

### Pilferage of Coal

1523. SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the large scale pilferage of coal at the mine sites from the rails wagons and at the pitheads;

(b) if so, the number of such incidents came to the notice of the Government during 1997-98 till date, State-wise; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to stop the pilferage of coal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) and (b) As per information received from Coal India Limited (CIL), theft or pilferage of coal from railway wagons at the sidings and colliery pit heads is carried out stealthily and clandestinely. The number of incidents of pilferage or theft of coal during the year 1997-98 and in April, 1998 is given below State-wise:-

State	No. of incidents of pilferage or theft of coal in 1997-98	No. of incidents of pilferage or theft of coal in April, 1998
West Bengal	390	62
Bihar	301	21
Orissa	32	7
Madhya Pradesh	3	Nil
Assam	11	Nil

(c) Following steps are being taken by CIL to prevent theft or pilferage of coal;

(i) Collection of intelligence reports about illegal coal depots and illegal movement of coal and informing district authorities of the same for taking preventive action.

(ii) Installation of check-posts at vulnerable points to check transport documents.

(iii) Construction of watch towers and providing lighting arrangements around the coal stacking area, erection of barbed-wire/wall fencing around pit head depots, static security manning including deployment of armed guards during the night hours, escorting of loaded rakes upto railway weighbridges by armed guards and joint patrolling with Railway Protection

Force in the long railway tracks which are prone to wagon looting.

(iv) Sealing of illegal mining spots.

(v) Close coordination with RPF and district police officials and carrying out surprise checks/raids.

(vi) Stringent action against transport vehicles caught in the act of theft or pilferage.

(vii) Monthly review meeting with district authorities for drawing out plan to eliminate the menace, carrying out surprise checks/raids in cooperation with the State Police at sensitive points and lodging of FIRs with the local police.

(viii) Engagement of Jady security guards for preventing women and children indulging in theft/pilferage of coal, strengthening of the security discipline by reassessing the requirement of security personnel, horizontal movement of executives with aptitude for security work and inducting qualified security personnel at junior, middle and senior levels.

In the Eastern Coalfields Limited road challans on security paper having water mark has been introduced.

For strengthening the security set up, training of existing security personnel, refresher training of CISF personnel and basic training to new recruits is security discipline is carried out at periodic intervals.

### Foreign Bank Branches

1524. SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government accorded permission to any foreign bank for opening their branches in Inida during the current financial years:

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the policy of the Government to allow the foreign banks to open branches in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUŔ M.R. JANARTHANAN): (a) and (b) In terms of the provisions of Sec. 22 of the Banking Regulations Act, Reserve Bank of India has the power to issue licences to foreign banks for opening their branches in India. During the financial year 1.4.97 to 31.3.98 the following approvals have been given by RBI to new foreign banks/existing foreign banks for opening their branches in India:-