

TION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the appalling working conditions in Kedla and Jharkand coal mines of Bihar ;

(b) whether he proposes to visit the mines to study the working conditions there ; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR) : (a) to (c) There are 45 working coal mines in Kedla and Jharkand area which are being worked by different managing contractors and about 7,000 persons are employed daily. All these units are having only open-cast workings. The Director General of Mines Safety is taking suitable action to ensure that the persons employed are not endangered and that the other provisions of law are complied with. During inspections by officers of Directorate General of Mines Safety dangerous working conditions were detected and others under Section 22(3) of the Mines Act have been issued in respect of 23 units and employment of persons for coal production prohibited till workings are made safe in accordance with the regulations.

Provision of Boots and Helmets for Coal Miners in Kedla and Jharkand Coal Mines of Bihar

1625 SHRI R. N. SHARMA : Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether under the safety regulations in force coal miners are required to be provided with boots and helmets ;

(b) if so, whether boots and helmets are provided in the Kedla and Jharkand coal mines of Bihar ; and

(c) if not, the action taken by Government in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR) : (a) Yes

(b) No.

(c) The owners who are managing contractors of Kedla and Jharkand coal mines have been asked to provide boots and helmets to the workers

Wages of Coal Miners in Kedla and Jharkand Coal Mines in Bihar

1626 SHRI R. N. SHARMA : Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state :

(a) the minimum wage of a coal miner of Kedla-Jharkand region of Bihar as prescribed under the law and as actually given to him ;

(b) whether Government are aware that there are no arrangements to weigh the coal in these mines for the purpose of making payment on piece-rate basis ;

(c) whether Government are aware that the workers are paid much less on piece-rate basis than what they are entitled to due to lack of weighing arrangements ; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR) : (a) There is no minimum rate prescribed under law for workmen in coal mines. The prevailing basic rates for quarry miners and pick miners in these mines are Rs. 5/- and Rs. 6/- per 50 Cft. respectively. As regards the Variable Dearness Allowance, there are 42 managing contractors working in the two collieries in addition to one block being run by the Receiver directly. The Variable Dearness Allowance is being paid at Rs. 2.13 by five managing contractors and the Receiver while the two managing contractors are paying at a lower rate of Rs. 1.62 and Rs. 1.77. The managing contractors pay wages to the workers employed for removal of overburden at Rs. 5.40 for earth cutting, Rs. 7.50 for earth fire clay and soft stone cutting and Rs. 10.80 for hard stone cutting for 100 cft. in both the collieries.

(b) Payments to piece-rated quarry miners and pick miners are made on measurements and not on weightment.

(c) and (d). No complaint has been received from workers regarding lack of weighing arrangements.