

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : A summary of the resolution may be sent to the UNO.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Why summary? We should send the whole of it.

MR. SPEAKER : Yes. I think, we can send the whole of it. They can make their own precis, if they like.

11.51 hrs.

COAL MINES (CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT) AMENDMENT BILL

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STEEL, MINES AND COAL (SHRI VASANT SATHE) : I beg to move :

“That the Bill further to amend the Coal Mines (Conservation and Development) Act, 1974 as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration.”

While moving the Bill for consideration, I would like to point out to the House that this is comparatively an innocuous Bill. All that it intends to do is to incorporate the provisions in the rules under the Act. The Coal Mines (Conservation and Development) Act, 1974, was enacted to provide for the conservation of coal and development of coal mines and for matters concerned therewith or incidental thereto. This Act replaced the Coal Mines (Conservation and Safety) Act, 1952. Section 6 of the Act, *inter alia*, provides that there shall be levied and collected on all coal raised and despatched and on all coke manufactured and despatched from collieries in India such duty of excise not exceeding Rs. 10 per tonne as may be fixed from time to time by the Central Government. The present levy is at the rate of Rs. 3.50 per tonne on non-coking coal and Rs. 4.25 per tonne of coking coal, effective from 9th February, 1983, on which date the excise duty was revised upwards by Rs. 1.85 per tonne on all coal to find funds for development of roads. The proceeds of the duty are applied for subsidy for conservation measures and protective works as also

on the subsidy on coal moved by rail-cum-sea route. It is also intended to utilise part of the proceeds for the scheme for development of roads in the coalfield areas in Dhanbad district.

According to the provisions of the Act, the cess collected during the previous year and the past undisbursed arrears can be paid during a particular year.

The collection and disbursements during the past few years are :

Total collections	: Rs. 20833 lakhs
Utilization of subsidy for conservation measures	: Rs. 12969 lakhs
Subsidy for transport of coal by rail-cum-sea route	: Rs. 2787 lakhs

As I said, the Bill is, more or less, a formality. But this gives an opportunity to the House to discuss the entire coal industry in the country from the point of view of development, scientific mining, conservation of coal, its utilization mainly for generation of power and consumer satisfaction, and the entire economy of coal in this country, welfare of labour, facilities created for labour etc.

I hope, the House will take this opportunity and the Hon. Member will be able to give their useful suggestions and views on the entire coal industry structure and the Government will benefit by that.

With these words, I again move the motion for consideration of the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Motion moved :

“That the Bill further to amend the Coal Mines (Conservation and Development) Act, 1974 as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration”.

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO (Vijayawada) : The main purpose of this amending Bill, as the Hon. Minister has told us, is to recover the cost of operations or other measures undertaken by the Government for the benefit of the mine owners, As

per the recommendation of the Subordinate Legislation Committee, of the Sixth Lok Sabha, this Amendment has been brought forward by the Government and we welcome it. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, this is not enough. A comprehensive legislation would have to be brought out to solve the various problems that are being faced by the coal industry.

The coal mines were nationalised as far back as 1973. Still, many of the objectives with which the nationalisation was taken up, are yet to be achieved. Even now, a lot of pilferage and thefts of coal are going on a very large scale. Strong mafia gangs are operating in the coal sector at various places and many times they have the blessings and cooperation of the politicians and they also have very close contacts with the people working in this coal industry. As a result of this, illegal mining is going on a large scale and nearly Rs. 300 crores worth of coal is either illegally mined or stolen away. It is a great loss to the country. So, the Government should take all necessary steps to prevent this type of thefts in the coal industry as also the illegal mining. It is very necessary because the country is very much short of coal. In fact, several thermal power plants are closed or partly closed due to the inadequate supply of coal in time. And sometimes because of the lack of necessary quality, the thermal power plants are finding it very difficult to generate power. As a result of this, there are several stoppages and shut-downs by the thermal plants. As a consequence, a large number of industries are closed and thereby very valuable production is coming to a grinding halt and thousands of workers are being thrown on the roads without any works.

Sir, the production targets are yet to be attained while the distribution is most unsatisfactory. The coal industry says that the Railways are not able to provide adequate number of wagons or transport facilities to supply the coal from the mines to the consumer. And the Railway Ministry says, No, we are not at fault. We are supplying the necessary number of wagons and rakes. So, the fault may lie with others but not with us." But ultimately, it is a fact that the coal that has been mined with great effort and at huge cost, does not reach the consumers in proper time. So, there should be

proper coordination between the Ministry of Coal and the Ministry of Railways.

It is a wonderful thing that while the country is starving for coal, nearly 30 million tonnes of coal is lying as pithead stocks near the coal mines. Last year the figure was 22 million tonnes, while this year it is 30 million tonnes, valued at nearly 500 crores of rupees.

12.00 hrs.

The Government should take immediate steps to reduce this quantity of coal that is lying as pit head stocks near the coal mines and see that coal reaches, the Thermal Power Plants as well as other industrial consumers or farmers in the country.

There is a great need to conserve the coal because this is a non-replenishable energy source. Unfortunately, we come across alarming news items that coal is being burnt near the coal mines for months together, whereby very valuable crores of rupees worth of coal is being unnecessarily burnt away. So more research should be made to combat these burning of coals and also efforts should be made to extinguish it. At present the Government is subsidising the Gobar Gas Plants with the idea to save the coal. Similarly, there are other avenues, where coal can be conserved and one such avenue, I bring to the notice of the Government, is that we can better utilise solar energy and there some research has already been done regarding solar burns which can be of much use in curing of tobacco. At present the coal as well as fuelwood are being used as fuel for the burns, and by this way nearly 30 per cent of the coal can be saved which is a great national economy. So, I request the Government to use the good offices of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, which is the agency for giving subsidy to the construction of solar burns to save coal in our coal sector. I would make an appeal to the Hon. Minister to set up Coal Stock Yard at Vijayawada which is a very-very important place and also a centrally located place in South India. There are large number of industries, as the Hon. Minister is quite aware, is 90 per cent of the tobacco grown in Andhra Pradesh is being utilised for our domestic purposes as well as for exports. All those tobacco need coal and it is a very big problem. And the

[Shri V. Sobhanadreeswara Rao]

Minister is quite aware of the problems, which the farmers are facing in the transport of coal through lorries and other things. So, if coal is made available by establishing a Coal Stock Yard at Vijayawada, it will be of great help to the consumers, to the farmers as well as to the industrialists in this area. We hope, the Government will take all necessary steps in this regard.

The Coal India's losses this year was Rs. 242 crores and the cumulative loss is around Rs. 1100 crores. We hope these losses will be reduced at least in future so that Coal Mines can function efficiently and can serve the ultimate needs of the country which is a very important role it has to play.

[Translations]

SHRI DAMODAR PANDEY (Hazari-bag) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am happy that this Bill has been brought here and even the Opposition has felt that it is an appropriate and welcome step. So, nobody is opposing it.

The provisions of this Bill are welcome and they cannot be opposed. But as has been stated by the Hon. Minister, this Bill has provided an opportunity to express our views in regard to mining and utilization of coal. There are, however, many sources of energy in our country, but we will have to depend mainly on coal for the next many years. There are no two opinions about it. Fortunately, our country is one of the 12 big countries having rich coal deposits and it is the fifth largest coal producing country. At present we have adequate coal production but it is still less as compared to our population. Our present coal production is not sufficient to meet the requirement.

This was the main aim of nationalisation of coal industry in 1971 and 1973, as private sector people could not make adequate investment to undertake scientific coal mining so as to ensure conservation of the natural wealth, which is neither a renewable nor an inexhaustible source. It was, therefore, thought that there was no alternative but to nationalise it. We do not repent it also. Many persons say that nationalisation was a wrong step. But I say that had the coal industry not been nationalised, we would

have been in great trouble and we would not have been in the position in which we are today. If coal industry had remained in private sector, the requirements of thermal power plants, steel plants, the Railways and the general consumers would not have been met. Much has been done after nationalisation. At the time of nationalisation the coal production was to the tune of 72 million tonnes whereas it has increased to 147 million tonnes last year. If everything had gone well, we would have achieved the target of 160 or 170 million tonnes this year. But we are not in a position to ensure so much production. It is not that we do not want or we cannot do so. The reason is that consumption of coal is not to that extent. The production was 147 million tonnes but a stock of 29 million tonnes is lying at the pit-heads. We fail to understand that on the one hand such a huge stock, of coal i.e., 29 million tonnes is lying at the pit heads, on the other hand there is a great demand for coal and it is not available. What an irony ! One of the Opposition Members has pointed out that coal gets burnt at the pit-heads. If the stock of 29 million tonnes of coal lies at the pitheads and it is not moved, it will automatically start burning due to internal combustion, which is its property, and requisite quantum of water will not be available there to extinguish the fire. The result will be that coal will be reduced to ashes.

I mean to say that we have made considerable progress in the production of coal but we have not been able to make adequate arrangements to take it to the places of consumption. The Railways are the life-line so far as transportation of coal is concerned. If you go into the figures, you will find that no significant increase has been made in Railway's transportation capacity since 1972-73. Coal is transported by diesel trucks and in this way we waste one source of energy to supply the other. Government should pay serious attention towards the transportation of coal from one place to another. Only the Railways are not capable of meeting the requirement as they say that they do not have adequate means. Unless arrangements are made to transport coal from one place to another, our future cannot be bright.

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA : Future of black coal will be black.

SHRI DAMODAR PANDEY : You will not get electricity without black coal. Your future depends on its future only. Coal makes your future bright, despite its black colour.

(Interruptions)

You can get coal at cheap rates...*(Interruptions)*...My suggestion was that you should make arrangements for its, transportation. Today we are resorting to more and more Mechanisation. The Hon. Minister has said that there is no option other than mechanisation. Previously, coal production was 74 million tonnes, but now it is 147 million tonnes. The Hon. Minister should take into account our investment and see whether it is justified and whether it is giving due return? I think that it is not so. It is somewhat less. As the Hon. Minister knows better, he will be able to state them in details.

The situation in Bengal and Bihar is particularly bad. For the last one or two years, power supply is interrupted for as long as eight hours or so in these States. If coal mines, where machines worth Rs. 17 crores have been installed, do not get power for eight hours at a stretch and these machines lie idle for eight hours, they will suffer heavy losses in terms of their depreciation value. Unless regular power supply is ensured there, they will continue to suffer losses. We export coal to countries for generating power, but we are not able to generate power in our own country. What an irony! So much loss is being suffered. It has been said that Coal India is suffering loss to the tune of Rs. 1,100 crores. I do not know whether he is aware of it or not. Coal is not a loss incurring industry. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, you may be aware that the Central Coal Fields Ltd. earns maximum profit and in terms of profit it stands fifth in the country. This year its profits totalled Rs. 125 crores. But Nobody mentions it. The Western Coal Fields Ltd. has also earned considerable profits. It is not much as compared to the investment that has been made in it. This company is also sixth or seventh profit making concern. The reasons for loss in B.C.C.L. and E.C.L. is that the West Bengal Government imposes an official strike in these companies. The State Government does not let the companies acquire the land. There

is no proper deployment of the work force. If the coal stock at a particular site is nearly exhausted and the workers are not deployed at another site, the coal mines cannot function properly. This does not happen in the Eastern Coal Fields. If at a particular site the total work force of one thousand is engaged, they will have to be engaged in some work at that very site but at other site two thousand more workers will be appointed. The Eastern Coal Fields and the BCCL are faced with acute shortage of power. These are the oldest coal mines, and they have become very deep and the production is declining. We speak of mechanisation and of further improvement but till we do not exploit underground coal, it is of no use. If we want our coal production to double by the turn of this century then underground coal mining needs immediate attention.

I have to say one thing with regard to environment and conservation. Very little thought is generally given to conservation. Unfortunately wherever coal is exploited, the environment is the first casualty. The forests are felled and the earth is removed. Everywhere in the world there is a rule that wherever the forests are felled, afforestation is undertaken. But we do not have any such rule in our country. Do we want legislation for every work? Have we ever felt that the felling of forests badly affects the weather and the environment? We should give a serious thought to it and should frame some laws to avoid it.

It has been said that we have only low-grade coal available in our country.

[English]

SHRI AMAL DATTA (Diamond Harbour) : He need not have wasted all the time for abusing the West Bengal Government. He has wasted all his time for abusing the West Bengal Government.

[Translation]

SHRI DAMODAR PANDEY : If I have said anything wrong I may be corrected,

[English]

SHRI AMAL DATTA : You do not know the conditions there.

SHRI DAMODAR PANDEY : I think I know better than you about mining there.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA : We will judge both of you now.

SHRI AMAL DATTA : When people are being deprived of employment, then new employment opportunities are to be created and that is not being done.

[*Translation*]

SHRI DAMODAR PANDEY : I would like to say a few words about the quality of coal. The Hon. Minister has said that the coal is of low-grade. It is not so. We have abundance of high-grade coal also available in our country. We often speak of the high-grade European coal but as the sulphur content is more in it we cannot use it. We have good reserves of Coking coal containing 7 per cent ash in Assam but we do not produce it because it contains sulphur as well. I would like to know whether we can use better technology to separate sulphur content from this coal and use it. Many big coal based industries have been set up in Germany and other foreign countries. Low ash content coal containing sulphur is found in Germany, but different industries have been set up there which manufacture as many as 200 items from it. There are many countries in the world which do not produce coal but they have set up many coal based industries. We produce coal but we burn it. Coal is not being properly utilised. I would like the Hon. Minister to pay attention to it and set up coal based industries wherever it is possible. We are importing technology from abroad by collaborating with various countries and we are investing crores of rupees in the machines that are being imported. If you make necessary arrangements within the country itself, it would help in providing employment to the maximum number of people.

In the end, I would like to raise a point with regard to my area. About ten to fifteen years back when Shri Devkant Barua was the Minister here, had assured that a coal based fertilizer plant will be set up in Karampura. The site was selected, survey was conducted and a final decision on setting up the fertilizer plant was taken, but, unfortunately the Janata Party came into power and the matter was closed. Nobody wants to listen in this regard now. I would like the Hon. Minister to reconsider it and inform

the concerned Ministry that an announcement to this effect was made in the House earlier. It should not remain on the files, rather it should be implemented immediately. This is no new industry. We have set up coal based fertilizer plants in Ramagundam and in Talcher and we do not have any bad experience there. We do not earn as much profit as we should but still it is adequate. I would, therefore, request the Hon. Minister to reconsider it.

[*English*]

SHRI JAGANNATH RAO (Behrampur) : I welcome this Bill. This is a non-controversial Bill. As the Hon. Minister has said, it seeks to give effect to the recommendations made by the Committee on Subordinate Legislation of the Seventh Lok Sabha. It suggested that the main Section 4 did not confer on the Central Government the power to recover the cost incurred by it for conservation of coal and development of coal mines. Section 4 of the Act confers on the Central Government the right to give direction and advice to the mine-owners, agents and managers to work the mines in such a way as to conserve coal, to work them on scientific lines and to beneficiate the same in the washery so as to reduce the ash content. If the mine owners do not do it, then the Central Government itself may do it and incur the expenditure and it has the right to recover the whole or part of the cost. But that is not covered by Section 4 of the Act. This is provided in Rule 6. The Committee observed that this right to recover the cost fully or partially is a substantive right and it should flow from the Act and not from the rules. Now, the Government is complying with that recommendation.

The second recommendation is to recover the excise duty as an arrear of land revenue. Therefore, these two are non-controversial.

In 1973 all the coal mines were nationalised. In 1974 Conservation of Coal and Development of Coal Mines Act was passed. I would like to know whether there are still coal mines in the private sector; otherwise retaining the words 'owner, agent or manager of the coal mine' has no meaning. The Government of India is the owner of all mines and minerals in the land, sea-bed,

territorial waters, continental shelf and exclusive economic zone under Article 297 of the constitution. If that is so, then why do you retain these words? If there are no private mines being worked by the private sector and you incur any expenditure, that can be recovered from the leasee. Whether it is BCCL or Coal India or the Mining Departments of the State Governments, they are your leasees. By not including the word 'leasee' it has created some confusion in my mind. That has to be clarified by the Minister.

If the Central Government has incurred some expenditure for conservation of coal or for development of coal mines, please tell us the amount incurred and on which mines.

About coal, coking coal is used for steel production. Our coking coal has ash content more than desired. To avoid this we are importing coal from Australia, which has a high sulphur content. We are incurring expenditure on de-sulphurisation so that it becomes useable in our boilers. Instead of that, why not improve the quality of our own coking coal? Try to reduce its ash content. Why not Central Fuel Research Institute at Dhanbad or Mineral Corporations in the States, who have their own laboratories, analyse it and think of ways and means to improve the quality so that it can be made useable by the boilers without any considerable damage to them? This aspect has to be considered seriously. Otherwise, import of coal from other countries is going against our declared policy of self-reliance and import substitution. Why should we import coal from Australia and then incur expenditure on it by desulphurising it? We can even incur more by improving our own coal by blending and by other methods. The complaint is only from two steel plants, Rourkela and Durgapur. Both Bhilai and Bokaro which were set up with Soviet technology, do not have any complaint. What is the matter? We had developed two coal-mines at Sudamdih and Mondih with Polish collaboration when I happened to be the Minister for Mines here. I know our mines are gassy mines and they have more ash content. But let us incur more and try to use our own coal instead of going abroad to get the coal. That reflects on our national prestige. We have gone so much ahead in science and technology. Cannot

we do this? Why not our scientists devote their full attention to this aspect? We are setting up so many steel plants but till today we have not decided which technology be adopted. That will not go well with our economic policy.

So also with non-coking coal. Every State now has got coal-mines. Recently coal deposits have been discovered near Farakka. Similarly, in U.P.—apart from Singrauli—in Gujarat, in every State coal-mines have been discovered. Every State has a Mineral Development Corporation. Let them take samples from these mines and analyse those samples so that they can know the quality of the coal and suggest ways and means to improve the quality so that it can be put to the best use. Let the report be kept ready so that when the time comes, that coal can be used according to the scientific analysis arrived at, otherwise it takes more time. Therefore, we should plan ahead. Ours is a planned economy. Ten years have passed since the passing of the Act. I am doubtful whether any attempt has been made seriously either to conserve coal or to develop the coal-mines in every part of the country. Let us not wait for the time to come. Let us sincerely try to develop the coal-mines in a scientific manner and try to beneficiate the low-grade coal into high-grade coal by blending and by other scientific methods which can be found out easily by our scientists.

As regards the low quality of the coal for thermal power generation, Talchar is an example. I have been hearing about Talchar power station for the last 25 years. This plant is using high ash content coal and getting all the troubles, but no serious attempt has been made either by the State Government or by the State Electricity Board or by the Central Government to solve this problem. That power unit was established under U.S. Aid programme in the late fifteen and the boilers were designed to suit the quality of the coal available. What is now needed, I am told, is the electro-static precipitators (ESP) which can blow off abrasive and other waste material so that the boilers can generate the maximum heat. I understand OSES have placed orders with Voltas for four ESPs, the first one of which will be supplied in 15 months time and the other three ESPs will be supplied at an interval of six months. That means three years of the

[Shri Jagannath Rao]

Seventh Plan would have gone. Therefore, time is the essence. We have to go ahead with speed and see that every ounce of coal that we have in the country is conserved and developed and the quality improved so that we can derive the maximum benefit from the coal. Recently in Ranchi, nearabout Bokaro, open-cast coking coal mines have been discovered. They say it is a very good quality coal. The Central Fuel Research Institute at Dhanbad has certified it to be of high grade quality. In Assam also there are coking coal deposits. Therefore, let us develop these mines and see that our steel plants are fed with good quality coal. Let the transportation cost be high. That does not matter. It is nothing compared to the cost we pay to the other countries to get coal from them and again try to desulpharise that coal to make it usable by our boilers. This aspect has to be considered seriously and with speed. And it should be seen that no further time is lost.

Coal production has become very expensive. Its cost has gone up. I do not know, why, but we cannot expect the cost to be at the rate as it was in 40s or 50s, naturally because the overall costs have gone up.

But we should try to reduce the cost further. Perhaps there may be a lot of leakages. There may be employment of more manpower than necessary. All these aspects have to be gone into seriously to see that the coal industry is no longer in the red and that it gives adequate returns to the Exchequer.

This is an industry which has got enough coal deposits. We are also recently able to locate more coal deposits in the country. So, we should take advantage of the natural gift that God has given to us and try to utilise it to the maximum extent so that our economy grows faster and we need not have to depend on foreign countries for import of coal at a huge cost of foreign exchange.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA (Bankura) :

Sir, the coal mines (conservation and Development) Amendment Bill has been brought here as per the recommendations of the Committee on Subordinate Legislation of the Sixth Lok Sabha.

In view of the importance of coal-mines in our national economy, the coking coal-

mines were taken over by the Government of India in the year 1971. The Coal Mines were nationalised in 1973 and the Coal India Limited was established in 1975. This Act, Coal Mines (Conservation and Development) Amendment Act, was enacted in 1974.

The most important task for us is the conservation of coal as a source of energy. As we all know coal is a precious and exhaustible source of energy and our country has got only 0.9 per cent of the coal reserves of the entire world. According to an estimate made by the Geological Survey of India the coal reserves in our country stand at 86,426 million tonnes of 1.2 meters of thickness and that is also up to 600 metres. The position of coking coal also is still less. According to the Geological Survey of India, the Coking coal will last for 35 years after 2000 A.D and the non-coking coal will last upto 20 years. That is why the conservation of coal is very important. But are we serious about this? Millions of tonnes of coal are lying underground in the form of pillars. In our country deep pillaring is not done. Thus when after extracting coal from a particular mine, that mine is abandoned, a huge amount of coal remains in the form of pillars and thus illegal mining takes place. After nationalisation of coalmines also this practice is still widely in use. Slaughter of mining is still done. Unscientific mining is still in practice. The operation of illegal mining should stop. The production of coal has increased since nationalisation. In the year 1974-75 the production of coal was 88.41 millions tonnes. Last year the production was 147.05 million tonnes. The price of coal has also increased nearly 6 times. The price has increased by 500 per cent. The average price of coal at the time of nationalisation was Rs. 37.63 per tonne and now it is, at the pit-head, Rs. 163 per tonne. The total loss has also increased. That is Rs. 1911.70 crores. Production has increased no doubt but we are importing coking coal because this coal is required in our steel plants. Every year we are importing coking coal.

Sir, the Geological Survey of India has made a survey. They have also submitted a report. That report has stated that large reserves of coking coal are there in the districts of Purulia and Bankura. By starting a new project we can produce coal and we can save the cost of import by spending crores

of rupees. This coal can be produced in our own country. Not only in Purulia and Bankura, but in some other parts of the State, coking coal can be found and can be produced. If this is done we need not import coal.

Sir, another aspect is this, which is being neglected in the Coal industry, and that is, R&D (Research and Development) We should develop proper technology in this country because the coal that is produced contains a large ash content. We should develop the technology to reduce the ash content of coal. This will reduce the ash content of coal and we can produce the coal required for the steel plants. We can also supply good quality coal to the thermal plants which were affected by the supply of bad quality of coal. For all this, R & D is very essential.

Sir, the Raniganj coalfield is the oldest coalfield in the country. Extract on of coal was started there long back, in the year 1770. The area is the largest, i.e., 1530 square kilometres. And in the Raniganj Coalfield, before nationalisation and even after nationalisation, some mines were left abandoned, left uncared and protective measures like the closing of the coal mines were not taken and thus these coal mines have become dens of illegal mining.

Another problem to which I would like to draw the attention of the Minister is the problem of subsiding in the coalfield areas. Sir, there are several Committees which were constituted, which went into the cost of subsidence. One Committee was Ghasnani Committee which has submitted its Report, which has submitted 10 recommendations. And the most recent one is Bagchi Sub-Committee which has submitted its report in the year 1979. but the Committee's recommendations have not yet been implemented. This Committee seriously dealt with the problem of subsidence in the coal field areas and this Committee has stated that there are 166 dangerous places and out of which, 83 are more dangerous and out of these 83, 45 places were earmarked in the Eastern Coalfield Ltd. Steps are to be taken immediately to save these areas from the danger of subsidence. While replying to my Supplementary the Hon. Minister has stated that the private parties are constructing their buildings

even in the dangerous places. I have visited that area and seen that ECL is constructing quarters and office buildings in places which are declared as dangerous places and which are prone to subsidence, and I request the Hon. Minister that at least he should pay a visit to that area because the problem is very serious, he should meet the officers and workers and see how the land, even the cultivable land, has been subsided.

Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to the rampant corruption in BCCL. Once I went to him and also wrote a letter to him regarding this. The employees who made this allegation against some high officials were punished, three or four employees were kept under suspension. News came out in *Amrit Bazar Patrika* of Jamshedpur Edition dated 21st July 1985 and I quote from the news item as follows :

"It seems corruption is the order of the day in the Civil Works Department of BCCL ...

Contractors get pay without completing their allotted works. Maintenance costs show, in absence of upkeep and contracts both, to persons who charge their higher rates."

"The firm was supposed to complete repairing work of 'D' block quarters at Bhuli township. The measurement book which is reportedly in the custody of Mr. D. N. Banerjee, the Overseer of the township, confirms this non-compliance."

So, before completion of work, the payment was made. The Officer was guilty, was responsible, against whom this allegation was made. Those employees who made this allegation against him, were punished.

Three years back, one auditor, a young auditor of the firm, was mysteriously murdered. He was murdered because they found some irregularities in the accounts of BCCL. He was murdered and his dead body was thrown on the railway track.

So, there is rampant corruption in BCCL. It is still going on in BCCL.

I request the Hon. Minister kindly to look into the matter.

With these words, I conclude my speech.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I request the Hon. Ministers to be very brief. Every Member should speak only for five minutes. We have to take up other Bills also.

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAV (Alwar) : Sir, I rise to support the Bill which has been moved by the Hon. Minister. The object of the Bill is to recover the cost of investment by the Government as well as to recover the excise duty from the agents, owners and miners.

But the Hon. Minister has not given the objects and reasons as to how much amount is due from those owners, agents and miners. It is very obligatory in this Act that objects and reasons must be given, as to what were the reasons by which you were compelled to introduce this legislation in the Parliament and I think this is a lapse on the part of the Ministry. It should have been given.

The previous speaker was advocating the cause of conservation of coal. But I think...

AN HON. MEMBER : This Bill is passed by Rajya Sabha.

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAV : The objects and reasons are to be given in the Bill.

AN HON. MEMBER : It is there mentioned "~~as~~ passed by Rajya Sabha."

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAV : Nowhere the objects and reasons are given in this Bill, even at the end of the Bill.

(Interruptions)

The next point is that the Hon. Minister might have gone through the report of the Advisory Board on Energy.

In its latest report, it recommended to the Government that there should be exploitation of primary coal and washery Grades I and II and the import should not be made by the Government so that foreign exchange can be saved. May I know from the Hon. Minister as to what steps he has taken to implement

the report of that Committee as reported in the national interest ?

The Advisory Board on Energy has recommended the opinion of experts that for steel, we shall need fuel for the coming years. Therefore, the output of prime coking coal as well as of washery Grades II should be enhanced. Since 1974 the output of prime coking coal and washery Grades I and II has gone down by twelve per cent, although the output of Grades III and IV has gone up by six per cent since 1974. That is why this nation is called upon to pay for import of coal with crores and crores of rupees. That money can be saved if you can exploit prime coking coal and washery Grades I and II to the extent they are required by our Steel Plants and by our nation.

May I also submit this to the Hon. Minister ? He might have read the report of the experts in the field of steel manufacture that, after 2040 A.D. the present technology of steel manufacture will be absolutely changed. Therefore, there is no need to conserve the coal. This argument which is being advanced from the other side that coal has to be conserved is baseless and futile. In the new technology, the coal requirement may be reduced to nullity. So, I think, the Hon. Minister will take positive steps to exploit coal to the extent of our requirements so that the foreign exchange may be saved and the import may be totally banned.

The next point I want to stress is this. There is new no coordination between the three Ministries, the Department of Coal, the Railways and the Electricity. There is need for coordination between these three Ministries. It is quite surprising that today the coal industry is running in heavy losses because of the fact that it has not realised its dues from the various State Electricity Boards. The position of outstanding dues as on 31st March, 1985 was like this. The Madhya Pradesh Electricity Board is on the top of the defaulters owing a sum of Rs. 28.78 crores. The dues outstanding against the Bihar Electricity Board were Rs. 24.15 crores. The dues to be paid to Coal India by the Durgapur Project Ltd. were Rs. 12.89 crores. The Haryana State Electricity Board has to pay to Coal India Rs. 15.46 crores. The Maharashtra State Electricity Board has to pay to Coal India Rs. 14.74 crores. The

Delhi Electric Supply Undertaking has to pay Rs. 7.71 crores. The Orissa State Electricity Board has to pay Rs 6.95 crores. The Badarpur Thermal Power Plant has to pay Rs. 6.09 crores. I want to know what steps the Hon. Minister has taken to recover these dues from the State Electricity Boards. I, of course, congratulate the Hon. Minister for having arranged for one month's stock of coal at all the important Thermal Power Stations; this is his achievement...

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : If the Electricity Boards are to pay their dues, then many of them have to close their functioning; they are already running in losses.

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAN : The Hon. Minister has to take positive measures to effect the recoveries from these bodies also. This particular Amendment is for making recoveries; you want to effect recoveries from the owners and agents of the mines. You have also to effect recoveries from these undertakings and Electricity Boards.

The last point which I wish to submit through you, Sir, to the Hon Minister is this. Today the small scale industry is suffering a lot, as there is no coordination between the Railway Ministry and the Coal Ministry. Now the Railway Ministry is charging additional freight by way of penalty from the consumers or from the consignees because of the fact that the coal sent in the railway wagons is beyond the maximum capacity of the wagons. Therefore, the consignee has to pay penalty equivalent to four times the freight.

Constant complaints are being made to the Government regularly about this especially from Gujarat and Rajasthan. Small Scale Industries Association has submitted a memorandum to you to ask your people not to load the wagons beyond its maximum capacity. Because as soon as you load the railway wagons beyond their maximum capacity four times penalty is charged from the consignees. So, I think, with the consultation of the Railway Minister this problem can be solved.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please wind up.

SRI RAM SINGH YADAV : It may be possible that large scale industries are not

affected by overloading the railway wagons. But as a matter of fact, it is affecting the new entrepreneurs engaged in the small scale industries and their interests are being jeopardised. So, I will submit to the Hon. Minister that he should instruct the coal mines not to load the wagons beyond their maximum capacity.

My second suggestion is that your weighing machines have become ineffective because they have been installed since long and there has been no replacement of those machines. Please install the weighto-metres and the estimated cost of weighto-metres is about Rs. 15 crores. The Railways and the Coal Department should share this and get the weightometres installed at the collieries.

With these suggestions I thank the Hon. Minister and hope that he will give a sympathetic consideration to my suggestions.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Shri Satyedndia Narayan Sinha, Hon. Members may please be brief. Only five minutes allotted to each member—

SHRI SATYENDRA NARAYAN SINHA (Aurangabad) : Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir. As the Minister himself has said, this is a very innocuous Bill. It is intended to amend Sections 4 and 8 of the Act which will Authorise the Government to realise the arrears as land revenue.

Sir, coal is an exhaustible resource on which depends the core sector of our economy like Energy, Steel, Cement, Fertilizers etc. It has just been stated by Shri Vasudeb Acharya that the coal reserves in our country of non-coaking coal will last for one hundred years and coaking coal for fifty five years if you adhere to the target of coal production laid down in 7th and 8th Plans. The Minister might take comfort in the fact that we are tapping other sources of energy and the coal is not the only source from which we can get energy. For instance, there are sources of nuclear energy, bio-mass, solar energy, etc. Yet Sir, despite the fact that we are having alternative source of energy, it is necessary that we should take steps for conservation and development of coal industry.

First I submit to the Hon. Minister that there is need for sufficient care and

[Shri Satyendra Narayan Sinha]

vigilance working the mines. I may submit that there have been cases where mines have been left with abundant coal after having been worked and thereafter illegal mining took place in those mines as there was sufficient coal left behind, which lasted for several years.

13.00 hrs.

And that lasted for several years. There are no safety measures in those mines with the result that accidents also take place taking the lives of workers. Therefore, it is incumbent on our Government to see that no illegal mining takes place. It is unfortunate that this operation is taking place on a very large scale and according to a correspondent who has studied the coal industry, the loss to the Government exchequer is of the order of Rs. 300 crores a year through these illegal minings. The Bhatti mines are not under his control, but just by way of illustration, I would like to say that under the very nose of the Government of India—you must have come across news in newspapers—illegal mining was taking place, several ponies were buried under it and many lives were lost. Therefore, I would underline the need for taking necessary action.

In ~~reply to a~~ question in the House the Hon. ~~Minister~~ told us that necessary instructions ~~had~~ been issued to stop illegal mining. Yet, I am sorry to say that this operation has not been stopped and it is going on. Of course, in the very nature of things, we have some difficulty because there is a collusion of some employees of the Coal India and in some cases even the personnel of the Industrial Security Force have also been found to have been in league with these operators.

Secondly, what has been worrying us is the question of private contractors. This private contract system is responsible for a lot of malpractices, pilferages and thefts. Trucks are loaded for a particular destination and a number of them are diverted to another destination and unloaded there. Then, obviously good quality coal is supposed to be loaded but in actual effect inferior quality coal is loaded and is supplied to the consumers. In fact the Coal Consumers' Association had submitted a memorandum that no effective steps so far have been taken to stop this ~~sort of malpractices and stop supplies of~~

inferior quality coal. I would submit to the Minister that adequate steps should be taken to stop this malpractice. The Minister is aware of this fact that there have been complaints from the State Electricity Boards and even from thermal power plants that apart from the fact that the coal contains a high percentage of ash going upto even 45 per cent, but it is also mixed with stone chips, which has been responsible for causing damage to the machinery. Even in this House, in answer to question put by me, the then Minister, Mr. P. Shiv Shankar admitted that this practice was there and every effort was being made to stop this. I would suggest that there should be a strict supervision at the time of loading of coal so that this kind of adulteration does not take place.

Sir, Energy Policy Committee of 1980 made two recommendations. The first recommendation was that the fire raging in coal mines should be extinguished. I understand that measures are being taken to extinguish those fires. There are fires raging for the last over 30 to 40 years I have seen them with my own eyes As has been mentioned due to internal combustion fire breaks out. Therefore, adequate care has to be taken to prevent further break out of fire. In gaseous mines this danger is more and one has to be very careful about it and take all precautionary measures to prevent accident at fires breaking out and causing loss of life.

Sir, there is dearth of sand in the vicinity. Sand is required for stowing operations. The contracts for sand are awarded to private contractors. In this also a great deal of malpractice is going on. There is over-billing. If they bring 100 trucks they submit accounts for 200 trucks. An auditor who was sent to check this was done to death. This menace of mafia gang which has been often spoken of in this House continues to persist there and no effective steps have been taken.

Shri Gujral, Chairman, Coal India was taking some steps to deal with these people to disperse them. He was able to do something. That work should continue. They corner all the contracts and no other person is allowed to come. There are a lot of malpractice like under-loading over-billing etc. with the result that despite the fact that the coal prices have been raised five times since nationalisation still the coal industry is having ~~an accumulated loss of Rs. 1100 crores~~

This is a matter of great concern for all of us and I would very humbly submit to the Minister to ensure necessary steps to streamline the working of coal industry to prevent these undesirable anti-social elements from cornering contracts and indulging in malpractice and commit theft of coal and also indulge in strip mining of coal. This is another facet of the malpractice obtaining there. There is strip mining in an illegal form which destroys the eco system of that area.

Therefore, I do hope the Hon. Minister will take care of this and take all possible steps to stop these illegal practices and ensure proper quality of coal to the consumers and to the State Electricity Boards. They are supplying adulterated coal with stone chips mixed to the Electricity Board and they spoil and damage the generator and other equipments. My friend, Shri Damodar Pandey, has mentioned that in the North Karanpura area coal deposit is the highest. The Railways are not able to carry the coal from the pit-heads to various parts of the country with the result that there is a huge accumulation of coal at the pit-heads. He suggested that thermal power stations could be set up near the pit-heads in the Karanpura area. I request that this matter may be examined by the Hon. Minister as it will also cut down the transport cost.

Sir, it was admitted that there was accumulation of about 30 million tonnes of coal near the pit-heads and the Railways were not able to move them. The present carrying capacity of Railways about 90 to 95 thousand tonnes. In reply to my Starred Question in this House, about the introduction of jumbo trains, the Government replied that the Railways were going to have a trial runs of such trains with the carrying capacity of 9000 tonnes. If that is going to happen, I hope that the pit-accumulation of coal would be cleared in no time. Therefore, I hope that this would happen and the Hon. Minister would also take into consideration the suggestion made by Shri Damodar Pandey. With these words, I support the Bill.

[Translation]

*SHRI S. THANGARAJU (Perambalur): Hon. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, on

behalf of my party the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, I rise to say a few words on the Coal Mines (Conservation and Development) Amendment Bill, 1985. As the Hon. Minister pointed out in his introductory speech, this Bill is an innocuous Bill and I extend my wholehearted support to it. In 1973 all the coal mines in the country were nationalised and the Central Government is now entirely responsible for conservation and development of coal mines in the country.

Sir, it is really alarming to know that at the pitheads of coal mines the accumulated stock of coal is worth about Rs. 500 crores. You will agree with me if I say that it is a matter of anguish to see that there is acute paucity of coal in southern States when we have so much of coal in hand. For example, coal is required in abundance for generating electricity. In total generation of electricity in Tamil Nadu, 70 per cent is coming from Thermal Stations and the balance 30 per cent comes from hydro projects and other sources. All the required coal for thermal stations in Tamil Nadu is to come from northern States. For Tuticorin Super Power Station, the coal has to come from Talcher in Orissa. The coal has to be transported through sea. We cannot bring coal through rail firstly because there are not enough wagons and secondly because the transportation cost is heavy.

The Central Government is giving concessional freight rate for transporting cement and steel. That sort of concessional freight rate is not available for coal. By bringing coal through rail, the State Electricity Boards will have to meet heavy expenditure. Then it becomes uneconomical for the Electricity Boards to supply electricity at cheap rate. I demand that concessional freight rate should be given for transporting coal through rail.

I am sure that the hon. Minister will agree with me if I say that adequate stocks of coal should be available with the Thermal Stations in order to ensure that there is uninterrupted generation of electricity. Unfortunately, on occasions the Thermal Stations do not have even two day's stock of coal with them. As it has become a normal phenomenon to have recurring floods in one

*The speech was originally delivered in Tamil.

[Shri S. Thangaraju]

part of the country and in other part of the country recurring drought, on the one side we have abundance of coal and on the other abysmally low level of supply of coal. In order to ensure that there is continuous supply to coal, the Government of Tamil Nadu had asked the Centre to permit the acquisition of three ships. The Centre has given permission to acquire only one ship. I take this opportunity to demand that the Centre should accord its permission to Tamil Nadu Government for acquiring two more ships so that the Thermal Stations are not starved of coal.

Similarly, the quality of coal supplied is also poor. The Tamil Nadu State Electricity Board is removing 1000 tonnes of stones from the coal supplied to the State. The ash content of the coal is also very heavy. Naturally this causes damage to the equipment in the Thermal Stations. The Thermal Stations are not able to generate electricity to the optimum capacity. That is why the Government of Tamil Nadu had sought permission to import 7 lakh tonnes of high grade of coal from Australia. The Centre has given permission to import only one lakh tonne of coal from Australia. I request the good offices of the hon. Minister for the Centre's permission to import the remaining 4 lakh tonnes of high coal from Australia.

Sir, coal is in the core sector of our economy. During the period 1973 to 1985 the price of coal has been hiked six times. from Rs. 47.50 per tonne it has gone up to Rs. 183 per tonne. Consequently the electricity rate has to be increased. This leads to the inevitable increase in prices of essential commodities. The hon. Minister should look into this aspect also before increasing the price of coal. If the hon. Minister ensures that the accumulated stocks of coal valued at Rs. 500 crores are supplied to the needy places, then there may be no need for him to increase the price of coal.

The hon. Members who preceded me referred to the accumulated loss of more than Rs. 1100 crores by coal India Ltd., inspite of increase in the price of coal from Rs. 47.50 per tonne to Rs. 183/- per tonne. They also talked about illegal mining and the pilferage of coal in substantial quantity. I am sure that the hon. Minister would look into the issue raised by my friends. Before I

conclude, I would request him to ensure uninterrupted supply of coal in substantial quantity to Thermal Stations in Tamil Nadu. Then only the Government of Tamil Nadu will be able to solve the problem of acute shortage of power in the State.

With these words I conclude my speech.

SHRI HARISH RAWAT (Almora) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister for his efforts which have resulted in record coal production this year. The coal production was 36 millions tonnes in 1952 and today we are producing 147 million tonnes. I believe that it is a wonderful achievement in itself. On the one hand, the hon Minister deserves congratulations and on the other I would also congratulate the workers, the officers and the whole machinery which is engaged in coal-mines.

Secondly, the hon. Minister deserves congratulations because it is for the first time that one can see such a good co-ordination between the coal, the power, the steel and the Railway departments. Complaints were often made in this regard earlier but now it is as a result of co-ordination that utilisation of the capacity of the Thermal Power plants has increased. Not to speak of other areas, it has increased even in Uttar Pradesh where it was minimum. To make it more effective, there is need to effect it at the lower levels also. Monitoring should be done at higher level to find out how it can be made more effective and purposeful and meetings should be held at the lower levels for this purpose. You would agree that there is a lot of scope for improvement in this field. 31 million tonnes of coal stock is lying at the pit-heads. Maybe, it has reduced but the point is that it is causing a great loss. Many power-plants complain that they ought to have at least one month's stock with them but actually they do not have it for more than 2 to 5 days or at the most 10 days, which can result in shortage at any time. On the other hand the stocks are just lying at the pit-heads. The Railway Ministry should be consulted to find out ways to reduce it and attention should be paid to it.

The conservation and development of Coal Mines is very essential for our country.

Ours is a developing economy and the population pressure will always be there and, therefore I feel that till a long-term perspective planning is not drawn in this regard, nothing concrete would be achieved. If there is continuous pressure on coal and the way the steel, fertilizers and power plants increasingly demand it, it will not last long. Many Hon. Members have repeatedly pointed out that the coal reserves in the country will last only for 90 years and feel that to meet the requirements of our economy, we would need coal not only for 90 years but for many hundred years more and the way coal is being extracted—we require 240 million tonnes during the Seventh Plan—I doubt if it could last even 90 years. All the Hon. Members have emphasized the need for tapping alternative sources of energy and I would request you to tap other sources as well so that the increasing pressure on coal is reduced. I would request the Hon. Minister to pay attention in this regard.

13.20 hrs.

[SHRIMATI BASAVARAJESHWARI
in the Chair]

We require 240 million tonnes of coal during the Seventh Five Year Plan—100 million tonnes for power sector and 140 million tonnes for steel sector, but we have to import coal for the steel sector. We should try to reduce our needs for importing coal. The way BHEL has improved the boilers, it will be better if we also use coal with ash content in them. I feel constant research is required on it. As BHEL has offered to supply new type of boiler to thermal plants, similarly some new method can be found out for steel power plants so that we may be able to utilise both types of coal—coal with sulphur content and coal with ash content.

Presently, maximum coal is being lost because of burning; 90 million tonnes is being destroyed because of it. I do not think much improvement has been effected after the nationalisation. It is true that fire incidents are not on that large scale in the case of new coal-fields but in the matter of old coal-fields which were earlier in the hands of private miners, huge quantities of coal catch fire. It is resulting in great loss to the country. A long term planning should

be made and a time bound programme to save coal from catching fire should be chalked out.

I want to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister towards the illegal mining in our country. This is resulting in loss to the tune of Rs. 300 crores. The Hon. Member, Shri S. N. Sinha has given detailed account of the pilferage of coal. My request is that can we create a protection force for coal mines which may be fully under your control? That should ensure that coal is not pilfered. I shall not go into the aspect of mafia gangs and other matters, which has been raised by other Members, but I would simply submit that you should pay attention towards these aspects.

Crores of rupees are due from customers and majority of your customers consist of public undertakings whether these are State Government undertakings or the Central Government ones. You are not able to realise money from them in time. This Bill would have been purposeful if you had come with certain suggestions regarding realisation of money from your customers. Huge amounts are in arrears and because of that you are suffering heavy losses. To make up your loss you are enhancing the prices. The Working Group for the Seventh Plan has asked for an additional amount of Rs. 14,410 crores for the coal industry. You are going to spend such a heavy amount but the return you are giving to the national exchequer is negligible. I feel it is a challenge to a powerful Minister like you, who is an ardent advocate of the Public Sector. If the Planning Commission sanctions this huge amount—and I wish that this amount should be sanctioned—will you give a return of 10 to 11% in the Seventh Plan? It can be achieved only when you increase your capacity, production and improve your quality.

With these words I support it.

SHRI RAJ KUMAR RAI (Ghosi) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to you for giving me an opportunity to support this Bill.

Coal is so important for our country's economy that we call it black diamond. Our Hon. Minister, Shri Sathe, who is one of the most influential Ministers in the Cabinet, has brought this Bill. He has made provision

[Shri Raj Kumar Rai]

for recovery of the arrears against coal supply as land revenue. It is a laudable step. This will fetch large amounts. As the Member, who spoke before me had stated that if timely realisation could be made from the public undertakings and these are also brought under its purview, it will be quite advantageous. If the arrears are recovered in time, that will help in successful functioning.

Sir, whereas I support this Bill and appreciate the personality and efficiency of the Hon. Minister, I want to give some suggestions also.

Coal is an exhaustible item. It may be available today but in near future it may not be available. It is, therefore, necessary that we use it cautiously. At present Coal mining is being undertaken with full zest. Coal mining is a good thing but we should use coal only to the extent it is necessary. For example, it is necessary to use coal for generation of thermal power. We should do it. While using coal we should keep in mind that coal resources will go on depleting. If we start using coal in those fields where it is not necessary, then very soon we will exhaust our coal deposits. I, therefore, urge that it should be used only where it is absolutely necessary. It would be better if a Bill is brought restricting use of coal on unavoidable items.

Tomorrow, there may be shortage of coal and power also. In case they are in short supply, the scientists may find a way out. But in the interest of the country we will have to be cautious and full care will have to be taken in the matter of consumption of coal.

Sir, I would like to point out to the Hon. Minister that the present functions of Coal India are the same as that of the Coal Board. These functions need to be revised. The country is not getting the desired benefits thereby. There is maladministration in the matter of employment also. Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes do not get employment in it as per the quota reserved for them. Labour engaged in it is removed from the service after a period of one or two years. They are paid less wages. Minor children are also employed and the management removes them from their jobs at

will. This is a very serious matter. It is a very big undertaking in the public sector and the Public Sector Minister is an eminent advocate. During his tenure, the system of contract labour is in force in coal-fields. Zamindari System has been abolished, Princely States have been abolished and middlemen have been banished by Congress in the name of bringing socialism, but the system of contract labour is still in vogue here. The contractor pays them a daily wage of Rs. 10/- or Rs. 8/- or Rs. 5/- and after 2 to 4 years the worker quits the place with his lantern and umbrella. I come from Eastern Uttar Pradesh. There are coal fields in Shri Panika's area. I have seen in Chhindwara also that children are unable to see their youth and even if they grow young, they cannot live their full life. They are never made regular. When they go there to seek employment, they take loan on interest and after a period of 1 or 2 years they go back empty handed. They are not made permanents in their service. In this regard, many irregularities are being committed in coal mines. I feel that, keeping in view the human factor and these children, we must take effective steps to provide education facilities and to improve their service conditions. Some way out should also be found to abolish contract system as early as possible. A Bill should be introduced in this House for this purpose. As you are the Minister in charge, everybody is expecting this thing of you.

Recently, I happened to read in the last week 'Ravivar', a Weekly published by Anand Publications from West Bengal; that huge quantity of coal had been mined in Burdwan, Raniganj, Jharia, etc. but proper land filling has not been done there. The result is that in many localities having a population of lakhs and crores, the land is hollow, i.e., nothing has been filled in it. And the day is not far off when the land would cave in and thousands and lakhs of persons will be buried under the debris, while we will be discussing in Parliament about the remedial measures.

Similarly, the contractors and landlords have cleared the forests, but no afforestation work has been undertaken there, which is adversely affecting the ecology. There are many things to say but due to shortage of time I conclude my speech now. I shall send

a letter to the Hon. Minister detailing the remaining points. I hope that the Hon. Minister will take early steps in respect of all those matters. With these words, I thank you and expect of the competent Minister that no point will remain unattended.

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA (Roberts-ganj) : Madam Chairman, I rise to support the Coal Mines (Conservation and Development) Amendment Bill. I shall try not to repeat the points already raised by other Members.

There is no doubt that the Ministry of coal deserves congratulations for the constant increase in coal production particularly after 1980. Even now the coal production is increasing for which I would like to congratulate the Hon. Minister and the Ministry of coal. I shall try not to repeat what has already been said. First of all a mention has been made about the Coal Board. It is a matter of great concern that huge amount of the Coal India is in arrears. It would have been better if a Bill had been brought here for effecting recovery of arrears from the consumers. I would, therefore, like to say that a comprehensive Bill should be brought here so that arrears to the tune of crores of rupees could be realised to run the Coal-India. The consumers complain that although provision for sampling has been made, yet there is no testing arrangement. I come from Singrauli area. Your bills are not according to the colliery value. That is why the Board or the consumers raise objection in this regard. Besides making arrangements for sampling of coal, arrangements should also be made for joint testing so that the quality of the coal is specified and there may not be any controversy in the bill. Everybody has admitted that there is considerable ash content in coal. When we supply coal having ash content to electricity boards, it carries big stones and shells also. So, the electricity boards raise objections. Coal India is far behind the schedule so far as the proposal of setting up washery is concerned. I would suggest that washeries should be set up so that good quality coal can be supplied. There is no doubt that under the able leadership of the Hon. Minister, there has been good coordination between the Coal India, the railways and the electricity boards. It was never witnessed before. I remember the period before 1980,

i.e., the period of Janata Government. Many electricity boards had closed down their plants due to shortage of coal. Now, you have changed the conditions because of which electricity boards are functioning smoothly. A sympathetic view will have to be taken in regard to the amount outstanding against them. There is not a single electricity board which does not have stock of coal for less than 15 days to run the plant. I would like to thank the Hon. Minister for that. Now I would like to say something about the workers welfare. The work of constructing their quarters is given on contract, but nobody is able to do the job. Last time I had given a suggestion that there must be an engineers wing in the Coal India to oversee construction work so that buildings etc. are constructed in time. Medical facilities should also be provided to them. There is a great need for a Central Hospital. One such hospital is there in the Singrauli Coal Fields but the area of Uttar Pradesh is not covered under it. There are a total of 11 coal mines in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. No Intermediate College, Degree College or I.T.I. has been provided there. You will have to provide all these welfare facilities. The workers should be provided drinking water facility. Coal should also be supplied to them so that their efficiency may increase. No doubt productivity has increased. You deserve congratulations for taking several safety measures. The number of accidents has come down and productivity has increased. It is a matter of great happiness. Mining Engineers in the open cast mines get promotion after a very long period. In the management, the ratio is 60 : 40. The Civil and Mechanical Engineers in the management are never appointed as C.M.D. or Director. You must remove this discrimination. The relations between the workers and the management are cordial. Unions have been formed at certain places. The Management wants to create Unions. It should be stopped. Indiscipline has also been curbed. At present 29 to 30 million tonnes of coal is lying at the pit-heads, but it is not being made available to consumers. For this you will have to streamline the distribution system. Coal yards were provided but there is laxity among our officers. I would like to give an example about the Western Coal Fields, where the old engineers have set up a society at Vishrampur in which people upto the level of G.M. have been included. Their aim was to do something useful. Being the

[Shri Ram Pyare Panika]

society of engineers, its bid was the lowest. About one year has passed, but it has not been awarded the contract of the coalyard. You will, therefore, have to pay attention to removal of corruption rampant in the distribution system. You will have to control it. You should find out why coal is not reaching the coalyards. Arrangements should be made that all the consumers living around the coal mines get coal direct from the coal mines. It will make no difference to you. The result will be that coal will be available at cheap rates. In Delhi, Haryana and Punjab, coal is not available at reasonable rates. The reason, therefore, is that either injustice is being meted out to coal traders, which should be checked, or the doings of the Mafia gang. Police officers and other higher officers are definitely in connivance with them in all our new coal mines. The officers of Coal India are working hand in glove with them. You must check their *modus operandi* of amassing wealth. We have watched it at close quarters and discovered that our officers had established nexus with anti-social elements. You have to take steps to check all these things.

Sir, we have given land for setting up coal fields under an agreement that employment would be provided to one person in each family. In U.P. and Bihar land was given for setting up coal mines under an agreement signed by us. The agreement is not being implemented. Last time also I saw you and at my instance you had issued orders for providing employment to 12 to 14 persons. But persons from Bihar are recruited at one place and then transferred to other places. Persons from other places are brought there. In this way the local people are not able to get any employment. I, therefore, request you not to bring outsiders in any coal fields. Instead provide employment to local adivasis, harijans and others, who have given land even if it is one acre, and to landless persons.

Another aspect is about decentralisation. At the time of Singrauli Coal Mines, it was not only envisaged but was decided and the Hon. Minister had also said in reply to a question that a company would be set there. But to-date this company has not been set up. Why do you want to concentrate powers at one place? For getting clearance for ~~many~~ decisions they have to go to Vara-

nasi and Ranchi. A company should be set up for Singrauli area. Directors will not serve the purpose. It is not possible for a director to do every job. You may keep his office at Varanasi. If you function in this manner, coal production will definitely increase, distribution will be smooth and corruption rampant in coal fields will be minimised. I would, therefore, like to submit to the Hon. Minister that norms laid down by the Coal India for setting up a company/zone should be followed. A separate zone may be set up for Uttar Pradesh, another for Madhya Pradesh and a company may be set up in Varanasi. This will result in increase in administrative facilities and you will be able to get rid of routine problems.

Besides, steps should be taken to save the coal burning at the pit heads. I would like to point out that in order to show more production of coal, certain officers of coal fields show fake production of coal and in summer they will show it as burnt. I would like to suggest that in order to check this malpractice or corruption you should have some machinery which may conduct on the spot inspection to carry out physical verification relating to production of coal and the stock of coal. This is very necessary.

With these words I thank you and hope that production will constantly increase in a key-sector like coal. It will result in more generation of power in the country and development of industries. There will be no shortage of these basic necessities. Coal is a basic necessity. It is, however, black in colour, but it is giving light in our country. I am confident that under your able leadership this field will witness constant improvement and you will continue to increase it further.

SHRI RAM BAHADUR SINGH (Chapra) : Madam, if the Bill under discussion in this House is not passed, conservation and development of coal mines will not be adversely affected and if it is passed, it will not usher in any revolutionary change. However, with the introduction of this Bill we have got an opportunity to discuss other aspects relating to coal.

Madam, among all the energy sources available in our country, coal is the most important. Conservation and development

of coal means that consumers must get coal in adequate quantity, at reasonable rates and in time. If it is not made available to them in time and at reasonable rates, no purpose will be served by enacting any number of laws pertaining to conservation and development. The country will not get any benefit thereby.

Last year there was acute shortage of coal in Bihar, which produces maximum coal. At that time the Chairman of Coal India had stated that there was unlimited stock of coal with the company, but it was not reaching the consumers due to shortage of rail wagons. It means that due to shortage of wagons, coal is not reaching the people, thermal power stations and steel plants. You and the Railway Minister sit near each other and the Cabinet functions on the principle of joint responsibility, then why should such things happen? It shows lack of coordination somewhere. If you want that this industry may prosper, I would urge you to bring about coordination in it.

So far as weights and measures are concerned, an Hon. Member has pointed out that all the weighing machines have rusted. He is right. If someone wants to purchase 100 tonnes of coal, he will have to purchase 110 tonnes. Only then he will be able to get 100 tonnes. If he makes a mistake of purchasing 100 tonnes of coal, he will get only 90 tonnes of coal instead of 100 tonnes.

As regards the quality of coal, the thermal power stations in various parts of the country have the maximum information about it. After the nationalisation of coal industry at least one lakh tonnes of inferior quality coal has been supplied. Coal mixed with stones and dust has been supplied and the thermal power station or the steel plant which gets inferior quality of coal will be damaged and power generation will come to standstill and the economy of the country will be shattered. This is one aspect. Madam, the other aspect is that for the last 50 years Jharia Coal Fields have been on fire and thousands of tonnes of best quality coal is being reduced to ash daily. Shamelessly we have to go with a begging bowl to other countries of the world who have no standing before us for the same coal, which is being reduced to ash here, for running our steel plants. We have to beg Australia and

Canada. If our Government wants conservation and development of coal mines, it should try its level best to extinguish the fire in the coal fields. If we are able to control the fire, then we shall not have to depend on other countries and we shall get the best quality coal to run our steel plants.

Madam, similarly maximum expenditure in coal fields is on account of Mafia gangs. The thing to be noted in this regard is that the person who occupies the highest seat in Bihar, i.e., who becomes the Chief Minister of Bihar makes announcement immediately after occupying the chair that liquidation of the Mafia gangs in the coal fields will receive topmost priority. But nobody has so far done this. When the present Chief Minister occupied the chair, he also made this announcement. He is fully aware of the coal belt. His entire life has been spent in coal fields. When he made this announcement, the people felt that this man can do something, but he has also utterly failed. I am not surprised because a person is judged from his actions and not from his pronouncements. I am making a long speech. My speech can be revolutionary, but I will not be judged by my speech. I will be judged by my actions only. We may continue to make any number of announcements either from the highest chair in Bihar or from a still higher chair about the liquidation of Mafia gangs, but mere announcements will not rid the coal fields of Mafia gangs because in the evening close-door meetings will be held with the same Mafia gangs. Mere announcements cannot liquidate Mafia gangs in coal fields.

So far as the worker is concerned, he works very hard and extracts coal from the mines at a depth of 300 feet to 3000 feet. When he comes out of the mine, it is not possible to identify whether he is the same person. The house in which he lives is a virtual hell. No drinking water is available there and he does not have clean environment. The result is that coal mine workers fall victim to T.B. and later on they die of it. No medicines are available in the hospital for this disease. All the drugs reach the houses of big officers. The remaining drugs are sold in black market and coal mine workers die in the absence of drugs. This evil is not from the bottom but from the top.

[Shri Ram Bahadur Singh]

In August, 1984 a conference of coal mine personnel was held in Ranchi in which the Coal Secretary, Shri S.B. Lal had also participated. He told the conference that the image of coal industry was not good in the eyes of people. He has rightly said this. The reason as stated by him was mismanagement.

I agree that everything in the world has its root under the earth but roots of corruption are in the sky. If you want conservation and development of coal mines, first of all corruption will have to be rooted out from the coal fields and you will have to begin from the top. So long as you believe that corruption can be rooted out by eradicating it at the lower level, it can never be eradicated. When Delhi is dirty, Patna and Calcutta cannot remain clean; Raniganj, Jharia and Dhanbad also cannot remain clean. Hence, you must show determination and take strong steps.

I have heard that you are a progressive and diligent person. You should show your progressiveness and diligence by rooting out corruption from coal fields in order to ensure conservation and development of coal mines. With these words I conclude and hope that you will keep my suggestions in mind and try to do your best.

[English]

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI (Deogarh) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Coal Mines (Conservation and Development) Amendment Bill. This innocuous Bill, as pointed out by the Minister himself, is intended to meet a statutory requirement; only a legal formality is to be complied with. The Subordinate Legislation Committee of Sixth Lok Sabha recommended some provision, not to be made in the rules but to be made in the Act itself and that is why this amendment has come. I congratulate the Hon. Minister - who is, of course, absent now—that in his introductory remarks, he invited suggestions from the House on the working of the coal industry and also on how to improve its working. After the nationalisation of the coal industry in 1973 which was a historic step, there has been immense development in the field of coal. Two lakhs more people have been taken into employment in the coal sector.

Their wages have been substantially increased. What was the objective of nationalisation? It was manifold. Firstly, it was thought that a basic industry like coal which was the primary source of energy and since it is the age of energy and without control over the source of energy no nation, more so, a country like India, wedded to democratic socialism can prosper. Therefore, this step was taken to take the country ahead along the path of democratic socialism step by step and, at the same time, to end corruption and exploitation of the lakhs of labourers employed in this field, and to reach a commanding height in the field of production of coal. And lastly it is to ensure steady supply to the consumers of coal at a stable price. These were the objectives underlying the Nationalisation of the coal industry in 1973.

A lot of things have been done for which the Government of India is to be congratulated, but I am constrained to observe that further much more need to be done. What is disturbing today is the loss this coal industry is sustaining since its nationalisation. It is sustaining an annual loss of Rs. 24 crores and an accumulated loss of more than a thousand crores of rupees. We are all worried about the state of affairs in our country particularly in the field of economy. In textile there is a loss, in steel there is a loss. Every steel mill is sustaining a loss to the tune of Rs. 100 crores. In coal operations also there is a loss. So, what will happen to this socialist economy which was so truly cherished to be followed in this country.

Causes leading to the losses of coal industry should be looked into and steps should be taken to see that no losses occur in future.

Now, what are the causes for these losses? To me it seems the old underground mines, lack of coordination between the labour and management, unscientific operations of the mines and the rampant corruption prevailing among the officers. They are treating themselves as lords. They do not care for anybody. Therefore, these officers and administration in the coal-field have to be tightened up. This industry requires better coordination and cooperation between the labour and management. There should be a proper participation of the labour in the

management also. Shri Vasant Sathe very often speaks of participation of labour in Management. It provides a challenge to him and his Ministry. It is a challenge to his capabilities also. I know he is a socialistic-minded and progressive minister. He has written a book on this subject, but let him start from his area involving the labour in management and making them partners in this field.

My friends who have spoken earlier have spoken at length about the pilferages, illegal mining and about the involvement of mafia group in this field. I do not like to deal with it because there is not enough time, but I would like to give some suggestions to the Hon. Minister.

My first suggestion is that the Energy Policy Committee report should be implemented in letter and spirit. The Fazal Committee suggestion to have captive power plants inside the mines should also be implemented. Coal is called black diamond. Many people have rightly said that coal is black in colour but it is instrumental in brightening the face of the economy. Coal is a basic factor in development, but it is very disturbing the way coal affairs are managed in the country.

The present Minister since he took over the charge of Coal Ministry has taken a lot of steps to coordinate between his Ministry and the Railway Ministry, and Energy Ministry for quicker movement of coal from the pitheads to the thermal power stations. We should not keep these things within the political ambit. It must be placed above political considerations. The economy must be above political considerations. I am giving you one Chinese example. China is at present producing 780 million tonnes of coal and 44 million tonnes of Steel. Our country started development around the same time as China did, but we have gone only upto about 10 million tonnes of production in steel and about 147 million tonnes of coal. In the Seventh Plan production of coal will be raised to 240 million tonnes and in the Eighth Plan to 325 million tonnes.

14.00 hrs.

For all this advanced planning is necessary right from now. There should be scientific

development. Rs. 14,400 crores is the demand placed before the Planning Commission by the Working Group. I don't know whether it has been finalised. But in this year under discussion they have given only Rs. 1400 crores. Only 50 per cent is allotted. A sense of belonging has to be created among the workers. A sense of participation is to be created. They have to be treated as partners so that corruption will go away and pilferage will go away. Accountability of the officers should be there. Responsibility has to be coupled with rights. Without responsibility when we are only talking of rights alone, it will not lead to any progress and development.

About Orissa and about my own constituency I wish to say something. There is a coal-belt right from Talcher upto Raikhol covering the Ib valley in between. This is a very big coal field. It is not only one of the largest in the country, but it is one of the largest coal fields in the whole world. But Madam, unfortunately, due attention is not being given to this coalfield. We can easily have two super thermal plants here—one at Talcher and another at Ib Valley.

About China's economy I talked a little while ago. In China what is it that they are doing? They are not taking political considerations into account. They are guided by practical wisdom. They are establishing power plants at the pit-heads of the coal mines only. We should also locate our super-thermal power plants at pit-heads only. Otherwise it will pose a big problem for us. Transportation will pose a problem; Railways will pose a problem. Thousands of crores rupees worth of coal is being burnt today. Nobody will be able to help us in the matter. We should help ourselves. The State of Orissa is traditionally and historically very backward. Very good reserves of coal are there; it is good coal, upgraded coal, without much of ash content. About quality of coal we are discussing here. We have got lot of coal in this country but yet we are importing from Australia. What is that coal? That coal contains lot of sulphur. The coal of European countries and Australia contains sulphur whereas in our country we have got coal without this sulphur content and this is the beauty of our coal! We can develop research to remove the ash content and re-structure the boilers of our power plants.

[Shri Sriballav Panigrahi]

Then we can meet our coal requirements indigenously. We need not go for imports.

My next suggestion is that a coal company may be located in Orissa so that proper attention can be paid to the development of coal industry in Orissa. Immediately we can have a separate Coal Division to start with in Orissa.

With these words, Madam, I support this Bill.

This Bill, though innocuous, is significant, having far reaching implications and far-reaching consequences to our national economy. I congratulate the Minister for having given opportunity to the Members of the House to discuss this in wider perspective and to give suggestions for the better working of the coal industry.

With these words I conclude. Thank you.

STATEMENT RE : SPECIAL REBATE
ON THE SALE OF HANDLOOM
CLOTH

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SUPPLY AND TEXTILE (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH) : Government of India have a scheme to provide special rebate at the rate of 20 per cent, to be shared equally between the Central and State Governments, in order to help the handloom cooperatives and corporations to liquidate their accumulated stocks.

2. The duration of special rebate was increased from 30 days to 60 days a year during the years 1983-84 and 1984-85. Prior to 1983-84, special rebate was allowed for 30 days in a year and rebate was also allowed for sales at National Handloom Expos organised by the Office of the Development Commissioner for Handlooms. While increasing the rebate to 60 days, the special rebate meant exclusively for National Handloom Expos was withdrawn.

3. However, for 1985-86, the old system of 30 days special rebate plus rebate for National Handloom Expos was re-introduced. However, a number of representations have

been received from some State Governments seeking a reversion to the earlier policy of 1984-85 of 60 days special rebate.

4. Upon reconsideration of the matter the Government have decided that during 1985-86 the period of special rebate will be increased to 45 days as against 30 days announced earlier. Rebate facilities will also be available for the Handloom Expos organised or approved by Government. This decision provides more benefit than the earlier policy of total 60 days rebate, which was inclusive of expos also. Thus under the present decision special rebate facility will be available for 45 days for all sales and in addition about 128 days of sales in expos.

5. This decision of the Government will greatly help the handloom sector to increase the sale of handloom cloth and to liquidate the accumulated stocks during the ensuing season.

14.06 hrs.

COAL MINES (CONSERVATION AND
DEVELOPMENT) AMENDMENT
BILL—Contd.

[English]

SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK (Cuttack) : Madam, this Amendment Bill suggests that the power to recover the cost of operations or measures undertaken by the Government for the benefit of coal mine-owner should flow from this Act itself, not from the rules and hence this amendment has been brought forward. We welcome this amendment because it is very much in tune with the nationalisation of coal-mines which was done in 1973.

Madam, conservation and development of coal mines is very important for the nations. Coal being the main source of energy has the highest forward linkage effect with steel, cement, fertiliser, railway, electric power and a number of industries. That is why the Act of 1974 was enacted and this Amendment Bill gives some powers to the Government to realise the duties and taxes from the owner, agent or manager, for

conservation and development of coal mines including stowing for safety or prevention of any factor which may adversely affect the conservation of coal and development of coal mines reducing the ash contents of coal. Madam, these powers were exercised under rule 6 of the Coal Mines Rules, 1975. As per the suggestion and recommendation of the Committee on Subordinate Legislation, this is being incorporated as a part of the Act.

Madam, the Geological Survey of India in 1978 has stated that the coal reserve in our country stands at 86,428 million tonnes of seam thickness of 1.2 metre and goes to a depth of 600 metres. According to the report of the Energy Policy Committee in 1980, the available coal reserve would be adequate to last for about 100 years on the assumption that the annual coal production will reach a level of 400 million tonnes by the end of the century. Madam, Energy Committee has given many suggestion on the conservation of coal. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether adequate steps have been taken for the conservation of coal and what are the main features they have suggested.

Madam, the important thing of this legislation is the coal production for which we require the development of the coal mines. What we see now today? The detailed official data of coal for April-June 1985 shows that production at 322.99 lakh tonnes was 2.6 per cent less than 331.77 lakh tonnes recorded in the corresponding period of 1984 and 10.7 per cent shortage of the targeted 361.63 lakh tonnes for the quarter. Madam, for 1985-86 full year, the coal output is targeted at 158 million tonnes or 11 million tonnes more than the recorded output of 147 million tonnes in 1984-85 full year. The 1985-86 target is just 5 million tonnes above the target of 153 million tonnes in 1983-84.

In the Seventh Five Year Plan, the Ministry has asked from the Planning Commission more than Rs. 44,000 crores for the development of mines. But the allocation made was only Rs. 1350 crores for the year, 1985-86. With this meagre amount, how is it possible to develop mines? It is also not

known how much amount we are going to get by this present amendment.

Coal India's output could have been significantly higher but for the extensive pilling up of pit-head stocks, largely for lack of railway wagons. A deliberate policy has been made for curtailing production in order to reduce pit-head accumulation. Pit-head accumulation has been brought down to around 22.7 million tonnes from nearly 30 million tonnes in April. This may also explain why Coal India has reduced its production target for the current year from 137 million tonnes to 133 million tonnes.

The wagon turn-over must be good and every thermal station should have a stock of at least 45 days of coal. Coal is not supplied in time also. Many industries are complaining of shortage of coal supplies. The recommendation of Fazal Committee including signing of an agreement between Coal India and State Electricity Board should be taken into account seriously.

When it comes to the quality of coal, there has been a mismatch between the quality of coal produced and the quality of coal acceptable to users. In other words, while the demand for coal remained unsatisfied during the year, was there excess production of coal of inferior quality? If that be the case, the quality of coal, including the additional coal to be raised this year, will have to show an improvement, so that the unsold stocks do not depress the quality of the overall mix of coal supplied to the consumer. It is gratifying to see that steps have been initiated to ensure that consumers notably thermal plants have some say on the quality of coal they get or at any rate, on the price they pay in relation to the quality of coal supplied. This seems to be the key reason why CIL appears to have decided to stagger coal output from open cast mines and concentrate on deep mining for additional raisings. This is a step in the right direction. The question is, will the grading of coal be given the go by once pithead stocks come down to manageable proportion? The progress of deep mechanised mining will be keenly watched by coal consumers who have so far been over-burdened with low grade coal.

[Shrimati Jayanti Patnaik]

The general demand for accountability becomes crucial for Coal India for some reasons.

First, some of the companies working under it have a long way to go towards the ideal of operational efficiency. In particular, the necessity of modernising the mining technology and machinery can hardly be overemphasised. The authority has pointed out that substantially large output can be obtained from the functioning of mines by better use of equipment. Considering the poor capacity utilisation ratio in a number of mines which is even as low as 30 per cent in some cases, there is the necessity of mining technology and full utilisation of things should be made. Coal unloading facilities must be modernised at many power stations as also machinery for reclaiming coal from dumps. In this field, more planning and co-ordination is very much essential and necessary.

I want it to go on record what an Hon. Member Shri Jagannath Rao has said about Talcher Coal fields. He said that Talcher Coal fields have bad coal, and the proprietors of these fields are facing adverse circumstances and nothing has been done to improve the conditions for the last so many years and that it is high time that some modern technology is developed in order to exploit the natural resources.

Another Hon. Member has said that due attention has not been paid to the development of coal mining in Orissa.

Sir, the inadequate attention for the development of coal-fields in Orissa is because of the functioning of the Talcher coalfields and the Ib valley coalfields under two different Coal Authorities. These two coal-producing areas in the State should be brought under the administrative control of a separate subsidiary of Coal India with headquarters in Orissa.

The coal available in Orissa is essentially of thermal grade. Development and utilisation of the coal reserves should, therefore, be accorded the top priority. The total coal-bearing area in the State in Talcher and Ib Valley coalfields is approximately 3,000 sq. kms. With only ten per cent of the total

coal-bearing area covered by exploration so far, the total reserves of coal established are of the order of 5,800 metric tonnes. Orissa accounts for about three per cent of the total coal production in the country.

Recent explorations in this region have resulted in the discovery of thick coal seams to the west of the present mining areas in Talcher fields. There is positive indication about occurrence of large deposits of coal around Gopalpur in Sundargarh district. It is said that it is of the highest grade for thermal with lower quantity of ash content and abrasiveness. So, Madam, this area should be developed and more attention should be given to develop the coal-bearing areas of Orissa as it has large deposits of coal. Orissa is an economically backward State and it should be developed.

With these words, I support the Bill.

[Translation]

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT (Nagpur) : Mr Chairman, Sir, I support the Coal (Development and Conservation) Amendment Bill.

As I have got the opportunity to speak on the subject, I would like to give some suggestions to the Hon. Minister. I recall the times when all the coal mines were in the private sector. The price of coal at that time was Rs. 32 or 33 per tonne and the private sector had demanded an increase of Rs. 2 per tonne but our Government did not allow that. After nationalisation, you increased the rates by 25 per cent on 8th January, 1984 and according to the report submitted recently the Western Coal Fields have earned a profit of more than Rs. 100 crores. You have earned profit because you increased the price by 25 per cent. Had you earned profit through efficiency or by effecting savings, only then I would have considered that amount as profit in the real sense.

I want to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister that there is great scope of improvement in the coal mines industry. The image of the Western Coal Fields is not very good. What is the increase in our production? It has increased from 138 million tonnes to 147 million tonnes. We are jubilant that we are making progress but what is to be looked

into is how are we making progress and how the figures are presented? Recently, I went to Nagpur. The small scale industries there have serious grievances that stone mixed coal is supplied to them. It is a fact. I myself visited 15 to 20 small factories and found that 10 to 12 per cent stone had been mixed in coal for which the factories were made to make the payment at the rate of coal. They are helpless because no one pays heed to them. This should be looked into.

Regarding the quality, less said the better. In my area the Kampti Mines are situated. There is a difference of Rs. 35 to 40 in the price of the B grade coal and the C grade coal. I have myself taken the samples of both the grades. The quality is the same but there is a difference of Rs. 40 in the rates. The industries request that C grade coal may be supplied to them as they do not want to pay Rs. 40 more but your officers insist that they will have to take B grade coal. Supply of C grade coal is refused to them. This is the position prevailing there. This does not help in improving the image. That is why I say that there is large scope of improvement. Machines worth crores of rupees are lying idle. Who are the officers who have purchased them and why have these been purchased when these were not required. The Machines are rusting and will become useless. Whose money has been spent? It is people's money and it should not be wasted. I would submit to the Hon. Minister that the officers who have purchased these machines must be occupying high positions and enjoying even now. You should take action against them because they are responsible for purchasing these machines wrongfully thereby causing loss to Government to the tune of crores of rupees. This is the need of the hour.

I would also say something about the washeries, in Chhindwara, which is Shri Kamal Nath's area, you have set up a washery at a cost of Rs. 50 crores but it is running at 25 per cent capacity. Why do you not run it at 100 per cent capacity. It is of utmost importance.

Just now the Hon. Members from Bihar were talking of illegal mining. I want to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister that mafia gangs are becoming active in Vidarbha region also. Though coal is loaded into the

trucks direct from the dumper and there is no question of loading charges, yet anybody who purchases a truck of coal is forced to pay Rs. 7 to 15 per tonne. This is just the beginning and no one can say as to what will be the limit. Therefore, it should be nipped in the bud.

I would submit to the Hon. Minister that there is a Protection Force in the Railways and if someone breaks a wagon he is shot dead. Why do you not raise an independent protection force in the coalmines too? Unless you raise this force, you cannot deal with the mafia gangs and other such elements.

I would also like to point out that too much accumulation of stocks on the pitheads results in the coal catching fire. In Chanderpur, coal worth lakhs of rupees was reduced to ashes because it was not despatched in time. You should ensure timely despatch.

You have introduced big box wagons. There is no weighing arrangement in the box wagons. Sometimes the quantity is more and sometimes it is less. It results in a mess and no justice can be done to the people in this way. This arrangement has been there for about two years. These are called N N. Box Wagons. Weighing arrangements should be made for them so that people get proper quantity for the payment they make. When the quantity is less, the people feel fleeced.

Many Hon. Members have pleaded for strict action in respect of realisation of arrears from the Power Houses. According to my information the dispute is because of the quality. Ash content is more in the coal and they claim that coal has not been supplied as per the required quality. This has resulted in large arrears. The Hon. Minister should himself convene a meeting of the concerned Chief Ministers to settle the issue of outstanding dues towards the Power Houses or the State Electricity Boards so that the misunderstanding among the people on this score could be dispelled. This should be settled by making marginal adjustments either way.

In the end, I would like to say that you work according to the new system. I thank the Hon. Minister for bringing forward this Bill and hope that he would give a serious consideration to the few suggestion given by me.

SHRI RAMASHRAY PRASAD SINGH (Jahanabad) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, while rising to support this Bill, I want to say that the country has benefited a great deal from the nationalisation of coal industry and the country has certainly made a lot of progress in this field. But, in spite of nationalisation, we are facing formidable problems. We have suffered national loss worth billions of rupees due to the fire which broke out in Jharia Mines and we have not been able so far to put out this fire and, I think, that day seems to be far off when we would be able to control this fire. Proper attention has not been paid to it. You can get from Girdih Coal Fields unwashed coal of the grade you import from Australia. The C.M.D.P.I. organisation has formulated a scheme in this regard, but we have not been able to implement it so far. Government must pay attention to it.

A tendency has been seen among your officials that with a view to achieving the targets, they mine the coal from the upper surface, but leave the coal in the lower layers. By doing so, they do get promotions and go to higher positions, but we suffer a huge loss of national wealth in the process.

Besides, the mafia gangs, who are above all laws of the land, indulge in illegal mining and transportation of coal from the coal mines. They sell this coal unchecked. There is nobody to apprehend them. This mafia gang is also causing loss to you. The voice against it is being raised ever since the nationalisation of coal mines. This has been going on since then and continues even today.

In this context, I want to draw your attention by naming some of the mines. The coal reserves, survey for which was conducted during the Second Five Year Plan have now exhausted, but no new scheme has so far been drawn up to mine the coal reserves still available at a great depth as a result of which wealth worth crores of rupees is being wasted and all mines have adopted this technique. They earn more profits from this system. They just say that the work is over. I know the names of such mines - Garkonda colliery, Sirka-Sonada and Girdih colliery. These mines have been closed down; mining operations have been stopped. Many of the workers are being paid their wages without any work. Thus, national wealth is being

wasted. We shall have to adopt a proper national viewpoint so that we may be able to mine maximum coal.

The fourth point is that mining work in Bihar is done on the instructions of Central Government. However, the officers working there belong to Bihar Government. The Central Government have no control over them. Coal is sold with their connivance and they have their share in the proceeds. They buy these posts by spending lakhs of rupees.

The Adivasis working in the coal fields have been removed from there. Their names are there on the list, but some other persons have been appointed in their place. The Adivasis cannot even register their protest. The number of such people is 40 to 50 thousand. There is growing resentment among these Adivasis and in case this resentment takes an ugly turn, our Government and our Hon. Minister would say that disruptive forces are raising their head. But, you cannot remove the disruptive elements which are engaged in such activities there. Today, other persons are accepting payments in the names of these 45 thousand people. They are not getting justice. Therefore, you must pay attention to it. Similarly, the stocks of coal which are piling up at pit heads are creating difficulty. The purchasers say that this is the fault of the Railways, the Railways say that the loaders are at fault, the loaders say that electricity is to blame; thus coal is piling up there. This is causing a huge loss to Government. Therefore, I conclude by saying only this much that Government should put a stop to this mismanagement and arrange proper transportation of coal.

SHRI K. D. SULTANPURI (Simla) : Hon. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Coal Mine (Conservation and Development) Amendment Bill and, I think, all the Hon. Members have supported this small piece of legislation.

Substantial use of coal is made in the Railways, Industry and our Projects which meet our basic needs. All the Hon. Members have told the Hon. Minister about the ash content in coal. All our Thermal Power Projects are our biggest assets. We should conserve our collieries so that the coal could be used during the crisis,

So far as coal mines are concerned, the biggest handicap in this is that whereas some collieries have been nationalised, still there are private people who are engaged in mining of coal. They cause harm to the forests; they are continuing their mining work without any permit. They show the coal mines by Government in their account; all this is done with connivance. The private people also mine coal on the site where Government mine coal. They take the collieries on long-term lease and their production is more as compared to Government production. With the taking over of this Department by Shri Sathe, who is a dynamic person, there has been a considerable improvement. He had earned a good name even when he was the Minister of Information and Broadcasting. Today also, I think, that the work done by him in the Ministry of Mines is quite encouraging. What I want to say is that the coordination between the Railways and the Ministries of Industry and Energy is a must. I belong to Himachal Pradesh—a hilly State. Coal to our State comes from Calcutta and Bihar. The coal so supplied is usually full of ash content; the pilferage starts right from the wagon; only ash reaches the people. Sometimes it so happens that the coal disappears *en route*. Nobody finds a trace of the coal. The Government of Himachal Pradesh have registered a number of cases regarding disappearance of coal. Nobody knows whether the coal was unloaded midway or it was diverted to Rajasthan. The people make off with coal on the way and, thus, coal does not reach the people to whom it is supposed to reach. For this, co-ordination between your Department and the Railways is a must.

I want to give an example of how private people produce more coal. In our State, we have imposed a restriction that certain items of forest produce, such as resin would not go out of the State. What happens is that private landlords take this land on lease and as a result of that our production falls as compared to that of the private people. Thus, you will have to develop forest there so that nobody is able to misuse coal. National wealth should be conserved. Recently, I had been to Punjab. At Ropar, I enquired how many days' stock of coal they have got to run the Thermal Power Project. They replied that their stock was not going to last more than 23 days. They further told that if

they kept more stock, it would be spoiled; there were possibilities of that catching fire and thus, causing destruction to our wealth. All three Ministries should jointly consider how the coal that has been mined could be despatched speedily to the destinations where it was needed so that this problem could be solved. If we want to brighten the future of our country and that of our children, we should pay more attention to Hydro-Electric Projects. More electricity can be produced in our hill areas through this process. A very small quantity of coal will be required for that as other sources of energy can be used. It will also lead the country towards progress. The Hon. Members have also expressed their concern over large scale felling of trees in the coal field areas. You should issue guidelines in this respect. We have mines of limestone in our State. The private people manage to take the land on lease from the Geological Department. Things similar to those happening in Mussourie are also happening in Himachal Pradesh. You are also Minister of this Department. Therefore, I want to submit that you should pay attention to this as well. If felling of trees continues in our country, our wealth will be destroyed for ever. This Bill is very appropriate. The entire House has supported it. I also support this Bill.

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH RATH (Aska) :
 Madam Chairman, I rise to support the Bill. The Minister and his Ministry are to be congratulated because they have taken sufficient steps to prevent for illegal coal mining as well as to step coal theft. They have also taken steps to see that the required coal of good quality and quantity are supplied to the consumers. They have set up additional coal handling plant and also washeries in the coal fields. I would request the Hon. Minister to investigate why the Coal India is running at a huge loss. It has been stated in the House that the labour contract is detrimental to the interest of the labourers. Coal India should pay attention to this. A scientific investigation is necessary. The Hon. Minister can as well set up a committee to find out ways and means how best this loss can be put an end to.

Sir, I will not take much time of the House because nationalisation of the Coal Industry and its functioning have already been stated

[Shri Somnath Rath]

by many Hon. Members. I would like to mention only one point. The Hon. Minister had replied to a question put to him, in this House, that better grade coal is available in Orissa. There is poverty in the midst of plenty in Orissa. I would only request the Government to help eradicate poverty in the State.

Sir, in Talcher, supply of coal to thermal stations with specification and size of coal and also provision for bunkering and storage facilities should be ensured. I understand that the Department has already sanctioned funds for this purpose and it should be expedited. Similarly, the Coal Department should have laboratory facilities and testing of coal should be carried out there so that they may be able to decide what type of coal is to be utilised and where it is to be utilised and to which of those places they should be sent for consumption. All this data should be compiled after carrying out the tests and communicated.

Sir, there is an acute shortage of Grades A and B coal needed for industrial consumption in the State. The total daily requirement is of the order of 82 wagons, which works out to about 2500 wagons for a month. This requirement is supposed to be met by the Talcher Collieries of the Coal India Limited whose daily production of Grades 'A' and 'B' coal is about 45 wagons or about 1500-1600 wagons per month at the most. As a result, most of the industries in the State have been forced to drastically cut down production. Some have faced closure. Industrial production has also greatly suffered in the process. It is high time that arrangements to mitigate the position are made.

Now, the S.S.I. units are facing the problem of getting their requirement of hard coke from the Bharat Coking Coal Ltd., which is also a subsidiary of the Coal India Limited. The Bharat Coking Coal Ltd., has not been able to make an enduring arrangement for supply of hard coke on regular basis to the new units, but prefers working out arrangement on month-to-month basis, which makes for an element of uncertainty and also may leave voids in the arrangement on month-to-month basis. It is necessary that supply of hard coke to new S.S.I. units on a regular basis should be

made. I am confident that under the leadership of the dynamic Minister, the Coal Industry as well as the Coal India Limited will march ahead and the industry will show profits in the years to come with the passage of the Bill.

[Translation]

SHRI YOGESHWAR PRASAD YOGESH (Chatra): Madam Chairman, I welcome the Coal Mines (conservation and development) Amendment Bill, introduced by the Hon. Minister in the House, because, thereby he has expressed serious concern for the conservation and development of coal. He is concerned about the coal industry and the coal production and this Bill reflects his dynamism. In this connection, I would like to give him a few concrete suggestions because I belong to the coal mine area and am well aware of the problems to that area.

All the Hon. Member have expressed their deep concern in the House over the lack of desired progress in Coal Mines due to the mafia gangs and the corruption prevalent there. I would like to suggest something to the Hon. Minister which would help him a lot. The conservation of coal can be fully guaranteed by different means like stowing, timbering, stopping of illegal mining, fire-fighting etc. It has often been observed that the sand required for stowing is not properly used in the coal mines. After the coal is extracted, sand is filled in the void and the pillars at the sides remain intact, and coal can again be extracted later on. But ordinarily it is observed that voids are not properly filled. The main reason for it is that the responsibility of filling sand is with the mafia. The transportation of sand and timber is with them. I would like to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister the recent strike by the contractors, who transport sand, the work in Bharat Coking Coal Ltd. was paralysed and the company was forced to agree to the terms and conditions dictated by the contractors. It is our major weakness and we can never control the mafia until we overcome it. Madam, I would like to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister that the total number of trucks which transport sand for stowing, are always far less than the number which is shown in records. Sometimes 10 trucks transport sand for stowing but 50 trucks are recorded and

sometimes 100 trucks are used but the records show a number of 1000 trucks. You can yourself imagine the way work is going on there. Recently, due to inadequate stowing in Alkusha Colliery, the whole mine caved in about two weeks back and some of the workers quarters were also badly affected. Similarly, improper stowing in Bhaura Colliery would have resulted in a major disaster in the mining history when about two or three years back the entire mine caved in. This is all about stowing. Stowing is very essential because it saves coal from fire and conserves it. It also ensures easy extraction of coal at a later date. If it is not done the mining of coal would be impossible.

Madam, much has been said about the beauty of coal. Coking Coal is beautiful beyond imagination. Lakhs of tonnes of coking coal is still in the bowels of earth. It is not within the knowledge of Government, but it can be extracted if a survey is made.

Secondly, I would like to say something regarding timbering. The wood supplied for timbering is not of good quality and the records are also not in order. Ten truck loads are shown in records when actually only one arrives and the same truck is registered in other collieries too. Due to lack of timbering facilities, the coal cannot be extracted from the mines and there is the possibility of accident also.

Madam, I would also like to suggest that Government should set up a coal dump in Dehri to improve the stowing work. Coal may be transported by wagons which can bring sand from river Sone on the return journey. This work should be taken over by Government. The only source for sand at present is Damoder Valley but unfortunately no sand is now left there and the Contractors are supplying earth instead and are getting payments therefor. Some other malpractices are also taking place but all of them cannot be mentioned here. The only way to avoid it is to set up a centre at Dehri and Sone from Dhanbad via Barbadi and thus the concern expressed about fire wood in up-country and Himachal could be removed. Sand should be transported from river Sone because sand is found in abundance there and the sand reserves will last

thousands of years. A big coal dump should be set up at Dehri to store coal.

In the end, I would like to say that Government is losing heavily on account of cutting of timber and it should, therefore, be checked immediately.

With these words Madam, I would like to draw your attention to the mafia which is taking roots and if the causes on account of which it is flourishing are not checked, the result would be disastrous. I would like to cite an example. The mafia is earning Rs. 70,000 from Mudamadi Washery. Why is Government tolerating loss of such a big amount? Why is the department being deprived of it? In spite of the fact that the company is incurring heavy loss why is Government not handling the amount? Why are the slurries which are earning crores of rupees for the country not being taken over by the Government? The coal should be supplied to the brick-kilns which can use it as fuel. It would save a lot of coal which goes in the hands of mafia. Thus the problem of educated unemployed would also be solved.

The contract system and the mafia was removed from the coal fields by Shrimati Indira Gandhi who had brought new hope to the workers. But it is a matter of shame that today crores of rupees are being incurred on the loading of coal through the private contractor system by payloader while thousands of our workers are sitting idle. There is a nexus between the mafia groups, the officials, and the police officers. I feel that in such a difficult situation, Shri Sathe who is a dynamic Minister can certainly be successful but he will have to take effective steps for it.

I can cite many examples of such incidents, but I would not like to encroach upon other Hon. Members' time and I would send those things in writing to the Hon. Minister later on.

I am sure that you will pay immediate attention to stowing, timbering and towards solving the problem of illegal mining. The Mukunda Project of Bharat Coking Coal Limited was set up with the collaboration of U. S. S. R. It is working to contain the fire in mines. The depth at which coal is being

[Shri Yogeshwar Prasad Yogesh]

mined in our country is not done anywhere else in the world. The new mining experiment is taking place in our country at our own cost.

*Raghuni Ke Chavur (Chawal)
Raghuni Ke Chura,
Tol Raghuni Pure Pura.*

Such deep mining is not done in any other country. What was the use of signing an agreement with another country and incur such heavy investment on this account. There is need to be vigilant about it.

SHRI KALI PRASAD PANDEY (Gopalganj) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I support impartially the Coal Mines (Conservation and Development) Amendment Bill in the capacity of an independent Member. It is the definite intention of the Hon. Minister to make progress in the field of Coal mining through this Bill. I welcome it heartily.

The question is, and many Hon. Members have raised it, that a time will come—may be after 75 years or 100 years—when there will be shortage of coal in India. Mr. Sathe, we are importing large quantities of coal but the moot point is how can we conserve coal reserves in India ?

There was a time when we used to hear that the place which produced personalities like Rajendra Babu also produced people like Natwar Lal. In these malpractices relating to coal, Natwar Lals are found not in other places, but in Delhi itself. You may ask all the Hon. Members to tell honestly whether some or the other Natwar Lal does not approach them with a small scale industry licence in his hand ? He requests you to accompany him to the Minister for the allotment of a coal permit. This bungling is not occurring in other parts of the country but only in Dehli.

About mafia once a question was asked in the House and it was hoped that this evil will be checked but it is still flourishing. In short :

*In Koyla looteron ki ek hi kahani hai
Jam jaye to khookhooon samjha, beh jaye
to paani hai*

This is the tale of mafia gang and regarding the officials :

*Pahli seekh yahi jiwan ki,
Apne ko aabad karo.
Bas na sake dil ki basti,
To aag laga barbad karo.*

There was a time when Bihar's Chief Minister was Shri Abdul Ghafoor and one Shri Saxena was a Collector in Dhandad. During his tenure, the photographs of all the members of the mafia gang were displayed at the Dhanbad Railway Station and illegal mining of coal by mafia gang was totally stopped in Dhanbad. During Shri Ghafoor's time, mafia tried to get the collector transferred but Shri Ghafoor did not agree to the transfer; but immediately after Shri Ghafoor's exit, Saxena was transferred. The mafia gang celebrated his transfer by spending not lakhs but crores of rupees. If you want to curb the mafia, you will have to take up the matter in your own hands and you have to go through Saxena Collector's report about the members of mafia gang. The Government of Bihar is run not by the officers and the politicians but by the mafia, and, illegal coal mining worth Rs. 300 crores is done every year by them resulting in loss of Rs. 1,100 crores.

The Hon. Members have made a mention about fire in the coal mines. Regarding Jharia, it was said that fire incidents have been taking place for quite a long time. There is shortage of coal in India whereas it stands fifth in the world. You should, therefore, constitute a study team which may report as to where coal can be used as raw material. The factories like the Tatas are earning crores of rupees by using it as raw material; similarly Government can also earn a lot by using it as raw material.

So far as power stations are concerned, wagons are supplied by the Railways. When these are despatched, the best quality coal is loaded in them but on the way the mafia gangs unload that coal and replace it with inferior quality coal. The result is the production capacity of all the power stations of Bihar instead of increasing has come down.

The Hon. Minister is an experienced person. I am requesting him, because the

request is heeded to by a person who has the capacity to redress it. In 1977, when Shri Sathe was in the Opposition and we were not the Members of the House we used to read in magazines about the courageous stand he used to take. At present the consumers are not being provided with coal and the permit is sold at Raniganj or Dhanbad for lakhs of rupees. Therefore, the Central Government should take over this arrangement in its own hands so that the people and consumers in the country may feel that they are getting the coal being supplied by the Government of India and Bihar Government. Similarly, the arrear dues from thermal power stations should also be realised so that the target could be achieved.

With these words, I conclude and hope that you will be able to curb the activities of the notorious mafia gangs. If the Government of India can solve the Punjab and Assam problems, it will definitely succeed in controlling the mafia gangs too. The officers who muster little courage to take action against them are shot dead. You should provide protection to such officers to enable them to take stern action against the mafia gangs. In conclusion, I hope that you will consider my suggestions.

DR. G. S. RAJHANS (Jhanjarpur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I will just say two or three things and finish. Many things have been said about coal. Just now our friends, who come from Bihar, have also spoken about it. I am reminded of a line—'water, water, water everywhere, not a drop to drink.' When you talk of coal, Bihar comes to mind and when Bihar is referred to, mafia comes to mind. I was studying the history of coal. First of all the East India company looted Bihar's coal. Then the Britishers and the private owners looted it. Relief was felt in the seventies when coal was nationalised. We thought that Golden Age for coal industry has been ushered. But the situation became worse after nationalisation and now the mafia is looting the coal industry. How much should I narrate? It is an endless story. This mafia gangs does not let the people take up a contract or submit tenders. The Hon. Minister is also aware of it. I do not believe that the Hon. Minister is not aware of it. Tenders are invited for a contract to supply sand to the coal mines. The tenders are submitted by hundred to two

hundred persons. The mafia men warn the people that if anyone submitted the tender he would not see the next dawn and there have been cases where they have not seen the next dawn.

The other aspect is about the contract labour. After a day's work, when a labourer goes in the evening to collect his wages, he is paid Rs. 8 instead of Rs. 15. When he asks about the remaining Rs. 7 he is told that he should not ask about that money as it is deposited with the Union. When he protests that he is not a member of any union, he is asked to keep quiet. The one who protests leaves this world. It is a vicious circle and no one has been able to break it. It is true that the present Chief Minister Shri Bindeshwari Dubey is trying his best and he has got success also but much requires to be done still.

I tell you about Germany. You might have heard that 23 million tonnes of coal is lying at the pitheads.

15.03 hrs.

[SHRI SOM NATH RATH *in the Chair*]

Somebody says it is 30 million tonnes. Then some say it is 27 and a half million tonnes. The Railways say that they do not have wagons to handle more coal. I want to know what is the difficulty in setting up more thermal power stations in Bihar and what is the difficulty in supplying coal to the existing thermal power stations? You do not need many more wagons for that. You can supply to them through trucks also. I was talking of Germany. There is one place Ruhr in Germany which is a large industrial complex. They set up thermal power stations at the pit-heads where coal had accumulated. This step resulted in industrialisation of that area. Why do you not set up several thermal power stations in Bihar also and industrialise that area? It is nothing but poor management and lack of imagination. The entire coal gets burnt and goes waste. That coal can be utilised. You can generate power by setting up thermal power stations and that power can be supplied to the national grid. That power can be used by the industries in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Bengal. You claim in this House that coal

[Shri G. S. Rajhans]

is available with you, but is it made available to people. I do not talk about the thermal power stations and industries. Even the general consumers do not get coal for cooking. From Dhanbad in Bihar coal is booked for Darbhanga, but it reaches Deccan; Coal is booked for Patna but it reaches Punjab. Government has closed its eyes everywhere. Everybody has his share everywhere. I have heard that in the coal trade, the middlemen have a field day and it involves a lot of bungling. It is time now and if Government do not pay adequate attention towards coal industry, all the industries in the country will come to a grinding halt. Power houses have coal stock for 2 to 3 days and other mills have coal stock for one day. How such a state of affairs will work? This situation has been going on for the last 5 to 6 years. You will, therefore, have to tone up the management to ensure availability of coal to private consumers, power stations and people living in other parts of the country.

In this connection I would like to draw your attention towards one thing more. Although it is not related to him as he will say that it pertains to the Minister of Labour, yet believing in collective responsibility I would like to point out that coal-mine workers suffer mainly from two types of diseases, i.e., T. B. and silicosis. Most of the people are not able to know this disease and they die a slow death. Thousands of people fall victims to this disease but there is nobody to bother about it.

The third problem is about illegal mining. Many mines have been abandoned. Mafia gangs go there in the night and get coal extracted through small children and load it in trucks and take it away. During rainy season mines cave in and thousands of workers are killed under the debris. I am telling you this from my experience as I have worked in coal mines. As no record of that worker is kept, even his parents do not come to know about his death.

The problem existing in coal industry is very grave and if it is not controlled, it will cause great harm to the country. I have learnt that the Mafia gangs operating in Dhanbad have spread their tentacles to

Delhi. Mafia people do not allow people to submit tenders. They say that the tender will be at their rate and if anybody else submits the tender, he will be shot dead. If they established roots in Delhi, the problem will become all the more complex. So, it is a very serious problem. I once again strongly urge that you consider this problem in all seriousness.

[English]

SHRI N. DENNIS (Nagercoil) : Sir, while supporting the Bill, I wish to offer a few points. This Bill seeks to amend Sections 4 and 8 of the Coal Mines (Conservation and Development) Act, 1974, in pursuance of the recommendations of the Committee on Subordinate Legislation (Sixth Lok Sabha) made in its Tenth Report.

This amendment is long overdue and I fully support this Bill. As several Hon. Members have pointed out that it innocuous this Bill is technical in nature and the scope of the discussion on this Bill is limited. But the overall consideration of coal and its utility could be discussed. Coal is one of the most important natural resources and it is the primary source of energy. Now coal is greatly in demand and different sectors use it. In view of the full realisation of importance of coal Government have taken effective steps for the conservation and development of coal and in 1973 it was nationalised and in 1974 the Coal Mines (Conservation and Development) Act was passed. Subsequently in 1975, the Coal India was established.

Some States like Tamil Nadu mainly depend on thermal stations. As far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, 70 per cent of its power generation depends on thermal stations and only 30 per cent is by hydro and other sources. There should be adequate and regular supply of coal to the thermal power stations, because it is a distant State. I would suggest that there should be storage of coal at a particular central place in the south from where it could be distributed to other places. States like Tamil Nadu which are far away should be supplied coal in the first stage. The stock of coal is there only on one side and on the other side there is dearth of coal. That does not mean that production of coal has to be stopped, but effective steps have to be taken for transportation and

movement of coal to the power stations. If inferior quality of coal is supplied to the power stations difficulties arise in their functioning. While supplying coal this aspect has to be taken into consideration.

Coal India has made improvement regarding the quantity of production of coal. In 1951 the production was only 33 million tonnes and in 1984-85 the production has reached 104.45 millions. At the same time there is increase in the price also. The price of coal has been increased six times since nationalisation. From about Rs. 48 per tonne the price has been increased to Rs. 183 per tonne. So though there is increase in production there is also increase in price. Even after the enhancement of the price, loss has been sustained in the previous year. This paradoxical situation has to be taken into consideration and remedial measures have to be taken to reduce the cost and at the same time to increase production.

Regarding illegal mining various speakers have spoken about it and the theft of coal is also there and both these evils have to be checked both by the Central as well as Governments and also by the other supervising authorities. Coal India has to gear up its administration and improve the efficiency and reduce the cost of production and to generate more profit. Quality of the coal produced has to be improved. Serious efforts have to be made for tapping the resources.

Regarding quality of coal, our coal has greater ash content. Complaints from Electricity Boards and Railway Department have been reported. Its waste material has to be removed and ash content has to be reduced. For that purpose, washeries have to be set up and the existing washeries need to be modernised. The number of washeries should be increased. Coal mines have to be developed in a planned way. Application of technological devices would reduce the ash content.

Regarding labour, safeguards have to be provided to them against accidents in mines. They have to be provided with better housing facilities.

[*Translation*]

SHRI SARFARAZ AHMAD (Giridih) :
 Mr. Chairman, Sir, I support the Coal Mines (Conservation and Development) Amendment Bill. I would like to tell that our coalmine workers play an important role in the development of our country because of their hard labour and sacrifice. I would like to ask the Hon. Minister whether the workers, who are taking the country on the path of progress, have electricity in their houses; whether any body cares to see their living conditions and whether school, college and hospital facilities have been provided to their children? If you want that they should work efficiently and sincerely then you should go to their homes and see their living conditions. During rainy season their houses leak, taps are without water and it is not known for how many years the B.C.C.L., ECL quarters have not been white-washed. Under an agreement the First Coal Wage Agreement 4,500 quarters were proposed to be built but nothing has been done so far in this direction. Under the second agreement 12,000 quarters were to be built, but no progress has been made in this regard also. It is true that by nationalising coal industry in 1973, Shrimati Indira Gandhi freed the coal workers from the clutches of mine owners and after that coal production had increased. But their condition has not improved to the desired extent. The hon. Minister is very intelligent and takes keen interest in the working of his department. That is why I would suggest that coal-based industries should be set up at the pit-heads. Coal based industries should be set up near the coal-mines because our railways have failed to transport coal properly. I want that a Super Themral Power Plant should be set up at Karanpura in Distriet Hazaribagh. Small entrepreneurs of Bihar are not getting coal supply whereas Bihar is the biggest coal producing State in the country. Coal belt has been found in the river Damodar which flows through Bairme. It was also proposed to divert the Damodar River, but nothing has been done in this direction.

The condition of roads in coal-field areas is deplorable. If you happen to visit that area, after seeing the condition of roads there, you can guess that you have reached

[Shri Sarfaraj Ahmad]

the coal belt. Where do the welfare development funds go? There is nobody to check it. The workers, who work very hard and who play a great role in the country's progress, have not been provided with any housing facility, roads, drinking water and hospital facility. You should pay attention towards these facilities.

People talk about the mafia gangs but they cannot operate without the collusion of the officers. They should also be checked.

I would like to make one more submission. The Chairman of Coal India should spend some time in Ranchi and Dhanbad also. He should visit these places once or twice a week and see what development work is taking place and how welfare funds are being spent.

With these words I conclude.

SHRI MANOJ PANDEY (Betia) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I support the Coal Mines (Conservation and Development) Amendment Bill.

The Hon. Members, who spoke before me, have made reference to both conservation and development aspects. I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister towards a very important issue which is different from these two aspects. After coal has been mined, the mines are stowed and left in that condition. The moot point is how can we reclaim that land for agricultural purposes. There are rich deposits of coal in our country even now. We would like to exploit these mines. We mine coal from mines spread over a vast area and our economy depends on exploitation of coal. Can the land left unutilised after stowing of mines, from where coal has been extracted, be used for agricultural purpose? I understand that there is a soil conservation research wing in the Ministry of Agriculture and through you I would like to urge the hon. Minister to establish contacts with the Ministry of Agriculture and see whether we can reclaim that area for agricultural purpose in order to meet agricultural requirements.

Secondly, I would like to make a mention about ecology on which views have already been expressed. We all know and

even the Hon. Minister has said that coal belt has been witnessing devastating fire and it is adversely affecting the ecology. Therefore, this is also a sensitive issue. We have got afforestation programme, social forestry programme and a number of other programmes to see that the environment is not polluted. With the help of these programmes we can save the environment from being polluted.

My third point, the most important one is that we have a river named Auranga in Bihar and huge reserves of coal have been found on the banks of this river. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether he would like to use the banks of this river or this belt as a mine?

My fourth suggestion is that the slurry left in the washeries should be allotted to such unemployed youth or other youth who have no work, so that they could set up some industry of their own.

While speaking on this Bill, the most important thing that I want to say is that the contract system is still in vogue in coal mines wherein lakhs of labourers are being exploited. By when are you going to stop it?

I would like to know the views of the hon. Minister on all the suggestions I have put forth.

With these words, I conclude.

[English]

DR. PHULRENU GUHA (Contai) : I support the Bill. Coal Mines were developed in our country in a most unscientific manner. Before the nationalisation of the Coal Mines, its owners never cared to improve the coal mines and they never looked to the interests of the workers. They only exploited them for earning money as far as they could. In the newspapers there is a news item—I do not know how far it is correct—saying that there is a move that colliery may be given to the private sector. I strongly oppose this move.

I would like to mention here about the housing condition of workers there. Even

after the nationalisation, the workers are living in very miserable conditions. I would request the Hon. Minister to go himself and see how their conditions can be improved. I am sure he must have seen their conditions, but he must do something for the workers there. They do not have water; they do not have proper latrines and they do not have proper houses to live in.

Coal has a tremendous utility in our economy.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSI :
But the officers have good houses.

DR. PHULRENU GUHA : Oh! Yes.
They have magnificent houses. Most of their houses are like Five-Star hotels.

We have to conserve the coal to our optimum capacity. I would like to say that the conservation of coal is the Government's responsibility.

Another point is that of the washing of the coal. Coal should be washed before it is sent to the Railways or to the power plants. So you have to improve the washeries. In this connection I would like to say that we must develop our research on this subject. But I feel very strongly that we do not have much research on the coal.

Coal is very necessary for the production of power. Though we know in the years to come there will be other sources of energy, but till that time we have to depend mainly on coal.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSI :
Coal is there in Bengal, but there is no power there.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Yes,
you are talking about the Congress.

DR. PHULRENU GUHA : I am not bringing here West Bengal or any other State. I am not mentioning any State.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSI :
But I have given a correct statement. There is coal, but no power.

DR. PHULRENU GUHA : We are to depend upon coal for energy. The research is going on for the development of solar energy. I hope a time will come when we will get power from the solar energy.

There are other sources like bio-gas etc. and we must not forget that we have to develop these sources also.

Coal is also used in the production of fertilisers.

Keeping in view the utility of coal for different uses, I would like to know whether adequate steps have been taken for the conservation of coal as suggested by the Energy Policy Committee? It is common knowledge that not only the power sector but even the ordinary consumers and small scale industries are suffering for inadequate supply of coal. Coal demands are likely to increase more and more in our country.

In view of the importance of the coal mines for the national economy and the need for its conservation and development, the Government took over the management of coalmines in 1971 and nationalised the industry. The conservation and development of coalmines is very important for the nation. Coal is one of the most important natural resource and is also the primary source of energy in our country.

Sir, before nationalisation the coal mine owners were lords of the area. I would like to say that after nationalisation the price of coal has been raised 6 times more. Even after nationalisation the powerful coal Mafia groups are still there in this industry. I would request the Minister through you, Mr. Chairman, to see that we take strong steps to eradicate the Mafia gang.

We all wish to put things in proper perspective. I request the Minister through you Mr. Chairman, to take some drastic steps to see that this Mafia business is completely wiped out.

Sir, a large number of children are employed in these illegal coalmines. How far it is known and is within the knowledge of the Government, I don't know. I request the Minister through you to enquire into this aspect and take necessary action in the matter.

[Dr. Phulrenu Guha]

Please excuse me for my saying now that these piecemeal amendments will not work much. A comprehensive Bill should be brought forward before the House for the consideration of all points which are needed for the production of better coal, sufficient coal and cheap coal in our country.

With these words I support the Bill:

[Translation]

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY (Hanamkonda) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, Andhra Pradesh is one of the States which have large coal reserves. The Hyderabad Government under the Nizam had started Singareni collieries which is now a public undertaking. The entire belt between Praniyata and Godavari and Krishna rivers has large deposits of coal. It needs money to exploit these reserves. Since the State Government do not have enough funds, this coal is not being mined. Shri Sathe had recently been to Kothakudam. A road which is being constructed between Ramakrishnapuram Belampeli and Kothakudam passes through the entire coal belt. Coal can be extracted through open cast mines in my area Bhopalpalli. Funds for this have been provided in the Seventh Plan, but due to paucity of funds, new pits are not being constructed at Bhopalpalli. An amount of Rs. 80 crores is being allocated annually for improvement in Singareni collieries, but it is not enough and the State Government is looking to Central Government for assistance. The Central Government will have to give grant for it. Another thing which I want to mention is that a murder is being committed there daily. What is behind these murders? There are many unemployed people in that area; they are unemployed in spite of abundant employment opportunities there. This is leading to frustration among our youths. Extremist activities have increased enormously in the Godavari belt. Even the constables or Home Guards are being killed. They are conspiring to close the coal mines. I would request the Central Government that they should provide funds for mining of this coal as early as possible so that employment to some people could be provided. A Super Thermal project is proposed to be set up at Manhoor during the Seventh Five Year Plan. I would suggest that a similar project should

also be set up at Bhopalpalli during this Plan. We know that there is a great demand for electricity. You can generate this electricity from coal. There is a fertilizer plant at Ramagundam; another can be set up at Bhopalpalli as well. We are giving more attention to solar energy and atomic energy. This will render the coal totally useless. I want that the coal should be mined speedily and used. After mining of coal, the mines should be stowed with soil or sand. Whenever there is an earthquake, some people are killed. Under the provisions of Coal Mines Safety Act, after mining of coal, mines should be stowed with soil. I would request that all the State Governments should be directed that after mining of coal, mines should be stowed with soil. Funds should also be provided for this purpose. The people get a job fetching Rs. 1,300 to 1,500 per month there. But, since there is no proper arrangement of water and health care, they go on strike. You should make arrangements in this regard. Order should be issued to the State Governments to increase working hours fixed under the Labour Act. Coal is not being mined in Bhopalpalli of district Warangal due to shortage of funds. I request that more and more funds should be provided by treating it a special case, so that coal could be mined.

SHRI AZIZ QURESHI (Satna) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support this Bill. While supporting this Bill, I only want to submit to the Hon. Minister, through you, that ever since the nationalisation of coal mines, Government have taken many welfare measures at political level. This Bill is also on the line of earlier Bills and I hope that more such proposals will be forthcoming in future. If a coal mine worker asks the Hon. Minister what facilities have been provided to him since independence, the Hon. Minister will have to remain quiet. I would like to point out that earlier the coal mine workers were exploited by the contractors and coal mine owners but now the same exploitation is prevailing in some other form and it is the officials and the bureaucrats who are perpetrating it. The purpose of This Bill will, therefore, not serve any purpose till another Bill is not introduced to curb these officers.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to my

constituency, Satna and the entire Vindhya-chal which is dotted on the one hand by numerous coal mines and on the other hand there are lime stone mines, cement factories and other factories. These factories are owned by the Tatas, the Birlas and other big industrialists but Mr. Chairman, Sir, will you believe that the workers engaged in those mines do not have any protection whatsoever. If a mine worker dies during the course of his duty, his body is disposed of to escape the obligation of an enquiry and payment of compensation to the next of their kin. This also helps them in checking discontent among the workers as a result thereof and the likelihood of any agitation. There is no one to care for these workers. I would like the Hon. Minister to visit the Cement factories in that area and see for himself how the whole area is badly affected and the crops and the houses are ruined, the people and their lives are on the verge of death. There is no one to look after them or care for them. The reason is that the factories belong to big industrialists like the Birlas and the Tatas. I had raised a question in the House regarding the factories owned by the Birlas and the methods used for dust control in them and the steps taken in particular in my constituency in that regard. The reply I received from the Madhya Pradesh Government states that all possible safety measures are used in these factories but there cannot be a greater fraud and injustice than this. These bureaucrats and officers have mortgaged themselves to the Birlas and other big industrialists and until stern action is taken against them, all our tall claims are futile. Not only this, the future historian will put us in the dock and hold us responsible for it.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to request the Hon. Minister that side by side with the coal-mine workers he should look after the workers of lime-kilns and Cement factories in Satna, Mahiyar and Camor areas and lime stone mines and cement factory workers in the entire Vindhya-chal and Madhya Pradesh. You cannot call them workers of a civilized society. They have not been provided with even the basic amenities of life so far and we have just been onlookers for them. Besides, I would like to request you that just as you have introduced this Bill in the interest of the coal mine workers, another Bill should also be

introduced to provide protection to the workers of the lime stone mines and Lime-Kilns, so that they may also enjoy the benefits of a free country. Besides, ways and means should be found out to check the environmental pollution that is taking place due to smoke from these industrial units. A ban should be imposed on the mills if they continue with the practice and do not help reduce pollution in the area.

I would, therefore, request the Hon. Minister to pay immediate attention and take effective steps for the upliftment of the poor workers and provide a better standard of living for them in Satna, Mahiyar and Camor areas and try to save the environment from pollution.

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL VYAS (Bhilwara) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Coal Mines (Conservation and Development) Bill, 1985. I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister that over since the Coal Mines were nationalised, Government is incurring loss to the tune of crores of rupees every year, while prior to that, when these mines were in the private hands, they were always running in profit. Under these circumstances, it becomes necessary to think about the impact of nationalisation because nationalisation is not done for incurring losses. Nationalisation is done for better performance and for higher production. It is also to ensure proper maintenance of mines and to look to the amenities and welfare of the workers. This is the main purpose of nationalisation. But even after nationalisation, thousands of workers are still working on contract basis there. The contractors do not provide any facility or amenities to the workers and in this way the nationalisation has proved unsuccessful because the very purpose of providing facilities and humane treatment to the workers is not served. I would urge the Hon. Minister to ensure better amenities and facilities to the workers and abolish the contract labour system in the nationalised coal mines.

The coal production is not fully meeting the country's requirements. The distribution system of coal is also not proper. The coal which is despatched to various industries, electricity boards, power houses or

[Shri Girdhari Lal Vyas]

other such institutions does not reach them because it is pilfered on the way and sometimes, it is even sold to unauthorised parties. As a result there of the industries and power houses are facing a difficult situation and they have to face great hardships. It has also been observed that the coal which is allocated to the Small Scale Industries Corporation for supplying it to the small units is also not distributed properly. Nobody knows where that coal disappears. No attention has ever been paid in this regard and the Small Scale Industries have to face great difficulty because they do not get the coal in time which results in shortfall of their output. Necessary arrangements should be made to ensure that the Small Scale Industries Corporation makes timely supply of coal to the small scale units and stern action should be taken against those officers in the Corporation who are acting as middlemen and are misutilising the coal and lining their pockets and thus betraying the country. Sir, I want to give an example of Jaipur. The coal supplied there for the small scale industries is not being supplied in time and as a result they are facing great hardship. Many a time complaints have been made, the matter has been discussed in the State Assembly several times but no proper arrangement has been made so far. Therefore, you should make proper arrangements to ensure that the people get coal without any difficulty. I would also submit and in the last Lok Sabha also I had submitted, that the big trade union leaders who organise these big mafia gangs indulge in malpractices in regard to the coal produced in these mines and huge quantities of coal are smuggled out to other places. From West Bengal it is smuggled to Bangladesh. Similarly, it is smuggled to Nepal also. This is occurring in several places and big people are involved in it. In this way around 50 lakh tonnes of coal is smuggled out and these industries have to suffer heavy losses which ultimately results in huge loss to the country. That is why our coal industry is losing more than Rs. 200 crores. It is, therefore, imperative that this pilferage is stopped. The protection force which is posted there is also hand in glove with these people. These people take away the coal and sell it illegally to private people. This aspect should be looked into.

An Amendment Bill was brought here wherein Railway Protection Force was sought to be brought under the definition of the Armed Forces. Similarly, if the Industrial Force which looks after the industries, is invested with powers to check pilferage and apprehend the pilferers who indulge in smuggling, you can save a lot. The mines, which are incurring losses, can make up the losses and also these can be developed better.

The coal to power houses is also not being supplied in time. Last time, when a discussion took place on coal it was mentioned several times that the full goods train was allocated for a particular place but it did not reach its destination and disappeared and is still untraced. The coal wagons do not reach their destination and disappear in transit. It requires special attention. If you check this, coal in the country would be put to maximum use and will help increasing the production and strengthening the economy. With these words I support this Bill.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STEEL, MINES AND COAL (SHRI VASANT SATHE) :
Mr. Chairman, Sir, I think I will better speak in Hindi because it is convenient to all the Members.

[Translation]

First of all I am grateful to all the Members for giving very good suggestions during the debate on the Bill. Although, as I said in the beginning, this Bill was an innocuous Bill, yet as it was necessary to incorporate in the original Act the provisions made in the rules and that step is being taken. But during the discussion on the Bill, the Members raised basic questions and gave suggestion for which I am thankful to them.

It is true that coal has a role to play in the basic industries, infrastructure industries that we want to instal in our country. Therefore, country's energy availability depends on coal.

The energy in our country is generated either in the form of hydro-power or from coal because the other forms of energy are

still, at the experimental stage. We are still not able to utilise the solar energy fully. Its development has not reached that stage yet.

Atomic energy too has its limitations. Therefore, the coal reserves in our country which are not going to last till eternity and can exhaust at any time, should be utilised in a way that the country benefits to the maximum extent. That is why the coal industry was nationalised. At the time of nationalisation, there were 2 or 3 main objectives. One was the workers in the field were being exploited. It was envisaged that coal production should be done in a modern and scientific manner. Coal was earlier being mined in a haphazard manner, and the mines and coal deposits were being destroyed, which is called slaughter mining. Coal industry was nationalised to stop all these things.

The third objective of nationalisation was to produce coal economically.

(Interruptions)

Now I would like to deal with the aspect that what were the objectives and how far they have been achieved? The objective was to control the prices, to increase the worker's wages, to stop their exploitation and to generate more thermal power in order to set up industries in rural areas. We have to see how far this aim has been achieved.

Sir, I would like to discuss the points raised by the Hon. Members here with an open mind. Our investment in the coal industry at the time of nationalisation was of the order of about Rs. 48 crores. Now, after 12 years it is Rs. 5,000 crores. Whose money was it? We invested nation's money, public money in the coal industry. Previously, we used to produce 74 million tonnes of coal but now we are producing 147 million tonnes of coal. Roughly speaking the production has doubled. A worker's minimum wage was Rs. 185 in 1971 but now it is Rs. 801. If allowances are added to this wage, the total comes to Rs. 1200 per month. So far as welfare activities are concerned, which include housing, drinking water, hospital and dispensary facilities, an amount of Rs. 6 crores was being spent at the time of nationalisation. Today, this expenditure has increased to Rs. 100 crores.

16.00 hrs.

Now, through you, Sir, I would like to inform this House about what has been done in practice. Production has been doubled. Just now some Hon. Members have stated that the prices of coal, which were Rs. 37 or Rs. 32 per tonne are now about Rs. 183 per tonne. Certain varieties of coal are costly, and some are sold at subsidised rates. Soft coal is sold at Rs. 175 per tonne at the pit-heads and its market price is Rs. 500 to 600 per tonne. I am placing these facts before you because I admit that there are serious shortcomings in our planning. So, we have to see to it. I am not saying this from the point of view of criticising or finding fault with anybody. It is a matter of self-inspection. We all have to see whether we have achieved our objective or not. If not, where we went wrong and how that mistake can be rectified. I am saying it from this point of view. Certain standards known as parameters exist in our country. Everything produced on earth has some international price. Are you producing your coal at the level of international price? If not, what is the out-put-manship in our country *vis-a-vis* the world out-put-manship? Despite such a heavy investment, our out-put-manship in the underground mines in our country is less than one tonne and in the open cast mines it is between 1.5 and 2 tonnes. Our out-put-manship is the lowest in the world. Why is it so? I humbly submit to the Hon. Member to see what was our objective? Was it our objective to create employment potential in infrastructure industry, i.e., in the steel making industry where 2.5 lakh people are working or in the coal mines where the number of employees has been raised from 5 lakhs to 7 lakhs? What was our objective? In my view the objective was to reduce the cost of infrastructure industries production and to produce coal at low cost and in mechanised way. It should be economical. We should take advantage of cheap labour and establish industries in villages by providing energy there. These small scale industries will provide employment opportunities and help in the balanced development of our country. Was it not our objective? The same thing happened in steel sector. Our steel production should have increased from 5 million tonnes to 100 millions tonnes. Our iron ore is the best in the world. Do you think that

[Shri Basant Sathe]

Indian coal is inferior? The Indian coal can compare favourably with the coal produced in European or other countries of the world where the coal has more sulphur content than the Indian coal. The quality of Indian coal is good. It is called power grade coal. We can produce more power by it. A mention has been made about the ash content. If our coal has more ash content, it can be made use of by improved boilers. There is nothing to be afraid of more ash content. You can generate maximum power with this coal having ash content. Moreover, there are many methods by which ash content can be reduced. It can be accomplished through washeries and coal handling plants.

I would like to suggest that cost of power production and steel production should be reduced. You might be aware that South Korea is a small country. It started producing steel in 1971, i.e. after us. Prior to that they used to produce 1.80 lakh tonnes of a steel through crude methods but during the period from 1971 to 1984 they have raised their steel production to 9 million tonnes. They are using the same technology which we are using. They produce 9 million tonnes of steel by the same technology which is used in Rourkela or other places and the number of employees in that plant is 14,500. How can we produce cheap steel as compared to other countries when we have employed 2.25 lakh people in the public sector to produce 5 lakh tonnes of steel? Where else had the people to be employed? Two lakhs twenty five thousand persons have been employed in steel sector and 7 lakh persons have been employed in the coal mines. How can cheap steel be produced? Our objective was to reduce the cost of steel production and produce 100 million tonnes. Thereafter steel based industries were to be set up in villages. Employment opportunities should have been created by setting up small-scale and cottage industries. The entire structure of the country was to be changed. Is it possible that due to unemployment in villages, youths from rural areas may come to Calcutta, Bombay, Durgapur, Rourkela and Delhi and we may provide them with employment? Do you think it is possible? I feel that it is not yet too late. I have been engaged in the trade union activity all through my life and have

worked in this field for 30 to 35 years—Shri Dandavate knows about it. I would like to ask that if there is need for employment oriented economy, where should employment be generated? I feel it should be generated not in the infrastructure but in the industries based on steel....

SHRI DINESH SINGH (Pratapgarh) :
 But who will do it ?

SHRI VASANT SATHE : We have to do it. Raja Saheb has himself been in the Government and worked in this area. I am not trying to apportion blames. I would like to ask the House that if we concede the demands made by the workers in the infrastructure field, the demands being made by displaced persons whose lands have been acquired, that a person from each family should be provided employment and if an employee dies during the course of his duty a person from his family should be employed, how can these be rationalised? How can man power be reduced? How will you effect economy to produce cheap and good quality steel and coal ?

(Interruptions)

I would like to suggest that the Government should take the responsibility of assessing the total income of a person whose land has been acquired and guarantee that income in the form of an allowance or setting up an industry for his family, instead ensuring that one person from each family is employed in the factory. In the present circumstances any industrial unit—whether it is steel factory or a coal mine—can never be economical. It is a basic question (Interruptions)

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur) : You have said that employment cannot be generated in the infrastructure field and so more people should be employed in the small-scale industries but on the one hand the handloom and powerloom industries are languishing because of your policy and no encouragement is being given to them and on the other hand you wish to remove them from this sector also. How can both the things go together ?

SHRI VASANT SATHE : Encouragement should be given to them in those areas. All of us should think together where

to generate more employment opportunities, irrespective of party affiliation. We can from a consensus about it.

Much has been said about the mafia particularly in Bihar. What is it and why does it happen? I am of the humble opinion that so long as the workers are not allowed equal participation in the management in real sense, the mafia cannot be checked. Who knows best about these evils? It is those who work there ... (Interruptions) They know who is indulging in pilferage. That is why I am repeatedly emphasizing the need for effective participation of labour in the management of all industries rather than in name sake. If elected representatives of workers participate in the management, you will find a revolutionary change overnight in the whole system and all the complaints would be removed. The House should give its sanction thereto.

.. (Interruptions)...

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : You may introduce it in the Coal India Ltd.

(Interruptions)

SHRI VASANT SATHE : If the trade unions agree to it I am ready to introduce it at any moment ... (Interruptions) ... Shri Rajiv Gandhi has categorically stated —

[English]

that he believes in participation of labour.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Participation of computers.

SHRI VASANT SATHE : Computer is also necessary if you really want to keep up with modern world and keep pace with it. A scientific man like you, Prof. Dandavate, just cannot poohpooch it.

[Translation]

I was trying to emphasise that there is need for participation of labour and accountability of the total work force. What is the most essential thing? It is the public money and the Government funds. As I

said just now, earlier we had invested Rs. 5,000 crores and now in the Seventh Five Year Plan we propose to invest Rs. 8,000 crores in it. In the Singareni Project in Andhra Pradesh we propose to invest Rs. 700 crores during the Seventh Plan. I would like to tell you that I have full faith in the workers and this is not theoretical. We saw the conditions in Singareni Coal Fields last year, where the work was done for 300 days and 400 days there was strike.

AN HON. MEMBER : 440.

SHRI VASANT SATHE : This situation was prevailing there for the last three years. The workers were being condemned by branding them as Naxalites and Extremists. I have myself visited the area and seen for myself. I met the Chief Minister of the State and also the workers in Ramagundam and Kothgundam. I asked them about the cause of dispute. There can be a dispute if there is cause for grievances or complaints. We suggested to them that a Grievances Council of Management and the representative of the trade union can be formed, provided they called off the strike. It is with humility that I am telling you that within three months there was a revolutionary change. The production increased by 20 per cent and the loss of man-days was reduced from 2,00,000 to 7,000. There were practically no strikes. Who brought about this great change? It was because of the workers. I am of the firm belief and I speak from experience that if a feeling of belonging is created among the workers they can bring about revolutionary change.

[English]

SHRI A. CHARLES : You must ensure participation of labour.

SHRI VASANT SATHE : I have been pleading for it; I have written about it, I have written about it in my book... (Interruptions).

But unless the leaders of the trade union movement in this country agree to this concept of real participation, we cannot do anything. Let them say so, I will do it with the support of the House tomorrow.

SHRI A. CHARLES : The whole House is supporting you.

SHRI VASANT SATHE : I am thankful to the House. I am sure, the Government will take note of it as also the Labour Ministry.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Even the Upper House is with you.

SHRI VASANT SATHE : Yes, this Bill has been passed there unanimously and they supported this idea, I am thankful to them.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : I am not talking of the uppermost House.

SHRI VASANT SATHE : When we go there, we will find out.

As far as basic things, required for coal production or steel production are concerned, we are fortunate in this country. We have got the best resources like iron ore, bauxite, aluminium, zinc, dolomite, lignite and coal. We must use these economically. We must produce at the cheapest cost compared to international prices and beat the world at their own game.

I feel ashamed, I cannot use a softer word, that our country has to export 25 million tonnes of iron ore and earn only 240 crores of rupees worth foreign exchange. That is all! Whereas, if this were to be converted into steel, it would give us 12 million tonnes of steel and we would be earning at today's international price, more than Rs. 4000 crores worth foreign exchange.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : And we are now importing steel.

SHRI VASANT SATHE : But the saddest thing is a country like South Korea imports iron ore, lime stone, coking coal and yet produces steel cheaper than any other country in the world and sells it to the world. Here is the country of mine, where I have the best iron ore and still I am stuck at 5 million tonnes in public sector and 9 million tonnes in total, whereas I should have been producing 100 million tonnes of steel by today,

The question is, our whole economy and our whole concept has been populist. I will give an example. We started by employing 2,25,000 people. How can you make your steel production economical? Whereas, I tell you, for a 9 million tonne steel plant, they are employing just 14,500 people. China has already reached the level of 44 million tonnes of steel and they are planning to reach a level of 90 million tonnes by the turn of the century in the next 15 years. With whom do we compete? I still feel that if this country adopts not only the latest system of economy, but also latest economic methods, not only the latest technology, but also the latest managerial methods, I am sure, we can produce more steel in this country. Without steel how can you industrialise rural India? Without coal, how can you have power and how can you have energy? Without energy how can you have industrial growth and agricultural growth? This is my anguish and that is why I have made a few proposals. Firstly, there should be accountability, authority with accountability, rights with responsibilities with total participation of the entire work force with full accountability to use public moneys. After all, it is the money of 70 crores of people that we are using in the public sector and elsewhere. That is why if we adopt the new concepts with the blessings and support of this House, I have no doubt that we can have a revolutionary change in our infrastructure.

I thank the members for their suggestions and with these words, I conclude.

SHRI E. AYYAPU REDDY : Is it a fact that Coal India Ltd. is thinking of raising the price of coal to Rs. 200 per tonne? Is this issue now pending with the Government?

MR. CHAIRMAN : That is a separate question. Now, the question is :

"That the Bill further to amend the Coal Mines (Conservation and Development) Act, 1974, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House will now take up clause by clause consideration of the Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That Clauses 2 and 3 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 2 and 3 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1 Enacting Formula and Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI VASANT SATHE : Sir, I beg to move :

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN : Do you want to say anything ?

SHRI E. AYYAPU REDDY : He may answer my question.

SHRI VASANT SATHE : There is no such proposal or thought as yet.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

— — —

16.20 hrs.

STANDARD OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ENFORCEMENT BILL

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House will now take up the Standards of Weights and Measures (Enforcement) Bill. Shri Rao Birendra Singh may now move the Bill for consideration.

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (RAO BIRENDRA SINGH) : Sir, I move :

"that the Bill to provide for the enforcement of the standards of weights and measures established by or under the Standards of Weights and Measures Act, 1976, and for matters connected therewith or incidentally thereto, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration".

tal thereto, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration".

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I wish to give the information that for the last three days we were raising the question of deportation of Lankan Tamilians. We are very happy that today when the writ petition was heard by the Supreme Court, the Government finally announced that they are withdrawing the deportation orders against the Tamilians and therefore the rights have been restored. We are happy that ultimately the wisdom has dawned.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I hope the House will welcome this long awaited the Standards of Weights and Measures (Enforcement) Bill. The Bill has already been passed by the Rajya Sabha. We were using varied types of weights and measures in the past. With modern technology being developed, it was felt necessary that we should have a uniform system of weights and measures in India also. With that end in view, in 1956, this Parliament passed the Standard of Weights and Measures Act, 1956. At that time laying down of standards of weights and measures was the responsibility of the Central Government under the Constitution. But the enforcement came under the State List. Therefore, States were asked to enact their own laws for enforcement of these standards of weights and measures, as, provided under the Act of 1956. Afterwards, there were some further developments in the international field. The metric system which India has adopted was further developed and some international standards were laid down and improved upon.

In 1976, another Act was passed by Parliament which replaced the earlier Act of 1956. Even at that time, the enforcement was the subject coming under the State. But soon afterwards, under the 42nd Amendment of the Constitution, enforcement also came under the Concurrent List. We had written to the States that they should pass their own Acts for enforcement of the measures provided for in the Act of 1976. Some of the States took action, but a large number of States in the country did not pass these enforcement Acts. Therefore, it was consi-