

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COAL
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4387
ANSWERED ON:16.12.2009
UNDERGROUND COAL MINE FIRE IN JHARIA
Meghe Shri Datta Raghobaji

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

- (a) whether underground mine fire is spreading in the coal mines in Jharia in Jharkhand;
- (b) whether Patna-Ranchi Highway (NH-33) has been closed due to the said fire;
- (c) if so, the steps taken by the Government to douse this fire; and
- (d) the schemes formulated by the Government for rehabilitation of the residents of Jharia area alongwith the diversion of roads and railway lines?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINISTER OF THE STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS & PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL)

(a): At the time of nationalization, surface fire area was spread over about 17 sq. km. As per World Bank study 1994-96, the surface fire area has reduced to about 9 sq. km.

(b)&(c): National Highway-33 (NH-33) fire has no connection with Jharia fire. Illegal mining by miscreants was noticed at NH-33 as early as 1999 and, since then regular FIRs were lodged by the concerned coal company i.e Central Coalfields Ltd. Illegal entries were made in seam XII by the miscreants, below NH-33 who robbed the coal and left a hollow below NH-33. On 26.6.2009 fire was detected in Seam XII, which was propagated from surface probably due to spontaneous heating. On 9.8.2009, a part of NH-33 potholed. Active blazing fire was found on the surface and dense noxious smoke was coming out of it. The fire was dealt initially by pouring water from surface & smothering of surface cracks & voids. Later on water mixed with DAP & Sodium Silicate & Liquid Nitrogen mixed with foaming agent was poured through strategically drilled 25 nos. of Bore Holes. Drills were deployed for drilling boreholes & pay loaders were deployed for mucking and filling. CCL extended all necessary help. Though the intensity of fire, temperature & smoke has reduced considerably due to all out efforts undertaken by CCL, the total elimination of fire can be achieved only by digging out the affected area. Action has been taken by State Authority and NHAI for diversion of the affected part of the road.

(d): As per the approved Master Plan for Jharia coalfield dealing .with fire, subsidence, rehabilitation and diversion of surface infrastructure an amount of Rs. 4780.60 crores has been provided for rehabilitation of BCCL and non-BCCL population living in the most endangered areas. Further, under this Master Plan, a lump sum provision of Rs. 20 crores has been kept for surveying and planning of diversion of railway lines and roads which are endangered by Fires/Subsidence.