

Title: Regarding need to review the decision to privatise mining sector-Laid.

SHRI SUNIL KHAN (DURGAPUR) : In a span of three years the Government has for the second time decided to throw open mining as well as of coal and lignite to the private companies apart from public sector companies. Till now coal mining to private companies was only allowed for captive purposes.

In a decision on 6th April, 2000, Cabinet approved suitable amendments to the Coal Mining (Nationalisation) Act, 1973 so that private companies could move in. The Government will now have to introduce a Bill in Parliament to make the proposed amendments. It is not in the interest of the country. It may be recalled that mining was in private hands and corruption was rampant besides coal miners were exploited unchecked by the private mine owners. To end all this, mining was nationalised.

I urge upon the Government not to go for opening up the mining sector for private hands, whose track records have not been good at all. I strongly demand for the public sector of coal mines so that the country could stand on its own feet. In protest of privatisation Coal industry and the delay in finalisation of the Sixth Wage Agreement Central Indian Trade Union called a strike which is going on from 20th Nov. to 22nd November, 2000. About six lacks employees have taken part as a result all the coal units of coal India have stopped their production.