

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4114
ANSWERED ON:25.08.2004
FIRE IN COAL MINES
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Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether some coal mines are on fire since long time;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the details of the value of coal getting destroyed by this fire during the last three years, year-wise;
- (d) whether any steps have been taken by the Government to extinguish the fire in these coal mines; and
- (e) if so, the details in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE COAL AND MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO)

(a): No. Sir. The Coal Mines from where coal is being taken out are not on fire. However, few coal seams of Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) and Central Coalfields Limited (CCL) are on fire since the beginning of the Century due to un-scientific mining activities by the erstwhile mine owners. The genesis or the fire in the coal seams is attributed to spontaneous heating of coal in contact with oxygen resulting in fire.

(b): In Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) 70 number of fire of different seams have been inherited from private mine owners at the time of nationalization. Since then lot of efforts have been made by BCCI to control the fire. 10 fires were quenched and other fires were kept under control. 4 new fires were identified after Nationalisation.

In Central Coalfields Limited (CCL), 4 seams at 3 colliery are under fire which are about 15-30 years old.

(c): It is difficult to exactly estimate the quantity of coal getting destroyed by mine fire during last three years. There are no laid down norms to calculate the quantum of coal being destroyed by mine fire in such conditions.

(d)&(e): The following steps have been taken to extinguish fire in coal mines:

- ~ Sand flushing into active fire Zone from surface to underground through boreholes;
- ~ Surface blanketing to prevent breathing in of air to the fire area;
- ~ Inert gas flushing from surface through boreholes to extinguish fire;
- ~ Quenching of spot fire and mining out the quenched coal;
- ~ Sealing of the Part of the mine under fire by construction of fire stoppings/isolation stoppings;
- ~ Application of fire resistant sealant in and around the isolation stopping/fire stoppings;

~ Regular monitoring with the help of Co-detectors, toximeter, air sampling and analysis of the same at colliery level;

- ~ Trench cutting by mechanised means to excavate fire and to prevent spread of the same; and
- ~ In some the mines intentional flooding by water has been done to quench the fire.