

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COAL
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:363
ANSWERED ON:02.05.2012
UNSCIENTIFIC MINING
Singh Shri Pashupati Nath

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

- (a) Whether the unscientific mining of coal by the erstwhile mine owners in Jharia coalfields in Jharkhand is one of the causes of fire and subsidence in the said areas;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the nature of losses caused to life and property in the said areas during the last three years;
- (d) whether the Government has received any proposal to douse the fire and for rehabilitation / resettlement package including relocation of the affected people; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the further action being taken by the government to address the said problems?

Answer

MINISTER OF COAL (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in parts (a) to (e) of the reply to Lok Sabha Starred question No. 363 for 2. 5. 2012.

(a) & (b): Yes, Sir. As per the Master plan, history of fire in Jharia Coalfield dates back to 1916 when the first incidence of fire was reported at Bhowra Colliery. Since then a number of fires have occurred in underground workings and in opencast Pits. In the past, prior to coal mine nationalization in 1972-73, coal seams of good quality prime coking coal, occurring at shallow depth were mined indiscriminately by the erstwhile private mine owners without considering the safety and conservation aspects. As a result, in some places small stooks were left below the surface infrastructures like river, jore, railway line and buildings etc. which have been/are being causing differential movement in the overlying strata including the failure of infrastructures. It causes sudden subsidence, collapse of U/G workings, outbreak of fires.

After the nationalization, mines were taken over by Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) and steps were taken to control mine fires. As per the fire study made by GAI-MET-CHEM in 1996, an assessment has been made that overall area affected by fire has reduced to 8.90 sq km against from the earlier affected area of 17.32 sq. km. at the time of Nationalization.

(c): As reported by Directorate General Mines Safety (DGMS), there is only one incident of fire and subsidence occurred on 28.7.2009 in Sendra Bansjora mine of BCCL in Jharkhand causing 3 fatalities and 1 serious injury during the last three years. Further, as per the approved Master plan, it was estimated that about 37 MT of good quality of prime coking coal has been destroyed and about 1453 MT of coal has been locked due to fires.

(d) & (e): Yes, Sir. To address the issues of fire & subsidence in the mined out areas of Jharia coalfield, a Master Plan dealing with fire, subsidence, rehabilitation and diversion of surface infrastructure in the lease hold of BCCL has been approved by the Government in August, 2009 for implementation over a period of 12 years including two years for completion of pre- implementation activities at an estimated cost of Rs. 7112.11 crores including Rs. 83.71 crores sanctioned earlier for various Environmental Measures and Subsidence Control schemes.

As per the Master Plan, 98314 houses (44155 houses owned by BCCL and 54159 other private houses) are proposed to be rehabilitated/ shifted within a period of 10 years. The rehabilitation of Non-BCCL houses/structures from the endangered areas is the responsibility of State Govt. of Jharkhand. In this regard Jharia Rehabilitation and Development Authority (JRDA) have been formed under the chairmanship of Commissioner, North Chhotanagpur by Govt. of Jharkhand.

Further a total of 45 fire schemes have been formulated and implemented to control mine fires with provision to deal with any new fire identified during implementation period and diversion of rail / road from the fire area. To speed up the fire dealing work, the fire patches are being excavated / dug-out by hiring of Heavy Earth Moving Machinery.