

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COAL AND MINES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:142

ANSWERED ON:19.11.2001

LALBANDH MINE COLLAPSE

BASUDEB ACHARIA;DINESH CHANDRA YADAV;MOINUL HASSAN AHAMED;RAM JEEVAN SINGH;SUNDER LAL TIWARI

Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Lalbandh mines of the Eastern Coalfields Limited(ECL)in Asansol district of West Bengal has collapsed due to illegal mining activities ;
- (b) is so, the number of casualties reported therein;
- (c) the financial loss suffered due to this incident;
- (d) whether the Government have conducted any inquiry in this regard;
- (e) if so, the outcome thereof and the follow-up action taken thereon;
- (f) whether the Administration and the Central Industrial Security Force(CISF) as well, have failed to prevent such illegal mining in ECL;
- (g) if so, the reasons therefore; and
- (h) the steps ECL propose to take to prevent subsidence in Raniganj Asansol coal belt area?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR COAL & MINES (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) & (b) : No, Sir. There is no coal mines by the name of Lalbandhin Eastern Coalfields Limited (ECL). Illegal mining was going on under a private land beyond ECL mine boundary at Lalbandh about 15 km. from Asansol town. As regards number of casualties, the district authorities have not been able to confirm it.

(c): No financial loss suffered by ECL.

(d): No, Sir.

(e): Does not arise in view of reply given to part (d) above.

(f) & (g): District authorities are to prevent the illegal mining taking place in areas outside ECL`s control. The steps taken by ECL to curb illegal mining are as under:

- (i) Sealing off the entries of abandoned Underground mines.
- (ii) Dozing off and filling up of abandoned OC mines.
- (iii) Patrolling by own security forces and Central Industrial Security Force(CISF).
- (iv) Intelligence collection and close liaison with District authority.
- (v) Cases of illegal mining are reported to District authority.
- (vi) Whenever illegally mined coal and implements of illegal mining are seized during the course of raids, the same are handed over to local police and FIR lodged.

(h): Extraction of coal is done with sand stowing to prevent subsidence where important surface features exist.

There are some shallow old underground workings of the past(erstwhile owners) which are now inaccessible and waterlogged. Many of these are unstable and may cause unplanned subsidence. Illegal mining may lead to subsidence also. Stabilization of old unstable underground workings by Hydro-pneumatic stowing has been taken up in priority areas in Raniganj Coalfields at Fatepur, Borachak, Palasbon, Gowala Basti, Porarband, Pottery, Bhutdoba, Haripur, Arun Talkies and Kumar Bazar under EMSC and CCDA.