

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COAL
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:152

ANSWERED ON:22.08.2012

FIRE IN COAL MINES

Namdhari Shri Inder Singh;Panda Shri Prabodh

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) Whether fire has been raging in various coal mines/collieries in the country including Ashoka and Piparwar collieries in Jharkhand and the illegal coal mines at Bardhaman district in West Bengal;

(b) if so, the details thereof, coal mine-wise and State-wise along with the period, since when fire has been raging in each such mine;

(c) whether the Government has assessed the loss of life, property and coal as a result thereof;

(d) if so, the details thereof, coal mine-wise and State-wise along with the number of coal mines that have been closed or proposed to be closed as a result thereof; and

(e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to compensate, relocate and rehabilitate the affected people and also to douse the fire?

Answer

MINISTER OF COAL (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL)

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

8th POSITION

Statement referred to in reply to parts (a) to (e) in respect of Lok Sabha Question No. 152 for reply on 22nd August,2012 asked by Shri Inder Singh Namdari,MP and Shri Frabod Panda MP regarding fire in Coal Mines.

(a) There is no raging fire In mines of Coal India Limited (CIL) except some areas located at the Jharia Coalfields (JCF) within command areas of Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) where raging fire does exist. In Ranigunj Coalfield, surface fires in all the seven sites as identified in the Raniganj Master Plan, have been extinguished.

There is no incidence of fire at Ashoka & Piparwar Collieries in Central Coalfield Limited . (CCL) of Jharkhand. Stray incidents of fire due to illegal mining were noticed and action was taken immediately by Eastern Coalfield Limited (ECL) to isolate the same through covering the area by Over burden material.

(b) According to the Master Plan for dealing fire in Jharia Coalfield, BCCL inherited 70 mine fires at the time of nationalisation and since then, due to some concerted efforts by BCCL, 10 fires could be liquidated completely and other fires were kept under control by and large. In the mean time, 7 more fires have been identified in JCF. Presently there are 67 fires out of which 9 are UG fires sealed behind the stoppings. These 67 fires spread over 41 colUeriesj are grouped into 45 fire projects for implementation.

Present status of fire at Jharia Coalfields (JCF) within leasehold of Bharat Coking Coal Ltd (BCCL) is given in Annexure-I. ` Â! .

(c)& (d) Loss of life: During last five years, there was one incidence which occurred in Sendra Bansjora OC mine of BCCL in JCF, Incidence took place while dealing with fire by excavation method causing loss of three lives due to severe burn injuries. The incident occurred due to sudden slide of hot materials from 1st OB bench. 4 female workers took shelter near a shovel due to heavy rain when hot material slid from 1st OB bench and engulfed the victims. They got burn injury due to hot particles of falling materials and steam thus produced thereof from accumulated water. Out of 4 workers, 3 succumbed in the hospital.

Loss of properties including loss of coal:

Direct loss of coking coal due to burning: After nationalization, it has been estimated that about 37 MT of good quality of prime coking coal has been destroyed.

Blocking of coal reserve in the same seams and under lying seams: As per Master Plan, it is estimated that 1453 Mt of coal is blocked and fire affected area is 8.9 sq.km.

Land damage caused by subsidence and cracking.

In the Master Plan, it has been assumed that 50% of the total in-situ coal may be recovered for sale taking the balance 50% coal as lost during dealing with fire.

NH-32 is to be diverted as an advance action between Godhur and Pootkee apprehended to be endangered due to fire in the proximity of the road.

As per the assessment made in the Master Plan, numbers of houses affected due to fire and unstable endangered area are as follows:

BCCL Houses 44155

Private houses 53291
(Authorized
& unauthorized)

Others 868

Total 98314

No subsidiaries of CIL have reported any such closure of mines as a result of raging mine fire in the recent past.

(e) Government of India approved the Master Plans for Jharia Coalfield for dealing with fire, subsidence and rehabilitation in the lease hold of BCCL in August 2009 with an estimated capital of Rs.7112.11 crore which includes a provision of Rs 2311.50 crore for dealing with fire and Rs 4780.60 crore for rehabilitation purposes. The implementation of the Master Plans consists of the following three broad heads:

1. Dealing with fires
2. Rehabilitation of inhabited sites from endangered areas
3. Diversion of rail & road and other surface infrastructures

Dealing with fire: This includes identification of fire areas, selection of technologies to deal with fires, prioritization for implementation and assessment of tentative fund requirement. Implementation of fire control measures will be the responsibility of BCCL.

Total 67 fires, spread over 41 collieries of BCCL, are grouped into 45 fire projects proposed to be implemented / being implemented in a time frame of 10 years.

Rehabilitation & Resettlement of the affected people from the areas affected by fire and subsidence including identification of affected sites, identification of resettlement sites and assessment of tentative fund requirement. Implementation of rehabilitation of BCCL houses is the responsibility of BCCL whereas rehabilitation of non-BCCL houses / structures is the responsibility of JRDA, a Jharkhand Government agency.

Diversion of rail & road and other surface infrastructures: In the Master Plan, a lump sum provision of Rs 20 crore as advance action has been kept for surveying and planning of the alternative routes for rail and road diversion, assessment of alternative railway sidings affected due to diversion, quantification of benefits, detailed layout planning for diversion etc.

Time frame for implementation as delineated in the Master Plan is 12 years including 2 years of pre implementation period. The same is being monitored regularly by subsidiary company, CIL HQ and also by High Powered Central Committee (HPCC) under the Chairmanship of Secretary coal, Ministry of Coal. The progress of implementation is also reviewed by the Minister of Coal time to time.