

only Rs. 36 lakhs have been spent. At each stage we cannot see whether it has been exceeded, we must see at the end of it. There is no purpose in this question.

#### Fire in Gidi Colliery

\*1280. **Shri Indrajit Gupta:** Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Gidi Colliery in the Karanpura area has been seriously damaged by an underground fire;

(b) whether it is a fact that valuable machinery had to be abandoned in the mine;

(c) the total cost of the damage incurred by the National Coal Development Corporation as a result thereof; and

(d) whether the causes of the fire have been investigated?

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel (Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha):** (a) to (d). A statement giving the desired information is laid on the Table of the House.

#### STATEMENT

A fire broke out in one of the three inclines in the underground mines of Gidi Colliery on the 24th May, 1961 at 5.30 p.m. Attempts were made by the colliery staff to reach the seat of the fire, but it was not possible to do so on account of thick smoke underground. Rescue teams then attempted to go down, but they too failed to reach the spot of the fire. Consequently it was decided to seal off the mine and the sealing operations were completed on the 25th May, 1961 within about 24 hours of the time the fire was first detected.

The fire was extinguished about the middle of June and the mine was reopened on the 25th July, 1961. It was found that as a result of the sealing of the mine, the water level inside had risen. The mine has, however, been dewatered since then. Electrical equipment which had

become damp has been taken out. All other underground equipment has been out right. Raising of coal from the mine is expected to start within about a week. The Managing Director has appointed an Enquiry Committee to investigate into the cause of the fire.

The mine was producing 18,000 tons of coal per month from each of the three inclines, and as only one incline caught fire, the loss of production was about 18,000 tons a month. No workers were rendered idle as they had all been deployed in the remaining portions of the colliery which continued to be in operation.

**Shri Indrajit Gupta:** From the statement I find that part of the equipment had to be taken out of the mine, and it says other underground equipment has been put right. I would like to have a clarification. I want to know whether a part of the equipment has been permanently damaged, as also the cost of the equipment which had to be abandoned underground when the fire broke out.

**The Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel (Sardar Swaran Singh):** Luckily, there has not been any permanent damage to the equipment. Some equipment of a portable type was taken out and necessary repairs were effected. Certain other equipment which could not be taken out was repaired without disturbing its position. I have not got the figure of the expenditure involved in setting right the machinery, but it is not much.

**Shri Indrajit Gupta:** Fire broke out on 24th May according to the statement. Up to now investigation into the cause of this fire has not been completed. May I know the reason for this delay, and by what time it is expected that the result of the investigation will be available?

**Sardar Swaran Singh:** An enquiry committee was constituted by the National Coal Development Corporation, and we do not know if the report has been submitted. We were trying to contact them even yesterday, but

we could not get through. So, we will ask them to expedite the enquiry and make a report.

**Shri T. B. Vittal Rao:** Who are the members of this committee? Is it the same committee which enquired into the blast that occurred at Kurasia?

**Sardar Swaran Singh:** It is perhaps the same committee with Shri Nar-gundkar of Singareni collieries as the Chairman or as one of the important members but I am not sure about it.

**Shri Tangmani:** The capacity of this mine was 18,000 tons per mensem. I would like to know whether the entire mine had to be closed and the production stopped, or only a part of it, because from the statement it appears that although only one of the inclines caught fire, the entire production has been stopped.

**Sardar Swaran Singh:** No. Production only in that incline stopped. That is clarified in the statement.

**Shri Indrajit Gupta:** It is being reported in the press that these underground fires in some of the N.C.D.C. mines beginning from Gidi and subsequently a much more serious fire at Kurasia, are taking place under mysterious circumstances. Has this aspect been investigated or explored or considered in any way by the Ministry? It is a very serious matter.

**Sardar Swaran Singh:** When these unfortunate accidents take place, people generally make their own allegations. It is not for me to contradict any allegation that might have been made. An enquiry committee has been constituted. It will go into the cause of the fire. I should await their report rather than prejudice the investigation work of the enquiry committee one way or the other.

**सीमावर्ती क्षेत्रों में सड़कों**

\*१२८२. श्री खुशबक्त राय : क्या गृह-कार्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि उत्तर प्रदेश के सीमावर्ती क्षेत्रों में सड़कों बनाने का उत्तर-

दायित्व डायरेक्टर जनरल आफ बार्ड रोड्स का नहीं है ; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो इसका क्या कारण है ?

गृह-कार्य मंत्रालय में राज्य-मंत्री (अ. दातार) : (क) और (ख). उत्तर प्रदेश के सीमान्त क्षेत्रों में सड़कों के निर्माण के लिए प्रांत के अन्य क्षेत्रों के समान साधारणतः राज्य सरकार ही जिम्मेदार है। डायरेक्टर जनरल आफ बार्ड रोड्स विशेष रूप से सैनिक (सुरक्षा) महत्व की सड़कों का निर्माण कराते हैं।

I shall read it in English also.

(a) and (b). The construction roads in the border areas of Uttar Pradesh, as in the rest of the State is normally the responsibility of the State Government. In the case of certain roads of strategic significance the construction is undertaken by the Director General, Border Roads as a special case.

श्री खुशबक्त राय : क्या मैं यह जान सकता हूँ कि उत्तर प्रदेश में जो सड़कों के निर्माण का कार्य चल रहा है उस की प्रगति क्या बहुत धीमी नहीं है, और कहीं कहीं पर तो नहीं के बराबर है ?

**Shri Datar:** They send reports to me from time to time regarding new strategic roads.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is the work going on quickly? That is what the hon. Member wants to know probably.

**Shri Datar:** There is nothing to suppose that it is being slowed down.

श्री भक्त बर्शन : श्रीनमन् क्या गवर्नमेंट के ध्यान में यह बात आई है कि चूंकि इन सड़कों का निर्माण उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार ने सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग द्वारा किया जा रहा है, और उन के काम का सिस्टम वहीं पुरानी ठेकेदारी प्रथा का है, इस की वजह से