

(b) if so, the Government's reaction thereto?

THE PRIME MINISTER, MINISTER OF ATOMIC ENERGY, MINISTER OF ELECTRONICS, MINISTER OF SPACE, MINISTER OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The matter is under consideration.

#### Low Temperature Carbonisation Plant in Surguja

1201. SHRI G. C. DIXIT: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 3152 on the 4th December, 1974 regarding low temperature carbonisation plant in Surguja and state the time by which the said project is likely to be cleared.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (PROF. SIDDHESHWAR PRASAD): A proposal for L. T. C. Plant from the Government of Madhya Pradesh was considered by Government along with the Government of Madhya Pradesh and other authorities concerned. The Government of Madhya Pradesh have been advised to submit a revised feasibility study report, in consultation with Coal Mines Authority and Central Fuel Research Institute. This is awaited.

#### Virgin Coal Bearing Area in Burdwan District of West Bengal

1202. SHRI SAKTI KUMAR SARKAR: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 2238 on the 27th November, 1974 regarding Virgin Coal Bearing Area in Burdwan District of West Bengal and state:

(a) whether the information has since been collected; and

(b) if so, the main features thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (PROF. SIDDHESHWAR PRASAD): (a) and (b). An article entitled "Neglected Bankura Coal Mines" had appeared in the Coalfield Tribune, dated the 19th October, 1974 which is published from Asansol. It highlighted the need for re-opening of the closed mines of Bankura District.

There are ten small mines in this district, which are covered under the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973, namely Ardhagram Khas, New Ardhagram, Gopalpur, Chakbaga Khas, Hamirpur, Jamuna Kanali, New Kalikapur, Kalidaspur, Banskuri and Khuratori Khas, out of which only the first three have been working, the remaining being closed mines, abandoned long time back.

Although the aforementioned article, citing the inspecting reports of 1897 giving the findings of the Coal Survey Advisory Committee, mentioned availability of coal in the abandoned mines, the available geological data are still insufficient to plan out full-time operation of coal mining. Even in respect of the three working mines, the reserves in two, namely Ardhagram Khas and New Ardhagram, have very limited life. The infrastructure facilities like power supply, railway siding and approach roads, are just not available. Many of the mines in this area will also have to be seasonal in character, being situated within the high flood level area of the Damodar river.

The Coal Mines Authority are undertaking a feasibility study to re-open Kalidaspur Colliery but in the absence of necessary infrastructure facilities and on account of the seasonal character of the mines, it may not be possible to re-open this or the other closed mines, immediately.