

relate to (1) the removal of certain practical difficulties in the enforcement of the Mines Act, (2) provision of additional safety regulations, (3) closer association of workers with safety measures, (4) provision for a minimum penalty in case of gross negligence or recklessness, and (5) increase in the levy of the cess for administration of rescue Stations.

With a view to motivate the mine managements towards better performance in the field of accident prevention, the Government have recently instituted a National Safety Award Scheme for mines.

(b) The Mines Act, 1952 and the rules framed thereunder also contain provisions regarding the amenities required to be provided to mine workers. The mining companies also operate their own schemes of providing relief to the families of workers killed in accidents in the shape of giving employment to one dependent, ex-gratia payment to meet funeral expenses, family pension, etc., in addition to the compensation payable under Workmen's Compensation Act.

Unrest among the Workers of P&T Telecom Factories

*3498. SHRI SUSHIL BHATTACHARYA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of Government has been drawn towards the unrest brewing among the workers of P and T telecom factories; and

(b) If so, the steps taken in the matter ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI VIJAY N. PATIL) : (a) and (b) No unrest is brewing among the workers of P&T Telecom Factories at present. However, the unions of industrial workers of Telecom Factories have made certain demands. These were discussed with their representatives recently in a cordial atmosphere.

Submission of Audited Accounts by Political Parties

*3499. PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been a demand that it shall be made obligatory on the political parties to submit audited statements of their accounts; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI JAGAN NATH KAUSHAL) : (a) and (b) The Election Commission has recommended that provision should be made by law for compulsory registration of political parties and for periodic inspection and publication of their accounts. This recommendation is under consideration of the Cabinet Committee on Electoral Reforms along with the various other proposals relating to electoral reforms.

Setting up of Another Coal-based Fertiliser Plants IN M.P.

3500. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that non-coking coal resources in Madhya Pradesh are so abundant as to sustain another coal-based fertiliser plant besides the Korba Fertiliser Plant ;

(b) whether Government have considered the question of setting up of another coal-based fertiliser plant in Madhya Pradesh; and

(c) if so, the decision taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI R. C. RATH) : (a) to (c) The Government have not explored non-coking coal resources in Madhya Pradesh

with a view to setting up another fertilizer plant besides Korba fertilizer plant.

**Operation of Helicopters for ONGC by
Indian Air Force**

3501. SHRI B. V. DESAI : Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to entrust the acquisition and operation of helicopters required for the Oil and Natural Gas Commission to the Indian Air Force ;

(b) if so, whether earlier Government had opposed the idea of handing over the job to private parties or creating a separate helicopter corporation ;

(c) if so, what were the main reasons for handing over the same to IAF ;

(d) whether Government have already approved the ONGC's proposed for acquiring 12 helicopters ; and

(e) if, so, to what extent they have been obtained ?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The various alternatives for providing helicopter support for ONGC's offshore operation were examined by the Government and it was decided that helicopter support for offshore operation should be provided by the IAF.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Tenders have invited by the Ministry of Defence which are in the process of being finalised.

Utilization of Solar Energy in the Capital

3502. SHRI R. L. BHATTA : Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether solar energy utilisation plan in the capital has been worked out by the Department of Renewable Energy under his Ministry ;

(b) if so, the broad outlines thereof ;

(c) whether any expertise for installation and use of solar collectors on the roof has been made public ; and

(d) what are fiscal incentives given by Government for users of renewable energy sources by the Industries ?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR) : (a) and (b) As a part of its efforts to propagate the use of new and renewable energy sources including solar thermal devices all over the country through its demonstration and extension programmes, a number of exploratory discussions have been held with various organisations in Delhi, like hospitals, hotels and industrial organisations, who may be interested in utilising solar energy. In the light of these discussions, a Solar Energy Utilisation Plan is under preparation. The utilisation of solar energy for low grade heat applications and for cooking purposes is contemplated under the plan.

(c) Several solar hot water systems of capacity 2000 to 50,000 litres in the temperature range of 60° to 80°C have been installed on the roof top of the buildings in various organisations. In addition to the Department of Non-Conventional Energy Sources, over a dozen private manufacturers offer expertise to all those interested in installing solar collectors on their roofs.

(d) Government has given several fiscal and promotional incentives for the utilisation of renewable energy devices. These include enhanced depreciation allowance, investment allowance, exemption from excise duty, short term loan from commercial banks, financing institutions, refinance facilities from IDBI, exemption from sales tax in the States/Union Territories of Gujarat, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Delhi and Maharashtra. Subsidies for various categories of users particularly in rural areas for biogas plants