneconomic, with the present level of productivity and coal prices, underground mining operations are generally not profitable. In order to make underground mines break even, the overall underground output per manshift (OMS) has to be higher. Besides productivity, other factors which significantly affect the production cost are cost of stores and spares, explosives, power, depreciation and interest etc. Similar factors influence the financial viability of opencast mines also. With the present level of productivity, the opencast mines are generally viable except in cases where the grades of coal produced are poor and are at a greater depth.

(c) Some of the major steps being taken to improve productivity are as follows :-

(i) Improved manpower planning including redeployment of surplus workers.

(ii) Control on increase in manpower through voluntary retirement schemes.

(iii) Deployment of higher capacity draglines, shovels, dumper and drills in opencast mines and roof bolting, continuous miner, powered support longwall system, multislicing, blasting gallery and hydraulic mining etc. in underground mines.

(iv) Improvement in the availability and utilisation of equipment by providing adequate workshop support, improved management of spares and timely rehabilitation of equipments.

(d) The provisional target of overall productivity in 1994-95 in respect of CIL and SCCL is 1.58 tonnes and 1.55 tonnes respectively.