

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COAL
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3832
ANSWERED ON:19.03.2015
ACCIDENTS IN UNDERGROUND COAL MINES
Venkatesh Babu Shri T.G.

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the report of one death every third day in India's underground coal mines;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the number of such incidents reported during each of the last three years and the current year;
- (c) whether lack of investment in coal mines is one of the main reasons for the high casualties in the coal mines;
- (d) if so, whether the miners are exposed to a number of hazards that adversely affect their health; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government to protect the lives of coal miners and the families of the deceased?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL, POWER AND NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL)

(a)&(b): As per Directorate General of Mines Safety (DGMS), no such trend is established. However there are some fatalities that occurred in underground coal mines in India. The number of accidents and fatalities in all underground coal mines during each of the last three years and the current year is given below ;

Year	Underground No. of Accidents	No. of Fatalities
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2012	25	28
2013	21	26
2014	28	29
2015	2	2

(c): The lack of investment in coal mines or insufficiency of funds is not the reason for casualties in the coal mines.

(d): Coal Mines are considered to be hazardous due to its nature, all over the world and is so in India also. Coal Miners are exposed to hazards primarily due to fires and explosions, Inundation, strata failures and subsidence/slides. However, the health hazards in coal mines are mainly due to inhalation of air-borne respirable coal dust generated during cutting/ drilling, loading and transportation as well as crushing and sizing of coal in the mines. The prolonged exposure of miners to respirable coal dust leads to contraction of pneumoconiosis in coal miners, which are prevalent in coal mining industry, not only in India but also the world over.

(e): The following steps have been taken by the Government to prevent accidents in Coal mines:

- (i) Continuous environment monitoring system is being installed in gassy mines to give forewarning of any accumulation of inflammable gas, presence of noxious gases including Co, Co2 and deficiency of oxygen in mine atmosphere;
- (ii) Low capacity loading and transport machinery are being replaced by high capacity machines in open cast mines thereby reducing the traffic in mines and accidents in opencast operations;
- (iii) A fresh initiatives has been undertaken to improve the skills of the operators and competent persons using most modern training aids like simulators;
- (iv) Workers participation and sensitization in matters of safety are ensured through training in safety and by initiatives like celebration of safety week and safety campaigns, etc.
- (v) Safety training programmes are organized among Managers and Supervisors for improving safety standards in mines.
- (vi) Risk Assessment Techniques are being introduced aimed at elimination of risks and to ensure safety of workmen.
- (vii) Standard operating procedures are established to avoid unsafe practices in mines.
- (viii) The following steps have been taken by the Government to improve working conditions and to protect workers from occupational health hazards in coal mines:
 - i) Provisions relating to safety and health of persons employed in mines as provided in the Mines Act, 1952; Mines Rules, 1955 and

Coal Mines Regulations, 1957; are implemented through inspections and other initiatives ;

ii) Provisions regarding precautions to be taken to control the airborne dust in mines including wet drilling, dust monitoring, provisions of dust Mask, Dust respirator, Personal dust samplers, dust sampling and testing as well as appointment of Dust in-charge in mines are also being updated with the most modern techniques and standards.

iii) The maximum permissible limit of dust concentration and the periodicity of the dust survey in mines have been proposed to be reduced.

iv) The Occupational Health of workers employed in mines is monitored/checked by conducting Medical Examination of workers before the job placement and re-examination at every Five Years intervals in accordance with the Rule 29B of Mines Rules, 1955. As per recommendations of Safety Conference in mines, frequency of PME brought down from five years to three years for workers having age more than 45 years and medical examination at last year of superannuation.