

continue to be developed in rural areas, there is no need to revive the earlier policy of up-gradation of extra departmental branch offices on Provision of public call offices.

Prevention of Illegal Coal Mining

8622. SHRI K. PRADHANI: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether some illegal coal mines are running in the country;

(b) if so, the number of such illegal mines and whether the number has also increased while compared to 1980-81; and

(c) the specific steps have been taken by Government in collaboration with the States to stop such illegal mines and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COAL IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI DALBIR SINGH):

(a) to (c) The coal mines (Nationalisation) Acts were amended in 1976 prohibiting any person other than the persons authorised by the Act to carry on coal mining operations in India in any form and terminating all leases relating to winning or mining of coal granted in favour of private parties except those engaged in the production of iron and steel. The Acts were also amended to make illegal coal mining a cognizable offence punishable with imprisonment extending to a term of 3 years and a fine extending to Rs. 20, 000/- .

The coal belt in the country is vast and as and when illegal extraction of coal is detected, it is reported to the Law Enforcing Agencies by Coal Companies. After the amendments of the Acts, under the guise of court orders in some cases unauthorised mining of coal was taking place. The Supreme Court in their judgements dated 11. 4. 1980 and 7. 5. 1980 upheld these provisions of the Acts. After these judgements, illegal coal mining has been curbed to a great extent. However, certain persons, at times, violate these provisions of Law and indulge in illegal coal mining. The Coal Companies and the State Governments are

taking concerted action against the offenders. The State Government have already issued instructions to the district authorities to take punitive and preventive action under these Acts read with provisions of Indian Penal Code. The Coal Companies have also been directed to report to the authorities concerned as and when illegal extraction of coal is detected. Periodic raids are conducted both by the Security staff of the coal Companies and the State Governments.

Faqir Chand Committee Report on Structure of Service Conditions of EPF Employees

8623. SHRI VIJAY KUMAR YADAV: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have received Faqir Chand Committee report on the structure and service conditions of employees in E.P.F. Organisation;

(b) if so, which of the recommendations of the Committee have been accepted and which are the recommendations not accepted by Government; and

(c) whether it is a fact that the officers of the organisation are feeling demoralised at the inordinate delay in acceptance of the rationalisation of pay scales as recommended by the Committee?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI VEERANDRA PATIL): (a) Yes, Sir

(b) The particulars of the recommendations which have been accepted and of those which have not been accepted are given in the attached statements I and II, laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT—8486/83]

(c) Proposals regarding rationalisation of the pay scales of the Regional Provident Fund Commissioners are presently under examination of the Government.