

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COAL
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3184
ANSWERED ON:21.03.2007
FIRE INCIDENTS IN COAL MINES
Khairi Shri Chandrakant Bhaurao

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

- (a) whether incidents of fire have taken place in coal mines of Dhanbad, Jharia and Raniganj;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether fire in these coal mines has not been completely controlled so far;
- (d) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (e) the steps taken to control the fire in the coal mines;
- (f) the extent to which the fire has been controlled till date as a result thereof; (g) whether any committee was constituted by the Government regarding fire incidents in the said coal mines; (h) if so, whether the said committee has given any suggestion in this regard; and (i) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government thereon?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO)

(a) & (b): Coal has the inherent property of spontaneous heating on exposure to oxygen present in air, which may sometimes result in outbreak of fire. The coal seams in Raniganj and Jharia Coalfields are particularly susceptible to spontaneous heating. Occurrences of spontaneous heating often take place in the course of mining operations and are immediately dealt with. The first fire in Jharia coalfield was reported in 1916. Bharat Coking Coal Ltd. (BCCL) inherited 70 fires existing prior to nationalization.

(c)&(d): In Jharia Coalfield there are 77 fires spread over 41 collieries in BCCL. 10 fires have been completely extinguished. 9 underground mine fires have been sealed off and 58 are under control but are to be dealt with as per the Master Plan of Jharia Coalfield. The fires in the underground coal mines in Raniganj Coalfield are under control.

(e): As per the updated Master Plan (2006) of Jharia Coalfield for dealing with fire and subsidence a total of 67 fires shall be dealt with under 45 Fire Projects in a span of 12 years at an estimated cost of Rs.2152.51 crores.

(f): Ten fires have been extinguished completely. The total surface area affected by fire has been reduced to 8.90 sq.km from 17.2 sq.km.

(g) to (i): The matter has been receiving attention for long and several committees have examined the matter. In Dec, 1996 the Government of India constituted a High Power Committee under Secretary (Coal) to review the problem of Fire and Subsidence in Jharia and Raniganj Coalfields and suggest mitigating measures. The Committee submitted its report along with its recommendations which are under implementation. Master Plan for dealing with Fire and Subsidence and rehabilitation of affected populace in Jharia Coalfield and Raniganj Coalfield has been updated for implementation in a period of ten years excluding two years of pre-implementation activities. The Master Plan is under process of approval by the Govt.