

(a) whether the private owner of dolomite mines of Bilaspur area (Madhya Pradesh) are not following the safety rules of mines and giving minimum wages to their employees;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the meeting called by Labour Commissioner was not attended by owners to settle the labour dispute cases; and

(d) if so, the action taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA) : (a) and (b) Provisions of safety rules and regulations are being followed in dolomite mines of Bilaspur district of Madhya Pradesh. The contraventions of provisions of the safety rules observed during the course of inspection of these mines are being followed up and rectified.

Almost all Dolomite Mines in Bilaspur area have been inspected but cases of payment of less than minimum wages have been detected only in the Associated Mining Company and claim cases have been sanctioned for filing before the authority under the Minimum Wages Act.

(c) and (d) Conciliation meetings are called by the Assistant Labour Commissioner (C) to settle the dispute as per the laid down procedure. During 1997-98, about 40 bi-partite and Tripartite settlements were signed by all the unions. However in eight disputes raised by Lal Zenda Mazdoor Union (CITU), the management did not attend the conciliation proceedings due to alleged threat of violence. Ex-parte failure of conciliation report has been received.

[Translation]

Air Service from New Delhi to State Capitals

403. SHRI SOHANVEER SINGH :
SHRI CHINMAYANAND SWAMI :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the State capitals in the country which are not connected with the National Capital by air service; and

(b) the steps taken by the Government of connect these capitals by air service?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR) : (a) The following States capitals have not yet been airlinked with Delhi:

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| (i) Kohima | (ii) Itanagar |
| (iii) Shillong | (iv) Gangtok |

(b) Kohima, Gangtok and Itanagar do not have operational airfields. Shillong airport is not fit for operation by aircraft type available in the fleet of Indian Airlines. However, private operators are being encouraged to add more stations in their network including Shillong subject to commercial viability.

[English]

Opening of a Sub-Regional Office of E.P.F. Organisation

404. SHRI JUAL ORAM : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria fixed for the opening of a sub-regional office of Employees Provident Fund (EPF) Organisation;

(b) the number of sub-regional offices are at present in the country, State-wise;

(c) whether the Government propose to open a sub-regional office at Keonjhar district in Orissa;

(d) if so, by when; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA) : (a) The Sub-Regional Offices in the EPF Organisation are opened keeping in view the parameters like number of establishments, number of employees, number of claims received/settled, service to subscribers in the area etc. While considering the proposal, the recommendation of the Regional EPF Committee is also kept in view in this regard.

(b) A Statement is enclosed.

(c) to (e) The proposal for opening a Sub-Regional EPF Office at Keonjhar has been examined but the same is not considered feasible due to inadequate coverage of the scheme in the area.