

LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Thursday, December 5, 1996. Agrahayana 14,
1918 (Saka)

(The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock)

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER in the Chair]

[English]

... (Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Mr Deputy-Speaker Sir, yesterday there was a serious incident in Kashmir during a public meeting organised by my party, the Communist Party of India (Marxist). There was an attack by terrorists and extremists with grenades and other lethal weapons. Six persons were killed and our Secretary in the State, Shri Yusuf, who is also an MLA, has escaped narrowly. It is a serious incident that has taken place in Kashmir. I demand a statement from the Minister of Home Affairs... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : We will take it up during zero hour.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Please allow it during zero hour.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Export of Granite

*201. SHRIMATI SHEELA GAUTAM :

VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI :

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to declare granite as a major mineral and bring it under its control;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the excavation sites of granite in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh; and

(d) the details of the countries to whom it was exported during the last three years alongwith foreign exchange earned as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) to (d). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Granite being minor mineral, mineral concessions are granted by the State Govts. under their

respective Minor Mineral Concession Rules which vary from State to State. Granite quarries in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh are mainly located in the districts as under :-

Rajasthan : Ajmer, Alwar, Banswara, Barmer, Bhilwara, Chittorgarh, Dungarpur, Jaipur, Jalore, Jhujhunu, Jodhpur, Nagaur, Pali, Sawai-Madhupur, Sikar, Sirohi and Udaipur districts.

Madhya Pradesh : Balaghat, Bastar, Betul, Bilaspur, Chhatarpur, Datia, Dewas, Gwalior, Jhabua, Jabalpur, Mandla, Panna, Raipur, Rajnandgaon, Sagar, Shivpuri, Sidhi and Tikamgarh districts.

(d) Granite is being exported from India to more than 100 countries of which some of the major countries are Italy, Japan, United States of America, Germany, Belgium, Singapore, China, Hong kong, United Arab Emirate, Netherlands, United Kingdom, etc.

The value of exports of granite during the last three years are as follows :

Years	Value Rs. in Crores
1993-94	772
1994-95	993
1995-96	1100*
*provisional	

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SHEELA GAUTAM : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in my reply to part (a) and (b) of my question, the Hon'ble Minister has said that question does not arise and as regards to part (d) of my question, a detailed reply has not been given. I had asked about the total amount of foreign exchange earned through exporting granite but the hon'ble Minister has not made any mention about it. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister as to how much foreign exchange has been earned through exporting granite during the last three years and the target fixed for the year 1996-97 and whether the target fixed for this year has been achieved or not as only four months of this financial year are left? My second question is that to how many companies licences and permits have been issued and whether these licences have also been given to the NRIs or not and the extent of concession given in the licences and permits issued to them?

[English]

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : Sir, regarding export earnings of granite, I have already submitted the detailed facts and figures in terms of rupees in crores. I have laid on the Table of the House a statement about it. In 1993-94, the value was Rs. 772 crore, in 1994-95 it was Rs. 993 crore and in 1995-96, it comes to Rs. 1100 crore.

Regarding the second question raised by the hon. Member...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MADHUKAR SARPOTDAR : What you are stating is already given in the written ~~reply~~. But the nature of her question is entirely different...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : I have given a clear picture based on facts and figures.

Regarding the second question under Section 3(e) of Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957, granite is a minor mineral...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SHEELA GAUTAM : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, he has given incomplete answer to my question. He should have given complete answer to my question stating the total number of licences issued and the number of licences issued to Non-Resident Indians out of those. My second supplementary question is that here are so many small mineral reserves in India and many people belonging to Scheduled Caste work there for the maintenance of these reserves. I would like to know as to whether any scheme has been formulated to provide loans to them from the co-operative banks? Loans are given to big industries but these small industries are not provided loans. In fact, large pieces of granite are found there but there are no equipments available in our country for cutting and polishing these pieces. Whereas in foreign countries people earn more money after cutting and polishing these pieces of granites. Whether the Government is considering to establish them?

[English]

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : Sir, the granite is a minor mineral. The policy regarding prospecting licence, mining lease etc. is provided by the State Government. The Central Government cannot interfere with it. But granite is a very important product of our country. It plays a vital role in the Indian economy. It earns a huge amount of foreign exchange.

To look after this, Government of India constituted the Granite Development Council in the year 1995. The first meeting of the Council took place in February, 1995. The Council constituted a sub-group with the Joint Secretary of Mines as its Chairman. The representatives of the State Government and the granite industry are there. The representatives from the Geological Survey of India and the Controller General of Indian Bureau of Mines are there. They are formulating certain policy to develop granite.

I would like to repeat it that granite is a minor mineral. According to the provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development Act), 1957, a minor mineral has been treated as a State subject...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, this Mining Industry, which earns 53 per cent of foreign exchange is on the verge of extinction. You have put the entire responsibility on the states. My submission is that these companies are not provided with 'Hamer furnace oil' due to which many companies in Rajasthan are on the verge of closure. Part (a) of my supplementary question is whether these arrangements are being made by the Government in this regard. Part (b) of my question is that the Central Government is continuing to invite foreign companies as a result of which the workers working in that sector are facing the problem of earning their livelihood. Please make it clear as to what extent foreign companies will be allowed to take over the area in the name of globalisation and the area which would be kept reserved for our local workers. Please give reply to my these two questions properly.

[English]

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : I would like to give an answer to the first supplementary. The granite industry is surely facing various problems. Many granite mining industries are going to close down. Out of 449 100% EOU in our country, only 119 are functioning.

Sir, I agree with the points that have been raised by the hon. Members. The main problem facing the granite industry today is the inter-state movement of granite. Then the royalty also differs from State to State and the Mining and leasing policies are also different in different states. It is because granite is a minor mineral. Though it is a very important subject, yet according to the Mines and Mineral (Regulation) and Development Act, 1957, granite is a State subject. Government of India has taken several steps for its development.

The Ministry of Mines and the Ministry of Commerce have also taken several steps to address this problem. For example, in 1994 a Cabinet memorandum was submitted regarding the amendment of the Mines and Mineral (Regulation) and Development Act, 1957. The Cabinet approved other amendments excepting the one which dealt with granite. The Cabinet directed the Ministry of Mines to convene a meeting of either the Chief Ministers of the States or the Ministers of Mines of the States. Accordingly, two meetings were held; one with the representatives of the Mining Industry and another with the State Mining Ministers. The observation of the representatives of the Mining industry was that the problems facing the mining industry today are due to the different policies adopted by the different Governments...*(Interruptions)* I have given an appropriate reply...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI : This subject falls under the jurisdiction of the Central Government. Do not evade your responsibility by passing it on to the State

Government. The Central Government does not provide furnace oil to them due to which 300 units are lying closed...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Let him reply.

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : Sir, it is a state subject and the Centre cannot enter into that arena...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI : The Central Government gives permit for furnace oil but infact, it does not issue it so easily...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : Central Government does not issue permits for furnace oil.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Who gives the permit for furnace oil?

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : Sir, granite is a State subject of Petroleum Ministry

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : So far as the licence for granite is concerned, it is given by the State Government but what he is asking is: 'Who gives the permit for the furnace oil'?

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : Sir, it is given by the Petroleum Ministry.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Is it for furnace oil also?

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : Yes, Sir.

[Translation]

VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI : Even the quota of furnace oil is not released. You...*'speaking ... (Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : Sir, it is a monor mineral.

[Translation]

VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI : Please speak about oil...*(Interruptions)* It is not made available. Its full quota is not released...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : He is not asking about the mineral. He is asking about furnace oil connected with that industry

[English]

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : Sir, Granite is a State subject.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : It is supplied by the Central Government?

Not recorded

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : No, Sir...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Wherefrom do they get the furnace oil?...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : They get it from the State Government...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please sit down. Let me get a clarification. Wherefrom does the State Government get the furnace oil?

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : Sir, granite is a product of the State Government. It is not given by the Central Government.

[Translation]

VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI : State Governments are even not issued their quota. You are misguiding the House...*(Interruptions)* what is the reason, 350 factories are lying closed there and people are facing starvation.

[English]

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : No

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Now, it seems that there is some confusion. Shri Joshi says that the furnace oil is supplied by the Centre whereas the hon. Minister says that it is being supplied by the State Government.

[Translation]

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, both the situations are clear. The fact is this that the Central Government gives furnace oil to the states but the quota of states is so less that it does not fulfil the requirement of the factories.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The Minister does not agree with that.

[Translation]

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : The Centre should increase the quota of Rajasthan state according to their need. You should at least ...*(Interruptions)* the Minister of Petroleum.

[English]

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : Sir, granite is a State subject.

[Translation]

VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI : The quota as demanded by the Rajasthan Government ...*(Interruptions)* That quota is also not given for general use to Rajasthan.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Dau Dayal ji, please sit down for a minute....*(Interruptions)*

[English]

Mr. Minister, your Ministry may not be dealing with furnace oil...

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please sit down.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM SAGAR : The hon'ble Member has used unparliamentary term, it should be expunged.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : It shall be expunged from the record.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please maintain decorum. Your Ministry may not be dealing with furnace oil. It may have been supplied by the Ministry of Petroleum. Either you say that you are not aware of it or ...

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI MUKHTAR ANIS : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the unparliamentary term should be expunged from the proceeding of the House.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : It has already been expunged.

[English]

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : Furnace oil is looked after by the Ministry of Petroleum and not by the Ministry of Mines. Regarding granite, my conception is hundred per cent correct.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Since furnace oil is dealt with by another Ministry and not by your Ministry, let the question go to that Ministry.

SHRI S. BANGRAPPA : The question relates to quarrying of granite. It has got two aspects. The first aspect relates to the general policy framework and the other is regarding quarrying of granite in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. It is a common scene in our country, even in the State of Karnataka. Quarrying of granite is going on. Different varieties of coloured granite are being quarried even in the mines of Karnataka. The environmentalists and ecologists have put forward their case saying that illegal or even legal quarrying of granite throughout the country, particularly in the State of Karnataka, has resulted in an ecological imbalance. Has the Government taken note of this matter seriously and is it taking steps to stop illegal quarrying? Though it is a State subject, will the Minister take proper steps to check illegal quarrying and also to have a control over legal quarrying so as to see that the environmental matter is not touched as it has resulted in an ecological imbalance?

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : I agree with the hon. Member that the granite industry in our country has adopted the traditional method of quarrying.

Whenever we follow the traditional method, there is always scope for environmental or ecological problems to come up. Although it is a State subject, the Ministry of Mines has taken some steps in this regard and some guideline are being prepared in consultation with the State Government.

[Translation]

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, there is huge reserve of granite in Madhya Pradesh. Granite is found in abundance in many districts of Madhya Pradesh. You have set up a Granite Development Council which has held only one sitting in 1995. I want to know whether you would call its meeting to frame a timebound policy and to remove difficulties in the process of its export in order to have maximum production of granite so that more foreign exchange can be earned. Whether you are considering to call a meeting of the Granite Development Council or to take any other measures for this purpose?

[English]

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : I am extremely happy to inform the House that the Ministry of Mines is going to convene a Minister level State Mining Conference which is going to be held in Delhi on 26th and 27th December.

Villages without Post Offices

*202. *SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK :
SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of villages without post offices in Orissa during 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97, till now;

(b) the number of villages in the State having post offices, district-wise, category-wise; and

(c) the number of post offices proposed to be opened during 1996-97 in the State, district-wise, category-wise?

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA) : (a) The number of villages without Post Offices in Orissa during 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97 till now is given below :

Year	No. of Villages Without Post Offices
1994-95	39418
1995-96	39418
1996-97	39412