

15.07 hrs.

DISCUSSION RE. ACCIDENT IN
THE CHASNALLA COAL MINES
NEAR DHANBAD

DR. RANEN SEN (Barasat):

Sir, with a heavy heart and a heart full of anguish and emotion, I rise to speak on this Chasnalla disaster. It is actually not a disaster but a massacre of hundreds of miners. Sir, the Chasnalla tragedy should rouse the conscience of the people of India, the Government of India and the concerned Ministries. The Chasnalla tragedy has roused the conscience of the country which is evident from the fact that ordinary people of India, trade unions, workers are contributing for the relief which is being provided to the families of those miners. I must also appreciate, first of all, the Bihar Government and also other State Governments who are trying to come to the help of the distressed families. The Government of India is trying to help them in many ways. Just now we have heard the report of how efforts are being made to de-water the submerged horizon. Sir, I also take this opportunity to thank the Governments of U.S.S.R. and Poland who came to the rescue of those miners, in fact came to the help of the Indian people.

Sir, I will now come to the actual point. Sir, it is the worst disaster in the history of coal mines in India. It is said—rather it was said—that the number of people involved in this would be 372. But I say that the number of people involved would be much more than 400. Why do I say this? There were 1100 people who were working in the pit under the mines. 700 of them were outside the mines at the time of the tragedy. So according to the simple arithmetic, the remaining 400 people were lost—let us hope they are safe and let us hope against hope. But according to the simple arithmetic, 400 people were underground. Then, besides these regular workers, there were six contractors working in the Chasnalla Coal

mine. Their number was not known. We do not know how many contract labourers went down or were sent down to the pit. Nobody knows. I am not going to refer to the newspaper reports for this. But there is a definite suspicion expressed by the officials that there were many contract labourers. The contract labourers are worse than cattle. Nobody cares for them. No register and no record is maintained for them. These contract labourers are used against the express recommendations of the Mine Safety Organisation. I will come to it later. Firstly, much more than 400 people are involved. Who are the owners of this colliery? IISCO. What is their record? In 1973 in this House we had more or less chastised Mr. Mohan Kumaramangalam for the accident that took place in Jitpur Colliery where 48 people died. An enquiry commission was set up under the chairmanship of Shri R. C. Dutt and some recommendations were made but none of them was implemented in any mine. This also was an IISCO mine.

What is the history of this mine? In the last 50 years, it has changed hands several times and abandoned. Long before when Mr. Mukherjee was a big man, he got a loan of Rs. 40 crores from the World Bank to modernise it. It was long back and so I cannot quote from any record. I can quote only from the newspaper. Nobody knows what renovations were made, but the expert officer made a report to the IISCO Coal Division Director Board that one horizon of this mine should be abandoned at least. This has also appeared in the newspapers and has not been contradicted so far. Of course, enquiry will be made and truth will come out. But today I ask: In January 73, coal mines were nationalised. IISCO was taken over and along with that this captive mine also was taken over. At that time did the Steel & Mines Ministry find out whether any such report is there? They have experts. When a unit is taken over, a thorough examination is made. Did they find

out what is the position of this captive mine? Three years ago the Jitpur colliery disaster took place, which was also a captive mine under IISCO. Now the Chasnalla disaster has taken place. The responsibility lies squarely on the Steel & Mines Ministry for negligence and dereliction of duty. Human lives are not play things.

I would like to put the whole responsibility on the Energy Ministry and the Finance Ministry. I am not quite sure about this thing but I want to put before the Minister whether it is a fact that there was a report by the DGMS that number one horizon should not be worked. I know that the officer made that statement to the newspapers. Secondly, whether it is a fact that such de-watering before working up the horizon was recommended? Thirdly, when the contractor's labourers were sent down, was there not water inside? My report says that there is heavy seepage of water. Whether there was any recommendation for prior de-watering before working the mines? Coal mines have become death pits for the miners. On 8th January, 1976, I had put a question to the Labour Minister because the DGMS comes under his jurisdiction. After the Chasnalla disaster, within a few days another disaster has taken place in Sitapur Colliery. As I have already said, human lives in our country have no value. Miners' job is to produce more for the country but observance of safety rules is nobody's business. Neither Mr. K. C. Pant nor Shri Raghunatha Reddy are bothered about that.

The labour leaders sitting on the Congress benches will bear me out that a court of inquiry has recommended banning of contract labour but this is still going on. There is great deterioration in the safety measures during the last two years. I only quote two years accidents—1973 and 1975. These are from the Government reports. In 1973, 243 people were involved and in 1975, 277 people excluding Chasnalla disaster, were

involved. If we include Chasnalla, it comes to 700 or 800 people. Why? Because there is no safety rule observed in the coal mines. What is the position now? Here I have got a paper cutting. The Director General, Mr. B. N. Bhatt, Eastern Region says that he has only 20 Safety Officers to look after the safety of 1,70,000 workers. A Welfare State talking of socialism and socialistic pattern of society, does not have money to employ more officers for safety of miners.

As I had said, Mr. Pant and the Government of India are interested only in raising coal, and the workers are raising it at the cost of their lives. I now quote from the note given by the Coal Mines Officers' Association to the Committee to review the Mines Safety law. It says:

"After nationalization, the supply of protective equipments, capital stores etc., is not up to the desired standard."

One would say that these officers were against nationalization. I know that not all officers were against; but some were. But I quote Mr. Kanti Mehta, whose statement has come out. He has said that even before Independence, conditions inside the coal mines were horrible and there has not been desired improvement. He belongs to the Congress; he is an INTUC leader. There is no doubt that the safety measures are observed more in violation than in observance.

Now about the supervisory staff who are not so much of higher-ups or very big bosses. In a note to the above committee on 23-12-1975 from their association i.e. 4 days before this Chasnalla disaster and 5 days after the Chinakuri disaster, they have said—and I quote:

"All safety provisions have been ignored and mines are worked in violation of them."

Their own officers are saying this. I do not find Mr. K. C. Pant here.

[Dr. Ranen Sen].

Probably he thought that Mr. Chand-rejit Yadav will be hammered here; but he is more responsible. Mr. Yadav is responsible for Chasnalla; but Mr. Pant is responsible for 700-odd collieries owned by the Government of India. More prosecutions by the DGMS are taking place for violation; in 1974 there were 11 cases of prosecution and in 1975, 25 cases. The DGMS has blamed the management for the accidents. He has held them responsible. They are under-staffed, as I had said earlier. Mr. Raghunatha Reddy is not here. He is in Rajya Sabha—I am told. The mines safety organization is directly under him. So many times in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, in the Labour Consultative Committee meetings—whose members are here—and in the meetings of the coal safety organization, the trade unions have said that the mines safety organization had to be strengthened. It is under-staffed. It is said that money is not available. Mr. Subramaniam and his predecessors could not get money to appoint qualified officers as mines safety officers. This fellow DGMS laments that in the whole of the eastern region, for 170,000 workers, he has got only 20 officers. I cannot read the whole statement. He says that his officers can visit one mine after a lapse of six months. This is the position. That poor fellow may also be responsible for many acts of commission and omission. I don't hold brief for him. But this is what he has said. Nobody has contradicted it. He has said it in Calcutta and in Dhanbad. In October 1974 such a dangerous thing took place. It was an underground explosion in the Ranipur colliery. The DGMS put the blame squarely on the management then. After Jitpur accident, Mr. R. C. Dutt had made some recommendations. In this House, the Ministry of Energy, when asked a question, replied that those were under consideration. The Government go on considering recommendations of such commissions and committees. They do not take any step and people die. They die in hundreds every year. The Finance Minis-

try has no money and so the Labour Department cannot employ proper persons. The only business of the Energy Ministry seems to be to raise coal; not to see about the safety of the workers. Shri Pant should have been here during this discussion. But, unfortunately, he is not present here.

Three safety conferences have taken place between 1958 and 1973 and they have made recommendations like the appointment of proper inspectors, a number of inspections by the officers of the DGMS, etc. Any number of recommendations have been made. One of the recommendations was that the representatives of the trade unions, irrespective of political affiliations, should be associated with mines safety organisation. That has been the demand of the INTUC, AITUC and all the other trade union organisations, whether affiliated to the central organisation or not. Yet, Government is still thinking over that. I am told that in certain collieries in Bihar and Bengal, even though the workers have made this demand and the mines safety organisation has been vociferously demanding it, no worker has been associated with it. Should not the trade union workers be involved in it? But the bureaucracy does not like that.

The DGMS in a statement earlier had stated that rescue operators, etc., are not always available. Look at the Chasnalla. The newspapers reported that the Government of India had to bring pumps for de-watering from Poona. Even though Dhanbad and Asansol are two big colliery areas producing the best coal in our country, proper pumps are not available in that area and had to be brought from Poona. I am told on enquiries that smaller pumps are available in that area. I say that the mines safety organisation of the Government of India should be equipped with at least the minimum requirements to meet such exigencies. Yet, the fact remains that we had to bring pumps from Poona and, ultimately, from USSR and Poland.

The safety conferences between 1958 and 1973 made certain recommendations. But none of them has been implemented so far. The third safety conference took place at Calcutta and the Chief Minister of West Bengal was asked to make a speech. In the course of his speech, he asked what was the use of making recommendations when those recommendations were not implemented. Our Chief Minister, Shri Ray, is not very famous for his very progressive or very socialistic outlook. Yet, when he found that none of the recommendations of the safety conferences has been either accepted or implemented, he was forced to ask: what was the use of holding these conferences.

Even though the R. C. Dutt commission made its recommendation in 1973, as far as I know, it is still under examination. I say that four Ministries are responsible for this Chasnalla disaster, namely, the Ministry of Steel and Mines, the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Energy and the Ministry of Finance. They are playing with the lives of the people. I must say that I have no personal grudge against Shri Yadav. As soon as the Chasnalla disaster occurred, he went there, stayed for a couple of hours and since the atmosphere was not congenial, he went to Chandigarh where there was much cooler atmosphere. I say it is true. Let him deny whether for three days he was staying in Chandigarh or not? If it is not true, I will sue the newspaper which has made this report. The presence of the Minister was necessary when atleast 372 deaths were apprehended.

As I said, we are playing with the lives of the workmen. The Mines Amendment Bill was passed unanimously by the Joint Select Committee in the year 1973. Even the Government side agreed to that. There are Members here who were the Members of the Joint Select Committee in 1973. They made certain recommendations in regard to safety measures. This Joint Select Committee consisted of

Members of both Houses of Parliament. That Amendment Bill has never seen the light of the day.

Who sabotaged it. D.G.M.S. made a statement on the 24th February, 1975, that means after waiting nearly for 1½ years, that the Bill was facing some trouble from vested interests. Who were the vested interests? This was a newspaper report. Nobody contradicted it; nobody hauled him up for making such a statement, such a damaging statement. I say it is good that the *ex-gratia* payment is being made to the families of the affected persons. The mine is being dewatered. We are hoping against hope that some lives will be saved. But no amount of money can bring back the death to life. The Chasnalla disaster is a sad chapter in the history of free India.

I say let there be a thorough enquiry into the Chasnalla affairs. I quote a statement from the President of Burdwan District Congress Committee. Mr. Pramanik, President, Burdwan District, Congress Committee, Asansol is under Burdwan District. Therefore, that gentleman was very much worried. Five or six days before, a disaster took place and that took place in Asansol area. He says in Calcutta on 7th January, 1976:

"Collieries were no more safe than Chasnalla, where nearly 300 mines were trapped below pit in floods and subsidence."

Mr. Pramanik said the mines at Chinakuri where the disaster took place on the 18th of December and the adjacent coal belt, as well as mines in the Kulti region, were all not quite safe.

It means a very big portion of Asansol area was not quite safe. This gentleman is worried. According to other sources, a fire had been raging for 15 years. That is nothing new. He further says:

[Dr. RANEN SEN].

"The entire situation in the coal belt should be examined thoroughly and steps initiated early to prevent a re-occurrence of the kind of calamity that took much a heavy toll of life at Chas Nala."

As far as the nationalised mines are concerned, the whole position has to be gone through, and in co-operation with the trade unions, this enquiry has to be made in regard to all the collieries and see whether the safety measures are followed or not, who are responsible for not implementing them?

When the Chas Nala Enquiry Committee was set up, the All India Trade Union Congress wrote a letter to the Minister that the workers' representatives should be there as assessors

I have no grudge against the INTUC. I do not know whether they have also made that demand. But we had made it at demand. The Steel and Labour Ministers did not find it necessary to associate the AITUC in this thing. However, that is not a very big thing. Let the truth come out. But I say that a thorough inquiry has to be made into all the coal mines that exist in India if we want to avert further disaster.

In the end, I offer my sympathy to the suffering people and their families who are suffering so much because we do very little for them.

श्री राम नारायण शर्मा (धनबाद) :
यह महोदय, चासनाला की दुर्घटना देश
लिए और खदान के लिए ख़ास कर के
नहीं विन्ताजनक दुर्घटना है। इस दुर्घटना
सूचना खदान मंत्री श्री चन्द्रजीत यादव
जुझे 27 तारीख की शाम को मिली और
उन के साथ ही चासनाला तक 28 को
दूर में पहुंचा। वहाँ की जो दर्दनाक स्थिति
उस का वर्णन करना कठिन है। वहाँ
कोयला खदान के लोग इकट्ठा हो गए
क्योंकि 28 तारीख काम करने

का दिन नहीं था और इसलिए सभी लोग
अपने संबंधियों को, अपने दोस्तों को, अपने
परिचितों के बारे में जानने के लिए कि किस
का क्या हाल हुआ पहुंचे हुए थे। सब से पहले
इस की सूचना वहाँ भारत कोकिंग कोल
लिमिटेड के पदाधिकारियों को मालूम हुई
और वे वहाँ पहुंचे, पहुंच कर के सुरक्षा के
लिए जो सब से पहला काम किया जा सकता
था पम्पिंग का, उसका इंतजाम शुरू हुआ।
यद्यपि पम्पिंग का इंतजाम काफी तेजी के
साथ लोग करते रहे और केवल भारत
कोकिंग कोल वाले ही नहीं, कोल इंडिया के
बाहे व्ह ईस्टर्न कोल फील्ड हो, सेंट्रल कोल
फील्ड हो या वेस्टर्न कोल फील्ड हो, सब
लोगों ने इस को अपना विषय बना लिया
और पूरी चेष्टा हुई। लेकिन अब तक कोई
निकला नहीं। अभी भी पानी की जो रिपोर्टें
आप को मिली, जैसा कि माननीय मंत्री जी
ने बतलाया, अभी भी इतना पानी है कि
फर्स्ट होराइजन तक पहुंचने में काफी देर
है जहा कि काम हो रहा था और जो कि
कारण बतलाया जाता है कि वहाँ से यह
रूफ बस्ट करने से पानी सारा नीचे चला
गया और सब के सब आदमी अदर रह गए।

लोगों की संख्या के संघ में तरह तरह
की बातें कही जाती हैं। आज तक मंत्री जी
की यह रिपोर्ट है कि 372 आदमी थे। लेकिन
अभी आधिकारिक तौर पर यह सूचना
मिली है, मैं परसों वहाँ गया था, आधि-
कारिक तौर पर यह पता चला है कि 372
जिन के नाम बतलाए जाते थे उन के अलावा
भी चार आदमी हैं लेकिन उन 372 में से
एक आदमी नहीं है यानी 375 की संख्या
बतलाई जाती है। उस में ठेकेदार के लोग भी
11 थे। उन को बाहे ठेकेदार का कहिए या
कैजुअल लेबर कहिए और लगभग 42
आदमी जो इधुटी पर गए हुए थे वे बाहर
घा चुके थे इस दुर्घटना के पहले। दुर्घटना
के चन्द मिनट पहले मैनजर और
सेक्रेट्री आफिसर निकले थे। फिर भी इस

दुर्घटना में दो फर्स्ट क्लास मीनेजर, एक सेकेन्ड क्लास मीनेजर और 17 सुपरवाइजरों स्टाफ के लोग थे जोकि इसमें विरहे हुए हैं। मैं घिरे हुए इसलिए कहता हूँ क्योंकि उनके परिवार वालों को अभी भी आशा है कि वे जीवित निकल सकते हैं।

वहाँ पर राहल के काम काफी हुए हैं। जैसा कि सदन में बयान दिया गया अभी फिर मन्त्री जी बतलायेंगे, इस दुर्घटना ने देश भर के सारे लोगों को छू लिया है। हमारे कांग्रेस के मंच से चण्डीगढ़ में इसकी चर्चा हुई। राष्ट्रपति जी ने अपने रेफ्रेंस में इनको दिया है। प्रधान मन्त्री जी के सामने इसका लाया गया तो वे तुरन्त बहस के लिए राजी हो गईं। आज इस चेतना के छूने के बाद, जैसा कि आज कहा जाता है कि सारे मून्क की ही नहीं सारे संसार की चेतना छू गई है, उनका बलिदान कामियाब हो सकता है यदि जिन कारणों की वजह से वे आज शिकार हुए हैं उन कारणों को दूढ़ लिया जाये। अभी तक यह दुर्भाग्य की बात है कि इस तरह की जो दुर्घटनायें होती हैं वह अपने साथ साथ सारी गवाहिया भी ले जाती हैं। अभी इस बात की कोई गवाही नहीं है कि इस दुर्घटना के क्या कारण थे। सन 1948 में वह खान छोड़ दी गई थी जिस में आज तक पानी भर रहा था और 1945 का उसका तैयार नकशा था। उनी तैयार नकशे को आधार मानकर उसके ठीक नीचे उसके फर्स्ट होराइजन में काम हो रहा था। सेकेन्ड होराइजन में भी काम हो रहा था लेकिन फर्स्ट होराइजन की तह उससे सिर्फ 80 फीट बतलाई जाती है। 80 फीट का स्टैंडर्ड भी ठीक नहीं है। सेन्ट्रल माइनिंग रिसर्च स्टेशन में आज उसको 60 मीटर किया है। इनके बाद बगल की ही खदान में जब परमीशन की बात आई तो वहा पर परमीशन दी गई कि अब 80 फीट में नहीं, 160 फीट नीचे में जाओ और वहाँ पर भी काम होता था। 5 जनवरी से वहा

पर भी काम बन्द हो गया। अब यह सवाल है कि इस दुर्घटना का कारण या तो वह 80 फीट की जो थिक्नेस बतलाई जाती है ऊपर की वह कम थी क्योंकि सन् 45 के नक्शे के आधार पर यह था। या उसको भी काटा गया हो या फिर सालिड व्जुस्टिग आज कल चलती है। पहले चारों तरफ कटैया करते थे, मशीन से काटते थे और काटकर के उस के बाद उस में होल करते थे और होल कर के ब्लास्ट करते थे। आज वह कटैया का काम भी बन्द हो गया है। बहुत जगहों से रिपोर्ट आती हैं कि जहा मशीन चलनी भी थी साइडकटिंग के लिए वहाँ सालिड ब्लास्टिंग को प्रेफरेंस देते हैं। ज्यादा से ज्यादा पावरफुल यंत्र का इस्तेमाल कर के अधिक से अधिक कोयला निकालने की कोशिश करते हैं। इस से इतने जोर का वाइब्रेशन होता है कि वह सारी तह को कमा देता है और उस से भी वह गिर सकती है।

जहा 470 फुट पानी का एकमुलेशनहो और उस का आधार 80 फुट हो, तो यह भी स्वाभाविक है कि उस के दबाव के कारण से भी सबसिडेंस हुआ हो। यह भी बताया जाता है कि 1968 में एक बार इस पानी को निकालने की कोशिश की गई, लेकिन पानी के थोडा निकालने के बाद जब उस में गर्मी होना शुरू हुआ, हीटिंग होने लगी तो गर्मी की वजह से पानी निकालना बन्द करना पडा और बाद में यह पानी फिर भर गया। उस के बाद वहा पर तीन कुए बना कर उस पानी को वहा के मजदूरों को दिया गया।

अध्यक्ष महोदय, वास्तव में इस तरह की खदानों के काम को बन्द कर देना चाहिये था, क्योंकि नियम के अनुसार इस तरह के पानी को निकाल देना चाहिये था और उस के बाद वहा बालू भर देनी चाहिये थी, लेकिन चाहे पहलें के कोई मासिक हो इस तरह बालू भरते नहीं थे

[श्री र.म.नं.रायण शर्मा]

श्रीर आज भी वह चेतना जामी नहीं है, आज के लोग भी उस को नहीं भरते हैं जिस की बहज से जो बीच का बैक्यूम होता है वह कमी न कभी घस जाता है, इन सब कारणों से पिलर भी बस्ट कर सकते हैं—इस तरह की दुर्घटनाएँ हो जाती हैं। इस लिये यह जरूरी हो जाता है कि इस तरह की दुर्घटनाओं से हम शिक्षा ले और इस तरह की व्यवस्था करे जिस से खदान में सुरक्षा हो और हम उस से बच सके।

श्रीमती जैमा कि माननीय मंत्री जी ने ने बतलाया 10 लाख गैलन पानी उस में प्रतिदिन सीपेज होता था, लेकिन मेरा अनुमान यह है कि आज वह सीपेज कम हो गया होगा, क्योंकि जहा से सीपेज होता था, उस का आधार बन्द हो गया है।

मैं आप का ध्यान 1958 में 1973 के बीच में हुई तीन सेकुरीटी कॉन्फ्रेंस की तरफ दिलाना चाहता हूँ इन तीन कॉन्फ्रेंसों में जो भी सिकांरिषों की गई वे आज तक पूरी तरह से इम्प्लीमेंट नहीं हुई, यद्यपि वे तमाम सिकांरिषों सब सम्मत थी और उन में सरकार भी पार्टी थी मजदूर भी पार्टी थे और उस समय जो प्राइवेट कंपनियाँ थी, वे भी पार्टी थी। हमारे एक्सपर्ट्स की यह ओपीनियन है कि जितनी दुर्घटनाएँ होती हैं, उन में से 60 प्रतिशत छत्र के गिरने से होती है साईट के गिरने से होती है और यदि उन की समुची व्यवस्था की जाय तो उस तरह की दुर्घटनाओं को काफी हद तक रोका जा सकता है। एक एक्सपर्ट कमेटी ने बैठ कर इन दुर्घटनाओं की जांच की थी और यह बताया था कि प्रतिवर्ष दुर्घटनाओं के कारण 20 लाख मैन पावर लॉस्ट होते हैं, जिनमें से उन की ओपीनियम के अनुसार 75 प्रतिशत को टाला जा सकता है मतलब यह है कि—यह ठीक है कि खदानों के काम में दुर्घटनाएँ होना लाजमी हैं लेकिन 75 प्रतिशत को टाला जा सकता है।

1966 में एक व्यवसायिक प्रशिक्षण

नियम बना था। उस के अनुसार उन को प्रशिक्षण देने के लिये दो स्थान खोले गये थे, प्रशिक्षण के दो स्थान होने के बावजूद भी अब तक केवल 30 प्रतिशत लोगों को ही ट्रेनिंग दी गई। भ्राम से बचने के लिये वहाँ पर कम से कम 78 डिग्री से 72 डिग्री के बीच में या उस के ऊपर तापमान रहना चाहिये। लेकिन जब वेन्टीलेसज का इन्तजाम नहीं होता है तो वहा का टेम्प्रेचर भी बढ़ता है, बहुत जगह गैस हो जाती है, बहुत जगहों पर भ्राम लग जाती है और बहुत जगहों पर ग्लास्ट करते हुए विस्फोट हो जाता है और उस विस्फोट से इस तरह की दुर्घटनाएँ हो जाती हैं। जो साधारण सैफ्टी इक्विप-मेंट्स मजदूरों को मिलने चाहिए जैसे बैल्ट, टोपी, जूते, पीने के पानी का इन्तजाम, छत और साईट वगैरह देखने के लिये यंत्र, यह सारे नहीं हो पाने हैं, उन का पूरा इस्पेक्शन नहीं हो पाता है। इसलिये दुर्घटनाएँ हो जाती हैं।

अध्यक्ष महोदय, इस दुर्घटना में नेपाल के 24 आदमी, तमिलनाडू के 12, पंजाब, के 17, वेस्ट बंगाल के 27, उत्तर प्रदेश के 21, मध्य प्रदेश के 6 उडीसा के 6, महाराष्ट्र का 1, और राजस्थान का 1, यानी 115 आदमी और 260 आदमी बिहार के थे। इस प्रकार कुल मिला कर 375 आदमी इस दुर्घटना में मरे हैं।

सैफ्टी मैजर्स की तरफ में सरकार का ध्यान आकर्षित करना चाहता हूँ कि माइन्स ऐक्ट 1972 में इंट्रोड्यूस हुआ, जोइंट सैलेक्ट कमेटी की रिपोर्ट 1973 से पडी हुई है, उस को अभी पास कर लेना चाहिये। वर्कमैन कम्पेन्सेशन ऐक्ट के सम्बन्ध में आप ने ध्यान दिया, आज सबेरे ही माननीय मालवीय जी ने घोषणा की कि एक आदमी जो कि सीनियर ड्रिलर था उस को 1 लाख रूपया दिया जाएगा। यह वर्कमैन कम्पेन्सेशन ऐक्ट 1936 का है जिस के अनुसार जो 500 रु० पायेगा उस को 10,00,00 रु०

कम्पेन्सेशन का मिलेगा। अगर कानून का पालन किया भी गया तो कोयला खदान के मजदूर को यह कम्पेन्सेशन पाने का हक हासिल नहीं होगा। इसलिये 1936 में जो १० की बैल्यू थी 10,000 १० की उस में परिवर्तन होना चाहिये और सरकार को कोयला मजदूर के लिए समुचित मुआवजे की रकम निर्धारित करनी चाहिये। आज अगर कोई रेल दुर्घटना में मरता है तो उस को 50,000 कम्पेन्सेशन मिलता है, और हवाई जहाज में मरने वाले के सबधियों को एक लाख १० देते हैं, और एक लाख १० के कम्पेन्सेशन का आज सबरे ही मालवीय जी ने अनाउन्समेंट किया है। सरकार को चाहिये कि उसी हिमाव से कोयला खान के मजदूरों के मुआवजे की रकम में सुधार किया जाय। और साथ ही मेरा निवेदन है कि १० की सीमा न रखें कि 500 १० वाले को ही मुआवजा मिलेगा, उससे ज्यादा पाने वाले को नहीं। क्योंकि खदान के अन्दर खान का मैनेजर भी जाता है और वह मर जाये तो उसको कम्पेन्सेशन का कोई हक नहीं है, यह धारणा बदलनी चाहिये। मेरा तो निवेदन है कि प्रप इन्शोरेंस की व्यवस्था होनी चाहिये जिस में सब लोगों का इन्शोरेंस हो। और दुर्घटना होने पर उन के आश्रितों को नौकरी मिलने में प्रीफरेंस मिलना चाहिये, तथा जो दुर्घटना से असमर्थ हो जाये उन को पुनर्वास की व्यवस्था होनी चाहिये तथा प्रेचुटी ऐक्ट को इस तरह से अमेंड करना चाहिये कि दुर्घटनाग्रस्त लोगों को पूरी प्रेचुटी पाने का हक हो सके।

पेंशन का इंतजाम कोयला माइन जेलनेयर आर्गेनाइजेशन ने किया है। लेकिन वह नाम मात्र का है। प्रतिविधवा 25 १० पेंशन में सुधार करना चाहिये। इसी प्रकार मुझे यह भी कहना है कि लेबर पार्टमेंट का जो सेक्रेटी आर्गेनाइजेशन है उस को कोई महत्ता नहीं रह गई है।

उस को सरकार नान-टेक्नीकल मानती है। और टेक्नीकल का काम सुपरवाइज करने का है। इन को हाईली टेक्नीकल होना चाहिये जिस से काम सुपरवाइज कर सकें। और बहुटेक्नीकल है भी, लेकिन तीसरे बेतन आयोग की सिफारिश के अनुसार उन को नान-टेक्नीकल माना गया। इसलिये सरकार को चाहिये कि उन को उचित स्थान दिया जाय, उन को मजबूत किया जाय जिससे वह सुपरवाइज कर सकें और उन के सुपरवीजन की कोई कीमत हो। आज कोयला खदान के मजदूरों में यह धारणा हो गई है कि श्रम विभाग का वही स्थान हो गया है जो स्थान एक विधवा वहन का अपने भाई के घर में होता है। तो ऐसी हालत में इनको मजबूत करना चाहिये।

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE (Howrah): While the debate is taking place here, the unfortunate miners are still under the mines trapped and their families are still uncertain about the fate of their men. But, generally, it is to be accepted that nobody will survive.

Now, it is admitted by all that this is the worst tragedy, the worst disaster in the collieries of India. This tragedy has taken place under conditions of emergency. The government is declaring that a New Era has started, an era of discipline, an era of production, an era of advancement has begun, but the worst tragedy took place in this era. Why? Why did under this new era this worst tragedy take place? According to my assessment of the situation, it is because of the bureaucratic implementation of these two slogans, 'More production' and 'Discipline' I visited Chasnala on the 30th. I met my friend, Shri R. N. Sharma there and I am thankful that he helped me and with his assistance, I got some overall idea of the situation there. The reports I got I want to place here.

The workers of the night shift on the 26th struck work in protest against the order of blasting coal there. This

[Shri Samar Mukherjee]

piece of information has never seen the light of the day. I was told by the friend who is the President of the local INTUC who helped me in seeing these spots that written protest was submitted to the local management against the order of cutting coal near that wall but for fear of discipline—as it is emergency now—and for fear that they will be charge-sheeted and will be suspended, they could not defy the order. So, they had to succumb to discipline and it is the conviction of the workers there with whom I had talks that it was this overworking of the mine neglecting warning that had caused this tragedy. Maybe so. After investigation what will come into the report or the document, I do not know, but I was told this by that friend—Mr. Nisar Ahmed, INTUC President of the local unit who accompanied me at the request of Mr. Sharmaji. He told me that there is record in writing that the workers protested because they have some horse-sense about safety, they know and they have experience and that is why they have objected.

SHRI R. N. SHARMA: That will be used in the Court of Inquiry.

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: May be, But I am placing this before the Minister and before the House.

I have also been told that one Overseer gave in writing a warning that this wall may collapse any day.

SHRI R. N. SHARMA: There is no Overseer in the coal-mines.

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Whatever it is, I am placing before you what I heard there....

SHRI DASARATHA DEB (Tripura East): Maybe some other functionary, if not an overseer.

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: These things are getting currency there. It is not that I am telling these things in order to discredit the Government. I am only placing before you what I heard there.

This is a very grim tragedy. With all seriousness we should discuss all the doubts which are dominating the minds of the workers there. Now it is admitted that the norms of safety had been callously ignored.

16.00 hrs.

The main effort was to step up production, let any consequences be there—whether wall collapses or whether people are entrapped. Mr. Sen, an officer over there told me that the usual daily production was 450 to 500 tonnes. From 1st January, the target had been fixed to 600 to 700 tonnes.

The officers responsible for all this were very much interested in increasing the production.

More production and discipline were the two main slogans under emergency. Safety norms were completely ignored and the norms had been completely violated.

So many other reports have also come in the newspaper. Some have been referred by Dr. Ranen Sen and some have been referred by my friend Mr. Sharma. The map was an old one. It was shown there in the map that the wall was 80 ft. According to the Mines Act, the safety barrier should be at least 60 meters i.e., 160 ft. Mr Swaminathan, Reporter, Times of India has stated, though in the map it has been shown as 80' but actually it is not 80', it may be 60' or even less than that.

I was told that these workers struck work in the mid night shift of 26th. They refused to cut coal at that point. It is also heard that there was some blast. I do not know whether there was actually any blast or not, but everybody admitted that there was such a big sound, it appeared that there was a big blast.

As per the Times of India, the quantity of water gush shows that the breach in the wall was more than 8'. Water was just on the top of the first

tunnel in the abandoned mine. The depth of the tunnel is 535'. The depth of the second tunnel is 935'. The third tunnel of depth of 1335' is not working now as there is water over there.

I was told that immediately after that disaster the attendance register was removed and the workers are very much suspicious that there will be tampering. That is why the workers got enraged and they assembled before the Office of the Manager, Mr. O. A. I was told that that Manager through some of his assistants removed that attendance register.

Workers' tempers rose so high that they threw stones. Some of the glass panes were broken. Police authorities came. They announced in the mine that unless that Attendance Book is restored back, everyone responsible for removal of the Book will be arrested. In the afternoon that book was restored back. In that book it is recorded that 412 people went underground; 40 came out. But this 40 was challenged. In my presence, the Assistant who helped me, told another officer. He told this in my presence. He told him that there are 4 names which is not in the list. They are missing; they are still there. The officer was asking me to see the distribution system. He immediately told "you give me the name, I will check up, whether it is correct, whether they were there or not." So, what I say is, the number figured in the register or the record of attendance is not absolutely correct. Because, I have seen this on the spot. From 372 it has now come to 375. But, as I said, the workers do not believe that only 375 have gone underground. There are some contractors' men and the practice is this that some of the contractors' men go underground without signing any register. There is one name of a contractor, Ajit Singh but the names of his men are not there. So, it is evident that more men are trapped in this tragedy. Sir, the local manage-

1929 LS—8.

ment, is trying to under-estimate the number of these casualties. We know their performance for the past so many years and you cannot wash away these doubts which arise in people's minds

Sir, there is also another threat. I am glad that the Sudamdih colliery has stopped working from 5th January. I have got information from some source which I immediately informed the Minister that any day this colliery may face the same disaster. There is also a big storage of water above it. The seepage is very dangerous and there is no proper protection. It is good that this colliery has stopped working. There is another colliery, Jitpur colliery. It is faced with similar danger, similar threat.

Sir, this Chasnalla disaster has highlighted some of the basic weaknesses and the operation of the dark forces there. We will know how the dark forces are operating. This is from the Times of India of January, 3rd.

'Miners who evade the gangsters at pay offices, are pursued in their homes. There is no way to escape or redress. It is useless to turn to the police who allegedly get a cut from the big money lenders to look the other way. Some policemen are also alleged to be engaged in money lending business. No succour can be obtained from security guards at the mines who themselves are the roughest and cruellest of the money-lender gangsters. Many of them in the old ways were musclemen hired by private mine-owners to subdue labour. After nationalisation they have been given a permanent tenure as security guards.'

So, Sir, this is the sort of condition under which miners have to live there. This tragedy has highlighted so many things. The machinery of

[Shri Samar Mukherjee]

the Director General for Safety of Mines has not been strengthened. All the recommendations of so many Inquiry Committees after the disasters have been sabotaged and this is not something which is an isolated case. The mineowners are very powerful and they can sabotage any recommendation, because they are living in a capitalist system; the Government defends that capitalist system, though talking of Socialism.

That is why I say all these vested interests have very strong hold on the machinery of the Government. Although we may shout here, I have no confidence that there will be any big remedies found after this disaster. I may say that we are going to see far more disasters in future.

MR. SPEAKER: You must conclude with this.

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: I am concluding. I agree with what my friend Shri Sharma has said with regard to relief. Government should give its serious thought to change the Act and provide for more relief so that the people, throughout their lives, have been rehabilitated. Those who are the victims of this tragedy are now getting the attention but those who are losing their jobs now because of the closure of the mines should not also be neglected and confidence has to be created among all the employees and throughout the country. And Government must act very very seriously to observe all the safety rules and bring before the House the Bill already amended and recommended by the Joint Committee without delay. I pay my homage to all those victims who are still in the trapped mine and my sympathies go to the families who have become the worst sufferers.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Damodar Pandey. Before you start, I would request the hon. Member to kindly con-

fine his remarks only to ten minutes because, if he exceeds that, I am sorry I shall have to exclude many more Members. So, in order to include as many Members as possible, kindly confine your remarks to these ten minutes.

SHRI SATYENDRA NARAYAN SINHA (Aurangabad): Will it apply to the Members of the Opposition also?

MR. SPEAKER: The Opposition have their time. In the case of Shri Samar Mukherjee, I have given him more time than what was due to his party.

SHRI SATYENDRA NARAYAN SINHA: There are two speakers from the Opposition side.

MR. SPEAKER: That is right. Now, Mr. Damodar Pandey.

दामोदर पाण्डे (हजारीबाग) :
अध्यक्ष महाशय, यह जो दुखद दुर्घटना हुई है, उसकी जांच कराई जा रही है और इस जांच के काम में मेरे कंधे पर भी कुछ जिम्मेदारी डाली गई है। इसलिये इस अवसर पर मेरा कुछ कहना उचित नहीं है। मैं इस बारे में कुछ नहीं कहूंगा कि यह दुर्घटना क्यों घटी, इसमें किसकी जिम्मेदारी है, आदि। लेकिन मैं यह निवेदन करना चाहता हूँ कि आज का बहस का जो विषय है, वह बड़ा मौमिन है।

हमारे देश में छः लाख कोयला खदान मजदूर काम करते हैं। यह एक बड़ी दुर्घटना हुई है, लेकिन केवल एक साल, अर्थात् 1975 में पूरे हिन्दुस्तान में जो दुर्घटनाएँ हुई हैं, उनमें 275 या 300 आदमी मरे हैं और लगभग 1500 आदमी गम्भीर रूप से घायल हुए हैं। जैसा कि

मेरे पूर्व-वक्ताओं, डा० रामेन सेन और श्री शर्मा, ने बताया है, इस सम्बन्ध में देश में हर एक स्तर पर काफी बाद-विवाद हुआ है। सेफ्टी कांफ्रेंस हुई। मिनिसट्री के स्तर पर बातचीत हुई। मजदूरों ने इस बारे में काफी आवाज उठाई, लेकिन आज तक इस समस्या का कोई हल नहीं निकल पाया है।

मेरा सुझाव है कि आज जो विषय हमारे सामने है, उस को तो यही समाप्त करें, लेकिन छः लाख कोयला खदान मजदूर जो अनजाने खतरे से अपने जीवन को लड़ते हैं, वे आर फाईटिंग ग्रेस्ट अननोन एनिमीज, उन को जो एक तरह भगवान के भरोसे छोड़ दिया जाता है, और इस प्रकार की दुर्घटनाएँ होती रहनी हैं, उन में देश के प्रतिनिधियों का भी कुछ कतव्य है. और इस लिए पूरी सुरक्षा की व्यवस्था के लिए समय निर्धारित किया जाये और उस पर इस मदन में बहस हो। जैसा कि मेरे पूर्व-वक्ताओं ने सुझाव दिया है, बर्कमैन कम्पेन्सेशन एक्ट और ग्रुप इनशोरिंग की योजना को तुरन्त लागू किया जाये, ताकि मजदूर जब काम पर जाये, तो उन के दिल में यह विश्वास हों कि मुझ पर जो कुछ भी बोले, मेरा परिवार अनाथ नहीं रहेगा, उन को देखने वाला कोई है। यह गारंटी हम खदान मजदूरों को दें। मैं इसी सुझाव के माध्य समाप्त करता हूँ कि इस विषय पर पूरी बहस हो और उन के लिए समय निर्धारित किया जाये।

SHRI SATYENDRA NARAYAN SINHA (Aurangabad), Mr Speaker, Sir, as has been stated by the previous speakers, it is clear that this disaster in the mining industry has displayed how ill-equipped we are to meet such a situation. The Minister has stated that one million gallons of water is

seeping everyday in the mine. Therefore, there must have been some arrangement for dewatering.

Besides that in 1956 a similar disaster took place when the roof of the Barodome mine collapsed due to heavy rainfall on the surface entrapping thirty-nine persons. Dewatering had been done and after 19 days 11 persons were found to be alive as they found shelter in an air pocket. With that hope dewatering has been done here also but it has taken a long time and we had to ask for help from Soviet Union, Poland and other countries. No doubt, they readily agreed to send high-powered pumps for which we are grateful to them. But, Sir, is it not a sad commentary on us that despite such accidents in the past we have not made adequate provision for high-powered pumps in the event of such a calamity.

Secondly, it has been admitted that the authorities had left or were leaving nearly 80 feet layer when the Central Mining Research Station on a reference by them in an earlier cases advised them to leave the safe distance of 160 feet between the two workings. The content that this was a 'developmental colliery' not intended for extraction of coal is not intelligible to me and to many other persons in the country. Even in this case there would be blasing and extraction of coal. Therefore, I would like to say that the mining authorities have shown criminal negligence on their part in not consulting the Central Mining Research Station or for that matter the Director General of Mines Safety for advising them about the safe distance between the two workings.

Then again Mr. Sharma has pointed that they did not prepare new maps. They were working on the old maps and did not know the level of water in that *khud*. They did not know whether there were any gasses in the pocket of the mine because there was

[Shri Satyendra Narayan Sinha]

a loud report, an explosion resulting into subsidence and flooding of the mine. All this point out to one thing that we have not been observing the safety provisions with care and concern as is expected of the management of a public sector. It has been stated by Dr Ranen Sen that three safety conferences have made earlier certain recommendations which were not implemented and also the courts of enquiry have made certain recommendations which have not been implemented.

Last year, in a seminar, the Director General of Mines Safety said that 75 per cent of these accidents were due to non-observance of safety provisions. The Health Minister of Bihar, who is also a labour leader, stated the other day that the disappearance the previous year of the inspecting staff has led to decline in safety standards. Why is it so? Is it because the mining authorities have been asked to raise the production? Is it because they are more anxious to reach the target of 12 million tonnes production? Is it because, in this particular mine, production was lagging and while they were trying to make it up with increased efforts, they have ignored the safety provisions?

The Court of Enquiry is going into this question. But, I was a little amazed that the hon. Minister made a statement that the safety provisions were observed. In my opinion, he had no business to say so and he should not have made that statement. It was rather hasty and in my opinion, it will tend to pre-empt the findings of the Court of Enquiry. In the face of this volume of evidence that the safety standards have gone down, he should not have made this statement. He will notice that the inspections are not carried out regularly. I wonder whether these mining authorities had consulted the Director General of Mines Safety. Was it not incumbent upon this organisation to carry out inspections? Why did they allow mining operations to go on with the layer of

80 ft., as is claimed, although it is doubtful whether it was 80 ft. or less?

My friend Dr. Ranen Sen has given the answer that this Directorate General of Mines Safety is under-staffed, that the pay scales are not attractive and that most of the posts are un-filled. Some of them have already left the organisation or are leaving for more lucrative appointments elsewhere. This situation should be rectified by Government. I entirely agree with Mr R. N. Sharma that Government ought to place this organisation on a firmer footing by giving them adequate pay scales and all that, treating them as technical personnel and requiring the staff to have particular qualifications so that the safety standards could be properly observed.

But, unfortunately, even after nationalisation, we have not become safety-conscious. There is no anxiety and feeling for the welfare and well-being of the workers, and if I may say so, it has been largely ignored. We find that accidents have increased after nationalisation. Dr. Ranen Sen has already given the figures. This is largely because of the fact that inspections are not carried out regularly, rules are not observed and the safety organisations have also not been activated. If I were to believe the hon. Minister that the safety provisions are there and that the safety organisation is functioning, then, there is no need for Coal India limited to come out with a modern scheme of safety organisation, which was reported in the Statesman recently, after the Chasnalla disaster. The Energy Minister has also set-up a high-powered committee to look into the standards of safety in the mines, as if they were all sleeping so far and they wanted this grim tragedy to wake them up from their slumber or to rouse their conscience about the safety of the persons who are working in the various mines.

It is a sad commentary on the whole system of working in the mines. My submission would be that

whatever may be the findings of the court of inquiry, we cannot exonerate the management in the public sector from their responsibility and duty to see that such disasters do not take place, that they are reduced to the minimum, if not altogether eliminated.

With these words, I join the other friends in conveying our sympathies to the bereaved families

श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह (चतरा) अध्यक्ष महोदय, माननीय मंत्री महोदय ने सदन के सामने जो बयान दिया था, उसमें ठीक ही कहा था कि देश में यह सब से भीषण खान दुर्घटना है एक बड़ी जबरदस्त राष्ट्रीय विपत्ति है। अध्यक्ष जी, मौत कई रूपा और रंगों में आती है। कभी जेर की तरह से दफाडते हुए, कभी बिजली के समान दबे पाव और कभी हिरण के समान कुलाचे भरते हुए। लेकिन चासनाला खान दुर्घटना पर यह जो मौन का रूप यहाँ देखने में आता है, इस की कोई व्याख्या नहीं की जा सकती। 27 दिसम्बर का प्रातः पहली पारी—7 बजे जब मजदूर अपने घरों से निकल कर बग जा रहे होंगे, उन की मातायें, बहिनें पत्नियाँ उन्हें चाप-नाशने के प्राद विदा कर रही होगी, उन्होंने स्वप्न में भी यह नहीं सोचा होगा कि उनके पति या उनके भाई या उनके बेटे अग्न्याने के समय लौट कर नहीं आयेगे और चूटने पर जो हाडी चढाई कर वह चढी की चढी रह जायगी, विमी को उतारने की मुश्किल नहीं रहेगी।

मैं परसो वहाँ था, चौथे रोज भी वहाँ था—जहाँ चासनाला खान दुर्घटना हुई है और, अध्यक्ष जी, एक और जहाँ वह सब से बड़ी दुखद घटना इतिहास की है, वहाँ दूसरी ओर यह भी कहना पड़ेगा कि सरकार की ओर से बचाव और राहत का जितना बड़ा काम हो रहा है, बड़े पैमाने पर हो रहा है, शायद आज तक इतने बड़े पैमाने पर

कही नहीं हुआ। जहाँ जो लोग जामों में लगे हुए हैं, सब के हृदय दुख और दर्द से भरे हुए हैं, लेकिन काम युद्ध स्तर पर हो रहा है और 24 घंटे हो रहा है—चाहे हमारे विदेशी टैकनोलॉजिस्ट्स हों, हमारे इंजीनियरों और मजदूर हों, चाहे इस्को के कर्मचारी हों, चाहे कोल इण्डिया लि० के लोग हों या दूसरी मन्थाओं के लोग हों या बिहार सरकार के कर्मचारी हों—सब के मन निष्ठा और विश्वास का भाव लगे हुए है कि कैसे हम मौत के मुह से इतने व्यक्तियों को से कम से कम एक व्यक्ति को तो दुनिया के सामने ला कर खड़ा कर सकें और यह विजय इमान की बहुत बड़ी विजय होगी।

अध्यक्ष जी, मे इस बात का इसलिये कह रहा हूँ कि जो लोग उन खानों में काम करने हैं—उनकी स्थिति बड़ी दुखपूर्ण है—जिन 375 लोगों का विवरण हमारे सामने आया है, उनमें 250 के लगभग ऐसे परिवार हैं जिन की परिस्थितियों की आर्य अस्तित्व 15 से लेकर 28 वर्ग मीटर तक है और चासनाला का बगन म जो सदरा गाँव है, उस गाँव में लगभग 58 ऐसी परिवारों के जिन को उमर 15 वर्ष से लेकर 60 वर्ष। अन्दर की होगी। उनमें से बड़ी की गरीब छोटे-छोटे दूधमुँह बच्चे हैं। उनका विवाह इस लिये नहीं किया जा रहा है 1956 में जो बड़ाघेमा में इस तालाब बनाई हुआ था उस में 19 दिन के बगन मी 11 व्यक्ति निर्यात कर बाहर निकाला गया था। उस तालाब में कुल मिलाकर 90 में डोरा में एक बहुत बड़ी खान दुर्घटना हुई थी, जिस में 250 से अधिक व्यक्तियों की माते हुई थी। 268 के करीब आदमी मरे थे, और चासनाला के बगन म जीतपुर खान म जी कि आई०आई० एस० का० की खान में, 18 मार्च, 1973 को दुर्घटना हुई थी जिस में 47 आदमी मरे थे। उस समय इस सदन में 21 मार्च, 1973 को कृति अटेशन की चर्चा में बहुत सी बातें कही गई थी, और उस का जवाब देते

[श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह]

हुए तत्कालीन खान मंत्री स्वर्गीय मोहन कुमार मगलम ने विश्राम दिलाया था कि इस की समुचित जांच हांगी और इस तरह के कदम उठाये जायेंगे जिम में इस तरह की दुर्घटना न हो। डा० रणन सेन ने कहा कि जीतपुर खान दुर्घटना की जांच हुई। लेकिन जांच के बाद जो रिपोर्ट पेश हुई उस पर ममुचित कार्यवाही नहीं की गई। और सब से दुख की बात यह है कि उस समय इम सदन में कहा गया था कि जो खानों में मजदूर काम करते हैं उन के कम्पलसरी इश्यारेम की व्यवस्था की जाय हमारे नौजवान साथी श्री पी० आर० दास० मुशी ने यह सवाल उठाया था और उस के उत्तर में तत्कालीन मंत्री महोदय ने यह कहा था।

“The Member raised the question about proper protection so far as the workers are concerned, who have to work under such dangerous conditions and suggested that there should be a type of insurance scheme which will see that the compensation is much greater than what it is today. I am grateful to him for the suggestion and certainly we will examine it”

लेकिन यह आज तक ऐगजाबिन ही हो रहा है, आज तक कोई कार्यवाही नहीं हुई।

16.32 hrs.

[SHRI ISHAQUE SAMBHALI in the Chair.]

सभापति जी, दुर्घटना स्थल पर अगर कोई जाय तो बहुत सारी बातें सुनने को मिलेगी, मैं नहीं जानता वे कहा तक सत्य हैं, उस का जो जांच कमीशन जाने या सरकार जाने, लेकिन हमारे काना में जो बातें पडी हैं उन को मैं कहना चाहूंगा।

यह कहा जाता है कि दो, चार दिनों से मजदूर यह कहते थे कि अधिक पानी चूता है और ऐसा लगता है कि जैसे कोई खतरा

आ रहा हो, इस की जांच होनी चाहिये। लेकिन इस पर किसी ने गम्भीरता से ध्यान नहीं दिया। यह भी कहा जाता है कि मजदूरों ने यह शिकायत उस दिन आधा घंटे पहले तक की कि पानी कुछ अधिक चू रहा है, और वहा के मैनेजर श्री भट्टाचार्य नीचे गये भी और उन्होने मजदूरों से कहा तुम लोग काम करो, कोई खतरा नहीं है। वे बाहर निकल कर आये और उस के 10 मिनट बाद ही खतरे ने मौत का रूप ग्रहण कर लिया। आखिरी व्यक्ति उम खान में बाहर आने वाले वहा के मैनेजर थे जिन को सम्भवत उसी समय हार्ट अटैक हुआ और अभी तक वह बर्नपुर अस्पताल में भर्ती है।

हमारे सामने कुछ सवाल ऐसे पैदा हो जाते हैं जिन का उत्तर सरकार का दूढ़ना चाहिये। उन सवाल का जवाब हम को मिले या न मिले, लेकिन भविष्य को इन प्रश्नों का उत्तर मिल जाये जिन में लखा का मशगल में जो खान मजदूर है जिन की जान को रोज खतरा रहता है, उन को भरोसा हो सके कि हम नीचे जाते हैं तो फिर लौटकर कर ऊपर आयेगे, और उन के परिवारों को भरोसा हो सके कि हमारा आदमी लौटकर आयेगा।

सब से पहला प्रश्न यह उगम्यिन होता है कि पुरानी खान और चालू खान के बीच में जो छन थी वह कैसे टूटी? आदमी की गलती से टूटी या प्रकृति की गलती से टूटी? इस की जांच होनी चाहिये। और यह भी जांच होनी चाहिये कि 80 फीट का सीम थी कि नहीं? क्योंकि बारबार यह कहा जाता है कि प्रोडक्शन दिब्बाने के लोभ में लोगों ने इतनी रोजिंग कर दी थी कि वह मुश्किल से 30, 40 फीट होगी। मैं नहीं जानता कि कितनी होगी। लेकिन इस की जांच होनी चाहिए। पुरानी खानों का जो नक्शा उलब्ध है, वह सही है या गलत है, इस की भी जांच हो। यह भी हम चाहेगे।

दूसरी बात यह है कि इस खान में या उस के बगल में जो जीतपुर खान हैं, उस में अभी तक ठेकेदारी प्रथा चालू है। क्यों ठेकेदारी प्रथा चालू है, मैं नहीं जानता। मजदूरों की ओर से बराबर यह शिकयत होनी रही है कि ठेकेदारी प्रथा के अन्तर्गत जो मजदूर काम करते हैं, उन्हें कोई भी मुविधा नहीं मिलती है और उन की जान बराबर खतरे में रहती है। जीतपुर खान में बड़ी मात्रा में ठेकेदार काम कर रहे हैं और चासनाला में भी काम करते हैं लिखित रूप में मजदूरों की तरफ से यह लिख कर दिया गया है कि हमारी हाजरी नहीं बननी है और हम लोग बिना हाजरी के खानों में काम करते हैं और किसी तरह का एक्मीडेंट हाँ जाने पर दवा भी नहीं मिलती है। क्या माइन्स रगुलेशंस में मुताबिक खानों में बिना हाजरी जाना जरूरी है? जीतपुर खान के मजदूरों ने 26-6-75 को यह लिख कर दिया है कि खुराक के रूप में पसा मिलना है और कभी कभी हम को विल्कुल पैसा नहीं मिलता है और जब हम पैसा मागत है तो मारा पीटा जाता है और जुल्म किया जाता है। गण्टीकरण के बाद और आजादी के बाद खनि तो पर इस तरह का जुल्म हो, इस चीज को सरकार को देखना चाहिए।

सभापति जी, एक दो बातें हम और जानना चाहेंगे। पहली बात हम यह जानना चाहेंगे कि इन खान के जो जनरल मैनेजर श्री जे०एन० आहरी हैं क्या यह बात सही है कि इस के पहले जीतपुर में भी जो दुर्घटना हुई थी, उस समय भी श्री जे० एन० आहरी वहा के मुख्य प्रबन्धक थे और क्या यह भी सही है कि उस के पहले चीनापुरी में जो भयकर दुर्घटना हुई थी, उस समय भी वे वहा के जनरल मैनेजर थे और क्या यह बात सही है कि जहा भी वे जनरल मैनेजर रहे हैं वहा इस तरह की दुर्घटनाएँ होती रही है और क्या यह भी सही है कि वे अपने जो जुल्म के लिए बड़े बदनाम है? सभापति जी मैं

अपनी ओर से कुछ नहीं कह रहा हूँ। जो बात मुझ वहा सुनने को मिली है वही बातें मैं बता रहा हूँ।

सभापति जी, बड़े दुःख की बात है कि इतनी बड़ी घटना हुआ गयी, देश के इतिहास में और दुनिया की मार्गनिंग हिस्ट्री में इतनी बड़ी दर्दनाक घटना हो गई लेकिन एक भी व्यक्ति को अभी तक वहा यह नहीं कहा गया है कि भई तुम्हारी इस में गलती हो सकती है और सभापति जी, मैं तो ऐसा लगता है कि जस्टिस उज्ज्वल नागयण सिन्हा की मिदारत में जो इन्वैस्टिगेशन कमेटी बैठाई गई है, उस जाच कमेटी की रिपोर्ट भी आ जाएगी लेकिन जो अधिवारी टम न लिए जवाबदेह पाए जाएंगे वे किसी न किसी तरह छूट जाएंगे और मुझे तो ऐसा भय लगता है जैसा कि कई साहब कह रहे थे कि प्रॉमोट भी हो जाएंगे। तो अब जो हो गया हा गया लेकिन भविष्य में हमें इस बात का ध्यान रखना चाहिए कि ऐसी घटनाएँ न हों।

दूसरी बात यह है कि श्रमिकों को, मजदूरों को, जोकि खानों में काम करते हैं, उनको उचित सुरक्षा मिले और तीसरी बात यह है कि जिस को भी नेगलीजेंस हो, जिस की भी लापरवाही हो और जिस की भी गलती हो, वह चाहे बड़े से बड़ा अधिकारी और ध्यक्ति क्यों न हो, उसे दंडित किया जाए। इस को हम मांग करते हैं।

सभापति जी, मेरी ओर देख कर आप मुस्करा रहे थे और मुझे ऐसा लग रहा था कि आप मुझे और बोलने देंगे लेकिन आप ने जो घटी बजा दी है तो मैं नहीं चाहता कि आप को आज्ञा का पालन न करूँ और आपकी आज्ञा का पालन करते हुए मैं पांच मिनट और लूंगा।

सभापति महोदय, नहीं, दो मिनट में आप समाप्त कर दें।

श्री शंकर बखाल सिंह मै दो मिनट में
श्री समाप्त कर रहा हूँ ।

सभापति जी, कुछ बातें मैंने बहुत गंभीर-
तापूर्वक यहाँ रखी है। जहाँ तक रिलीफ का
सवाल पंदा होता है, सरकार की ओर से काफी
रिलीफ दिया जा रहा है और दिया जाएगा
और लोगों को नौकरी भी मिल जाएगी,
लेकिन लोगों की जाने वापस लीट कर नहीं
आ सकती। अभी माननीय सदस्य डा० रानेन
मेनने कहा कि इम्पान मंत्री, श्री चन्द्रजीत यादव
गये और तुरन्त भाग कर चंडीगढ़ में पहुँचे।
यह बिन्कुल बेबुनियाद इलजाम इसलिए
था कि मंत्री महाांदय चंडीगढ़ छोड़ कर जब
उनको यह समाचार मिला वहाँ पहुँचे और
तुरन्त पहुँचे। हम लोग भी वहाँ बहुत ज्यादा
चिन्तित थे और चंडीगढ़ का मार्हाल इस चिन्ता
से और इस दर्द में भीग रहा था। हम सब
इस प्रतीक्षा में थे कि हमारे श्री चन्द्रजीत
यादव लीट कर आएँ और हमें बताएँ कि
वास्तविक स्थिति क्या है। जब हमें वास्तविक
स्थिति का पता लगा तो प्रधान मंत्री श्रीमती
इंदिरा गांधी और काब्रिम अध्यक्ष, श्री देवकान्त
बख्सा ने सब से पहले चासनामा कांड का दर्दनाक
घटना का जिक्र किया और उन लोगों के
प्रति श्रद्धांजलि भी अर्पित की। यही नहीं
श्री रघुनाथ रेड्डी, मिहार सरकार की श्रम
मंत्री श्रीमती नाम कुलारी सिन्हा, वहाँ के
स्वास्थ्य मंत्री श्री त्रिदंबरी कुवे जो इंटेक के
बहुत बड़े नेता हैं, इन सभी के माननीय सदस्य
श्री राम नारायण जी जर्मा, श्री दामोदर पाडे
आदि सब वहाँ गए और अभी भी इन सबों
का एक एक पाव वहाँ है। इस परिस्थिति
में मैं केवल इतना ही कहना चाहता हूँ कि
इसे राजनीति का प्रश्न नहीं बनाना चाहिए
बल्कि मानवता का प्रश्न बनाना चाहिए
और मानवता का प्रश्न समझ कर दुखी लोगों
की हर तरह से मदद की जाए। साथ ही
जिन लोगों को नैगलियेंस पाई जाए उन्हें
दंडित भी किया जाए जिससे इस तरह की

दर्दनाक घटना की पुनरावृत्ति फिर कभी न
हो सके।

सभापति महोदय : मैं एक अर्ज माननीय
सदस्यों से करना चाहता हूँ। अभी पांच
मैम्बर बोलने वाले हैं। मिनिस्टर सहब को
साढ़े पांच बजे बुलाया जाएगा। इसलिए, मेरी
दरखवास्त है कि माननीय सदस्य सात आठ
मिनट से ज्यादा न लें।

श्री जगन्नाथ मिश्र (मधुबनी) : मेरी
प्रार्थना है कि जिलेन लोगों का लिस्ट में नाम
हैं उन्हें अवश्य बुलाया जाए फिर चाहे पांच
मिनट या सात मिनट दिये जायें। पिछली
बार की तरह नहीं होना चाहिए कि नाम तो
थे लेकिन समय के अभाव के कारण लोगों
को बुलाया नहीं जा सका।

सभापति महोदय श्री सोखी।

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH SOKHI
(Jamshedpur): Sir, this is the third
biggest world mishap in the history
of coal mining. I will not repeat the
points made by the previous speakers.

I visited the Dhanbad coal mine
area a month before this accident, i.e.
between 27th and 29th November and
I was surprised to see that water
was being pumped into the abandon-
ed mine. When I enquired from one
of the coal washery officers, he said,
"This is an experiment from the
side of the Mine Safety Department."
It has to be enquired into whether
this experiment has resulted in this
accident. When there was seepage of
one million gallons per day, why was
this water being pumped? When I
asked, "Why didn't you do send stow-
ing here?" The officer was not able
to explain. He only said, "The order
is to fill water from the Damodar
river." This is a serious thing. I
think this accident could have been
prevented if the authorities had been
a little bit alert. Some experts think
that as per the map of the abandon-
ed mine, the disaster should never

have occurred. Why did not the Chasnalla mine authorities ask the Central Mining Research Station to test the seam and recommend safety margins, if the question of distance between the two mines comes in? The mine authorities could have easily taken the precaution of verifying the accuracy of the old map by drilling test holes. This was not done. This accident has taken place due to the negligence of the mining authorities and of the Directorate General of Mine Safety.

I want to know the duty of Director General, Mines Safety. Whether he is a ceremonial head or is he meant for looking after the mines? There are preventive measures which could be suggested to the mine owners. He and his subordinate officers who have their headquarter at Dhanbad should have taken these measures. Now, I am told that there is a tug of war going on between the Mines Authority and the Director-General of Mines Safety and each one is trying to blame the other party. I would request the Minister of Steel and Mines whosoever the officer may be, if he is found irresponsible and negligent, should be dismissed and I would say that some of them should have been suspended by now. In 1971, a roof collapsed in Rourkela Steel Plant. When the report came in, late Mr. Kumaramangalam dismissed right from Foreman to General Manager. This time also, nobody should be spared and I think, only then, you can set an example.

With these words, I conclude my speech.

श्री जगन्नाथ मिश्र (मधुवनी) : सभापति जी, मझे लगना है कि 1975 ईस्वी मन् बिहार का विनाश करने की कसम खाकर आया था। उसका पारंप्रण हुआ नहीं कि हमारे बिहार के परमप्रिय नेता और तत्कालीन रेलवे मंत्री हमसे निर्दयतापूर्वक छीन लिए गये।

अगस्त में विनाशकारी बाढ़ आई, और आज जिस विषय पर हम चर्चा कर रहे हैं, वह घटना भी 27 दिसम्बर को ही घटी। यह चमनाला की घटना है।

कोयला खान में यह पहली घटना ही नहीं है, जब तब घटनाएँ होती ही रहती हैं। लेकिन इस बात की जो घटना हुई है वह सर्वोपरि है और उसके रिकार्ड बूट कर दिया है। इसमें 375 आदमी अभी तक पानी में धिरे हुए हैं। बचाव के काम हो रहे हैं। मुझे संतोष है कि हमारे नौजवान, कर्मठ, तत्पर और मूतैद रहने वाले उभ्यात मंत्री श्री चन्द्रजी यादव ने इस मौके पर अपनी प्रेजेंस आफ माइन्ड और कर्मठता का परिचय दिया है।

जब चण्डीगढ़ में ए० आ० सी० सी० के जलसे मे लोग सम्मिलित हो रहे थे, तां वहा पर इसकी सूचना पाकर ही श्री यादव सीधे वहा पहुंच गये और वहा वस्तुस्थिति की जानकारी ली और जो भी संभव हुआ वहा व्यवस्था कर के वह प्रधान मंत्री को अवगत कराने के लिए वापिस आ गये। इस तरह से उनका आना-जाना बराबर रहा। उनका साथ ही हमारे केन्द्रीय श्रम मंत्री भी पीछे नहीं रहे।

अक्सर हम ऐसा कहा करते थे कि बिहार सरकार सोई रहना है, लेकिन इस बार बिहार सरकार सोई नहीं था, जमी थी। वहा के श्रम मंत्री, स्वास्थ्य मंत्री, मन्थ्र मंत्री, मूख्य सचिव आदि लोगों में भी वहा जाबर स्थिति की जानकारी ली और जो भी संभव हुआ दु खददं को दूर करने के लिए उन्होंने प्रयाग किया।

इस चसनाला खदान का काम 1945 में ही बन्द हो गया था, फिर 1960 में कौकिग कोल की आवश्यकता महसूस होने पर एक विदेशी फर्म के परामर्श पर उसकी तह में फिर खुदाई का काम प्रारम्भ हुआ। अनुमान यह है कि 80 फ्रिट की उस दीवार के बरसों

[श्री जगन्नाथ मिश्रा]

काम करने से गिर जाने के कारण उसमें जहाँ-तहाँ छिड़ हो गये थे और उन्हीं से पानी प्रवेश हुआ ।

ऊर्जा विभाग के सैक्रेटरी श्री चारी का कहना है कि खदान का काम बहुत सकीर्ण रूप में हो रहा था । अगर वह बहुत दूर तक होता रहता तो पानी का जमाव इतने विशाल रूप में न होना । उनका अनुमान है कि अगर दूर तक खदान का काम होता तो पानी 2,3 फिट से ज्यादा नहीं जा सकता था और इस तरह इतनी जानों को कुर्बानी न होनी में समझना है कि कोई टैक्निकल आदमी, या जो शक्तिशापी कमीशन नियुक्त हुआ है, वह ही बतायगा कि दुर्घटना कैसे हुई ?

50 बरस की दुर्घटनाओं में ऐसी दुर्घटना आज तक कभी नहीं हुई । 1965 में घांरी में जो खान दुर्घटना हुई उसमें 300 लोगों की जाने गई । यह जो दुर्घटना हुई है, इससे देश ही नहीं मारा विश्व अवसन्न, खिन्न और दुखी है । राष्ट्रपति जी और प्रधान मंत्री जी ने वहाँ घिरे हुए लोगों के परिवारों के प्रति संवेदना प्रकट की है । देश और विदेशों में पथासन्न सहानुभूति प्राप्त हुई है । इस समय सबसे जबरदस्त समस्या यह है कि खान से पानी को कैसे निकाला जाये ? इसके लिए देश में जहाँ से भी पम्प उपलब्ध हो सके, वहाँ से वे मंगाये गये ।

डा० रानेन सैन ने कहा है कि हमें नागपुर से पम्प लाने पड़े । मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि आवश्यकता पडने पर नागपुर क्या, देश के बाहर रूस, अमेरिका या पोलैंड से भी इस प्रकार की सहायता प्राप्त की जा सकती है । यह कार्य हमने उन मजदूरों की रक्षा के लिये किया है, और किसी मतलब में नहीं । अगर नागपुर और बम्बई से पम्प मंगाये गये, तो यह ठीक ही किया गया । जो हुआ है, वह बिल्कुल ठीक हुआ है और

मन्त्री महोदय इसके लिये धन्यवाद के पात्र हैं ।

रूस से केवल पम्प ही नहीं आये है, वहाँ से एक्सपर्ट भी आये है और बहुत सा अन्य सामान आया है । पोलैंड से भी 5 पम्प आ चुके हैं, लेकिन जब पानी का स्तर 180 मीटर तक निकल जायगा, और जब हमारे देशी पम्प काम के लायक नहीं रह जायेंगे, तब पोलैंड के पम्प काम में लाये जा सकेंगे । इस समय रूस से जो दो पम्प कार्यरत हैं, उनसे प्रति मिनट 11,900 गैलन पानी की निकासी हो रही है ।

मैं चन्द्र शब्दों में वर्णन करूंगा कि इस सकेत की घड़ी में सरकार और अन्य मस्थानों द्वारा क्या कार्य किया गया है । वहाँ पर एक इन्फर्मेशन सेंटर की स्थापना हुई है जिसका काम है कि वह लोगों से जानकारी हासिल करे कि किस को क्या सहायता चाहिये । यह सूचना प्राप्त कर के उन लोगों को सहायता की जाती है । एक वैलफेयर सेंटर भी बना है जिसका काम है—

to serve as a Medical Centre, to serve as a Free Rationing Officer, to serve as a Survey Office.

वहाँ पर जो पदाधिकारी है, उनको धर्मपत्नियों के द्वारा विपत्तिग्रस्त परिवारों में फूड पैकेट्स बाँटे जाते हैं । अभी तक करीब 6,000 पैकेट्स बाँटे जा चुके हैं ।

बिहार सरकार ने रिलीफ की जो व्यवस्था की है वह इस प्रकार है—

Immediate relief at the rate of Rs. 500/- per family; an additional relief at the rate of Rs. 1,000/- per family, grant of homestead land of 0.5 acre per family in Bihar; assurance of employment to the extent possible in the State Government departments undertakings to all dependents above 18 years of age; and assurance of providing educational facilities.

IISCO management have decided to provide Rs. 2 lakhs in addition to the ex-gratia grant at the rate of Rs. 1,000|- per family.

केन्द्रीय स्तर पर चमनाला एमरजेंसी रिलीफ फंड की स्थापना हुई है, जिसके अध्यक्ष हमारे म्टील मिनिस्टर श्री चन्द्रजीत यादव हैं। उन के एक सदस्य हैं हमारे केन्द्रीय श्रम मंत्री और बिहार के श्रम मंत्री भी उन के एक सदस्य हैं। आइ एन टी यू मी के जो प्रेसीडेंट हैं भगवती जी वह भी उस के एक सदस्य हैं। इस कमेटी का काम है कोआर्डिनेट करना और जहां में जो धन उपलब्ध हों उस को जमा करना, उस का हिसाब रखना और विपदग्रस्त परिवारों में उस को बांटना। इस के जरिए काम हो रहा है। इस में सावधानी बरतनी है कि हम ने जो रिलीफ देने की व्यवस्था वहां की है वह उचित आदमी को मिले, बर्दमान और घुसपैि ए उस को न ले ले, असल आदमी को ही वह मिले। इस पर निगरानी रखना है। सुनेने में आया है कि वहां पर महाभूत, मनीलेडर्स इर्देगिर्द मडरा रह है और जो पैसा रिलीफ का दिया जाता है वह उन में मिल कर या जबर्दस्ती या जैमे में उन में हडप लेने हैं। सरकार हम के ऊपर निगरानी रख और उन परिवारों को और विपदग्रस्त होने में बचाए।

दूसरी बात—ये सब कांड जब होते हैं तो जवाबदेही टालने का काम होने लगता है। हम कहते हैं कि उम का दोष है, वह कहते हैं कि उम का दोष है। यहां का जो नक्शा बना हुआ है उस की आर्थेसिटी की जांच सेटल माइनिंग रिसर्च स्टेशन से करानी थी। इस बात को लेकर माइन स्टाफ का अभियोग डायरेक्टोरेट जनरल आफ माइन सेफ्टी पर है और डायरेक्टोरेट जनरल का माइन स्टाफ पर। इस को कौन देखेगा? यक्ष आशा है कि जो हाई पावर कमीशन बैठा है कि वह इस की देखभाल करेगा और उचित व्यवस्था करेगा।

कोयले की खान और कोयला कितना महत्वपूर्ण है यह बतलाने की आवश्यकता नहीं। ऊर्जा का प्रमुख साधन अभी भी कोयला है। यह दुर्घटना बताती है कि अन्य खानों में भी सुरक्षा की समुचित व्यवस्था होनी चाहिए। ऐसे माधनों की खोज और प्रयोग आवश्यक है जिग में कोयले के यांत्रिक खनन की प्रक्रिया और उत्पन्न हो।

हम यह अच्छी तरह समझे कि खनकों का काम सिर्फ रोटी कमाना नहीं है। यह देश सेवा है। उन के प्राण की रक्षा की जिम्मेदारी प्रवन्धकों पर है।

खान में पानी भरने, जमीन धसकने, उन के भीतर कोयला या गैस में आग लग जाने में या शूद्ध हवा के अभाव से दुर्घटनाएं हो सकती हैं। उन को रोकने के लिए स्थायी नियम बनाने चाहिए और उन का पूरी तरह पालन होना चाहिए।

अन में मैं यह निवेदन करूंगा कि जिस तरह ट्रेन दुर्घटनाग्रस्त और वायुयान दुर्घटनाग्रस्त लोगों को मुआवजा दिया जाता है उम हिमाब में खान में काम करने वालों का मुआवजा बहुत ही कम है जिन के बारे में हमारे माननीय सदस्यों ने कितनी चर्चा की है कि उन का काम कितना देशभक्तिपूर्ण और जवाबदेही में पूर्ण है। वे अपनी जान खतरे में दे कर काम करते हैं। लेकिन उन के लिए मुआवजा निर्धारित किया है दस हजार और वह भी शायद देते हैं या नहीं देते। इसलिए मैं आग्रह करूंगा कि मुआवजा सबंधी कानून में परिवर्तन किया जाय और उन को उचित मुआवजा मिल सके हम की व्यवस्था हो। इस के साथ साथ खान में

[श्री जगन्नाथ मिश्र]

काम करने वाले प्रत्येक व्यक्ति के इश्वारेस की व्यवस्था हो। डम ने मे उन के परिवार वालों को भी सतीष होगा श्रीर खान का काम ठीक तरह से चलेगा।

श्री परिपूर्णानंद पेन्वेली (टिहरी गढ़-वाल) सभापति जी, मैं उन शोक सतपन परिवारो के प्रति अपनी समवेदना व्यक्त करता हू। जैसा कि आप जानते है हमारे राष्ट्रपति जी ने श्रीर प्रधान मंत्री जी ने भी इस पर कितना धोम व्यक्त किया है। इस मे कोई सदेह नहीं है कि चासनाला कांड की दुर्घटना की जाच करने के लिए हमारे सुयोग्य मंत्री याश्र जी की अध्यक्षता मे एक उच्च स्तरीय कोमिशनन कमेटी का गठन किया गया है जो कि बहुत तत्परता से अपना काम कर रही है श्रीर यथा समय जो भी म्हायता उन के परिवारो को दी जा सकती है वह भी दी जा रही है। बिहार सरकार भी स मे अपना योगदान कर रही है।

यह अया रा का विषय है कि चासनाला कांड सार्वजनिक धन की उस खान मे हुआ है जा कि आधुनिकतम बतलाई जाता है। किन्तु डम से बड निवमपन की मिसाल श्रीर क्या है म्कतार है कि खान दुर्घटना होने के बाद हम को दूसरे देशो से म्प्य मगाने की व्यवस्था करनी पडी डम की व्यवस्था पहले नहीं की गई थी। यह तो हमारा मोभास्य हुआ कि हमारे मित देश रूस और पोलैंड ने डम का समय पर म्हायता दी वरना हम हाथ पर हाथ रखे बठे रह जाते।

मै आपका ध्यान स्वर्गीय श्रीमोहनकुमार मगलम के उस भाषण की ओर आकर्षित करना चाहता हू जोकि उन्होंने जीतपुर दुघटना के बाद 26 मार्च, 1973 को खदान प्रबंधको और निरीक्षको की बैठक आयोजित की और उसमे उन्होंने कहा था :

“उत्पादन कितना ही वांछित क्यों न हो, इसे असुरक्षित खनन प्रणालियों से प्राप्त नहीं किया जाना चाहिए, और मुझे विश्वास है आप लोग भी यह महसूस करते होंगे कि असुरक्षित खदान अन्त मे उत्पादन की दृष्टि से भी निम्न कोटि की है।

उन की इस सलाह के बावजूद भी मैं समझता हू उस खान मे जो काम करने वाले प्रबन्धक है उन्होने समुचित रूप से ध्यान नहीं दिया। 375 व्यक्तियों की जो मृत्यु हुई उसके लिए मै कहता हू कि कुछ व्यक्तियों की लापरवाही के कारण यह सब हुआ है। उन को इस हत्या के लिए जिम्मेदार ठहराया जाना चाहिए। यदि यह मिद्ध हो जाय कि कुछ लोगो की गलती की वजह से यह लापरवाही की वजह से यह हुआ है तो उन पर उनकी रेग्गामेन्सिबिलिटी फिक्स की जानी चाहिए। इस सम्बन्ध मे जो मणोधिप्त विवेचना विचाराधीन है श्रीर ममद मे आन वाला है म समझता हू उनमे डम बात की व्यवस्था की जानी चाहिए कि लापरवाही के कारण डम प्रसार की जो दुघटनाये खदानो मे होती है उनको रम्पामोर्वाटी फिक्स की जानी चाहिए और कठे से बडे दण्ड की व्यवस्था की जानी चाहिए।

इस सन्दर्भ मे मैं एक बात यह भी कहना चाहता हू कि खान दुर्घटनाओं की अब तक का जो रिपोर्टस आई है उनसे पता चलता है कि इस प्रकार की दुर्घनाये 50 प्रतिशत तक पहली शिफ्ट मे होती है। म चाहता हू जो कोर्ट आफ इक्वायरी बैठी है, विद्युत विभाग की ओर से जो उच्चस्तरीय मिति का गठन हुआ है वे इस बात पर विचार करे और देखे कि जिन लोगो की इस प्रकार की लापरवाही से दुर्घटनाये होती है उनको

किस प्रकार कड़े से कड़ा दण्ड दिया जाये। यह जो दुर्घटना हुई है उसने सारे देश और राष्ट्र का ध्यान आकृष्ट किया है लेकिन इससे पहले भी और आज भी आये दिन खानों में दुर्घटनाये होती रही है जिनकी ओर ध्यान नहीं जाता है। मैं अपने उत्तर प्रदेश के पहाड़ी जिलों की बात कर रहा हूँ। हमारे यहाँ ममूरी की पहाड़ियों में लाइम-स्टोन की खेरीज है जहाँ पर रोजमर्रा मजदूर मरते हैं। चूकि प्राइवेट सेक्टर में खाने चलती है और उनकी साठ-गाठ माइन सेफ्टी डायरेक्टोरेट में होती है इसलिए मामला रफा-दफा कर दिया जाता है और मजदूरों को कोई कम्पेंशन नहीं मिलता है। मैं तो कहूँगा कि हम देश के मजदूरों की देशभक्ति या यह नमूना है कि ऐसी घटनाओं के बाद भी वे जोखिम उठाकर अपना काम करने रहते हैं। कुछ दिनों पहले फ्रांस में ऐसी दुर्घटना हुई तो उसके बाद मजदूरों ने काम पर जाना बन्द कर दिया लेकिन हमारे देश में इस जोखिम के बावजूद काम करने हैं यह उनकी देशभक्ति की बात है।

अन्त में मैं कहूँगा कि इस प्रकार संवेदनशील भाव व्यक्त करके, कानून बना करके और संसद में इसकी चर्चा करके हम उन विधवाओं की माँग का सिद्ध नहीं भर सकते जिनके पति हमेशा के लिए चले गए हैं, उन अनाथ बच्चों को महारा नहीं दे सकते जिनके पिता इस संसार से चले गए हैं। किन्तु मैं यादव जी से कहना चाहता हूँ कि आगे के लिए वे इस प्रकार की व्यवस्था करें कि खानों में काम करने वाले मजदूरों की पूरी सुरक्षा रहे और इस प्रकार के गैर जिम्मेदार लोगों को कड़े से कड़ा दण्ड देने की व्यवस्था हो। इन शब्दों के साथ, यादव जी ने जो व्यक्तित्व दिया है उसका भी समर्थन

करना हूँ और अत्यन्त खेद व्यक्त करता हूँ कि इस प्रकार की दुर्घटना हुई।

17.00 hrs.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSI (Calcutta-South): Mr Chairman, Sir, the whole country is deeply moved and shocked at the accident of Chasnala and our Minister of Steel and Mines, Shri Chandrabh Jayadav, in his statement, has made it absolutely clear that the Government is taking all possible steps at least to see that people, if at all anybody is alive, are properly rescued and other immediate measures are taken

I am not going into detail, since almost all the responsible Members from the Opposition and from our Party have expressed their views. Some of them have visited the area and have given the actual position as they had witnessed there. I would like to deal with the accident in a different angle in the country

As you know, Sir, the main source of our wealth in the country is from the coal mines and the main achievements of our country, whether it is industry or transport or energy, are due to coal. I do not like to make any premature statement at the beginning till the inquiry is not over as to whether it is a sabotage or any conspiracy. But immediately after the Emergency we are deeply concerned with some of the incidents, like, the sabotage in electrical plants of the State Electricity Boards in various States, a few minor and major trains accidents, the disaster in Chasnala and today's statement by the Minister of Petroleum about the incident in the Bombay High. All this in no way gives any indication that the growth of the country's economy is entirely dependent on its being run smoothly either by the workers or the management.

[Shri Priya Ranjan Das Munsi]

Before the coal mines were taken by the Government, they were in the hands of the private individuals. Rightly or wrongly, they had done their best to exploit the workers and the resources of the country. Before that, they were in the hands of the British. But I do feel, in view of the statement of the late Mr. Mohan Kumaramangalam, the nationalisation does not merely mean only to have an overall control on the wealth, the production and distribution but also to have a complete change in the administrative set up, including those machines and mechanisms in the operation of the coal mines or in other areas.

I would briefly put a few questions to the Minister for my personal curiosity and for the curiosity of the people in the country. I hope, the Minister will be able to give the answers to these questions. It is good enough for all of us to express our gratitude to those countries, specially who have rendered their help, like, Poland and Soviet Union, in their usual manner of friendship to India. Is it not bad enough for us to realise that in a country like India, after more than 28 years of operations in various sectors, like, coal mines and others, we are not in a position to claim that we are self-equipped in all capacities for all sorts of operations and accidents or sabotages or such disasters in coal mines without depending on foreign support? This gives us a clear indication that either the Coal Mines Safety organisation or the Government or the Ministry itself is not very clear as to which are the essential requirements for the Coal Mines Safety organisation to face the worst possible disaster in the country if at all it so happens. It is good that Soviet Union and Poland have come forward to help us in time. But it is not good on our part to feel that such type of help will

always come on every occasion in every sphere.

Firstly, I want to know whether the Government or the Ministry or the Coal Mines Safety organisation has given a careful consideration and thought, after Jitpur colliery incident, to improve the character and condition of the safety equipment and the organisation through financial investment involving foreign expertise or improving the character and quality of research in the Coal Mines Safety organisation.

We often hear and listen even from the responsible political forces and the Government officials that some of the officials in every public sector undertaking are not happy with the system of activities run by the Government and that, on the contrary, they would have been extremely happy if the private sector would have been in-charge of these operations. I do not like to prejudice any officer nor I would like to put a question in regard to anybody in particular. I feel, it may not be the motive of all officials to go against the workers and the Government

But I would sincerely like to put a few questions as to whether it is not a fact that it has been found on several occasions in the coal-mine areas that complaints have been lodged by the working-class people against a few individuals in the coal-mines Management in the various collieries for their mis-conduct and for their criminal negligence, in some cases, about safety organisation, and if so, after the Jitpur incident, if any officials in this matter have been sacked, punished or suspended.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the relief is no doubt inadequate, even though the Government is trying its best to give some measure at least, including the State Governments and other non-official organisations. But, again, I come back to one of the important questions which I raised during the Jitpur discussion on the Floor of the House. We have seen that when a

plane crashes, the passengers who fly by airlines get compensation of not less than a lakh of rupees, and we have seen that the passengers who can afford to fly by plane are not ordinary citizens or poor people. If this is the justice shown by one public sector undertaking to its passengers who are flying by plane, why can't the same justice be applied in another public sector undertaking or public sector unit where serious types of works are being done by coal-mine workers, the poorest people of the country, to generate wealth for the country, by providing all sorts of amenities for the people who are not in the mines but outside? It is a great shock for all of us that we don't try to consider this problem in any manner which would have increased the morale of the people in the coal-mine areas.

After the Jitpur incident Mr. Mohan Kumaramangalam promised that he would look into the problem but, unfortunately and to our great shock, he is no more and he also died in a plane crash.

I visited some of the coal-mine areas—not during this incident but before—and everyone there posed the very same question; and they have taken it for granted that whether their lives are being secured or not just to fill their bellies they have to go to the mines, taking all risks. This does not increase the good and healthy conditions of the mining areas.

If you take the example of the African coal-mines—African countries, most of which have been liberated just now or which are not yet liberated but are still under colonial rule—it has been stated that their mining operations and safety organisation and equipment are much more improved. On the contrary, the Indian coal-mines are not even up to the mark. Just imagine that the coal-mines safety organisation were not giving a factual report till the nationalisation of the coal-mines and the respective collieries! It was agreed

upon, after nationalisation, that proper co-ordination would be made. Now, during the re-allocation of business among the Ministries, the nationalised coalmines came under the Ministry of Energy while a few coalmines which are associated or attached to the steel companies are under the Ministry of Steel & Mines. So I would like to know whether at least now, in the role of Management for the security of the working-class people in the mine areas, any proper co-ordination is made between the Ministry of Energy, the Ministry of Steel & Mines and the Ministry of Labour; and if not in what way they are operating, I would like to know.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, another interesting thing which most of the Members have witnessed during their visit to Chasnala I would like to point out. On the one hand, the Management of the public sector units are saying that there is no more room to recruit any other labour in the coal-mine areas and, in most cases, a few muster rolls have been demolished immediately after nationalisation because, it is true, there are many fake labourers. But, at the same time, we see that in every coal-mine, in respect of regular labour and without taking any other fresh labourers, some contractors are being deployed to save labourers. Those who are not guilty can come for the work but they have no security—though they are not fake—under the Compensation Act because they are not regular labour as per the muster roll. It is also interesting to note that the attendance registers— even after taking over the coal-mines—are not clear as to how many are going into the mines and how many are being kept out. If this is so, what is the point of the General Manager there hiding the facts all the time? All these details would be revealed at the time of the enquiry, I know. But, at the same time, I would make this request to the hon. Minister. Immediately after this Chasnala incident, our first task should be to increase the morale of the people working in the coalmines who are not

[Shri Priya Ranjan Das Munsil]

yet affected and who should not be affected adversely by incidents such as this, and also to make immediate enquiries and get reports on other coalmines, to ensure whether the safety operations are going on or not.

The last question to the Minister is whether he is aware of the fact that, during December, in the course of the usual inspection and check of the safety operations inside that mine, reports were made available to the General Manager apprehending some dangers in that mine, and if so, whether adequate measures before 27th December, 1975, were taken or not. These are not matters to be gone into in the inquiry; this information must be easily available with him just now.

With these words, I would like to conclude because nothing is to be said here until the inquiry is over. But I would just make a point in reference to the speech made by a Member of the Opposition, Shri Samar Mukherjee. I am grateful to him that he visited the area and expressed sympathy with the working people. But I do feel that, taking the incident of Chasnala, it would not be wise on our part, whether sitting on the ruling party side or on the Opposite, to make any sarcastic remarks about the standard of discipline or the character of production in our country, because, that would ultimately demoralise the whole trend which is geared up at the moment.

SHRI AMRIT NAHATA (BARMER): Mr. Chairman, Sir, while we are debating the Chasnala disaster, each one of the speaker of this august House has expressed a sense of deep sorrow. We all feel as if we are under the shadow of a very harrowing and poignant tragedy. I join all my hon. colleagues in expressing my sense of sorrow and sympathy for the bereaved families.

Now, I want to make one proposal. Tomorrow or this evening, the radio and the press will carry the news

that Parliament discussed the Chasnala disaster, and various Members criticised this and that. I would make one suggestion. I hope I am expressing the feelings of all the hon. Members present here. It is true that the entrapped workers have lost their lives, and those lives cannot come back. But just as a humble token of our sympathies with the bereaved families, I propose, each one of the hon. Members of this august House may donate today's allowance to the Chasnala Relief Fund. I hope all the hon. Members will agree with this proposal that one day's allowance will be contributed to the Chasnala Relief Fund that has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Shri Chandrajeet Yadav.

I do not want to repeat any of the points that have already been made, nor do I want to go into the facts. But I would say one thing. There is a general feeling among the mine management, the industrial management, the management of the public sector and also the private sector that the security rules are an impediment⁴⁴ to production. This is a great misconception which has got to be removed. The safety precautions are meant not only to save human lives which are as important as, if not more important than, the national production—human lives are sacred, each man's life is sacred to us—but also to preserve uninterrupted production. The statistics prove that accidents, whether in mines or factories, lead to not only loss of human lives, but also to loss of production, loss of mandays. They exceeded the target of production in this particular mine. But what has happened today? For months, I am afraid, the entire mine will have to be abandoned, and production will completely cease. First of all, this misconception must be removed, and the Government must impress upon the entire management of the industries, mines and all other sectors, that the safety precautions are a must for uninterrupted production as well as for the safety of human lives.

I would support the demand made in this House that the Compensation Act must immediately be amended. Rs. ten thousand for the loss of a life is a mockery. This also, I was told, is not the limit. If management wants, it can pay more than Rs. ten thousand, but that never happens. No management pays more than Rs. ten thousand; even this Rs. ten thousand is paid grudgingly. I would request that minimum compensation for a loss of life in any mine or industry should be Rs. fifty thousand.

Many a time, it has happened in the coal mines and other mines that workers apprehend some danger to their security; they apprehend that certain safety rules are not being observed. Under such cases, the workers' right to refuse to work must be recognised. When they point out non-observance of certain safety rule, or they apprehend danger to their security, immediate action must be taken. Actually what happens is different. I have my own experience in a particular mine. When there have been violations of safety rules, or when danger has been apprehended and the workers have refused to work, they have been charge-sheeted, suspended and reprimanded. And later on, accidents have occurred and their fears have been vindicated. In such cases, I would urge upon the Government to see that whenever a group of workers point out any violation of safety rules, and they refuse to work, that right must be recognised and whatever violation is there, that should be set right.

Today, I was reading in Patriot, how the Mines Safety Laws have a long history in our country, and it has been claimed that our safety laws are as perfect as anywhere in the world. And, there is no doubt, whatsoever that if all the safety measures are observed strictly, 80 per cent of the accidents can be avoided. What does it mean? It means, that if any accident takes place in coal mine or any other mine or factory, it must be assumed that violation of some safety measures has taken place. This must be assumed

1929 LS—9.

ed and the management must immediately be punished until and otherwise later on proved beyond any doubt that it was not responsible for it. It must be assumed whenever there is an accident.

In the case of Chasnala disaster, this enquiry will go on and usually in such disasters, no evidence is left behind. I am afraid, the entire thick wall might have been washed away, because it was a torrential deluge and probably we would not be able to find the bodies, only skeletons may be there. One does not know, such disasters do not leave any evidence. This question will go on for years and years, no responsibility would be fixed by then the people who are responsible would not be here; they might have retired or promoted, or they might find out ways to escape. That is not the proper way. Whenever accidents take place, the management must be held responsible, they must be suspended immediately, because it is assumed and it can be taken for granted that without violation of safety laws, accidents do not take place. Our safety laws are fool-proof and when accidents take place, it must be assumed that violation has taken place and they must be punished.

Now, a word about the mining safety arrangement. I was shocked to learn that there was a proposal to disband the office of the Mines Safety at Dhanbad. There was even a proposal that the Department of Mines Safety should be under the concerned Ministries. This would be disasters. The Mines Safety organization is a policing force, to enforce mines safety rules. But, what is the position to-day? Many hon. Members referred to the Director-General of Mines Safety. As a matter of fact to-day there is no such person. There is only an Acting Director-General of Mines safety. For more than two years, I suppose, there has been no Director-General of Mines Safety. He is horribly under-staffed, the Inspectors under him and the Offi-

cers under him. For example, for the whole of Rajasthan—Rajasthan is the second State where mines wealth is the largest, after Bihar—there is only one Inspector for Mines Safety. Horribly under-staffed all these Inspectors are also poorly paid. In such conditions how can you imagine that a Mines Safety Inspector could face the General Manager of a huge complex, a Rs. 200 crores or Rs. 500 crores worth complex where the mining safety or the factory safety rules are violated? That poor Inspector goes, nobody listens to him and nobody cares for him. Moreover, what is happening especially in public sector undertakings is that these Mines Safety Inspectors are lured away by offer of remunerative jobs in their undertakings. Previously, the private sector used to bribe them. Now the public sector firms pick them up, offer them better posts with higher salaries. With that temptation the Mine Safety Inspector does not do anything with the hope that he will get a more remunerative job in the public sector undertaking. Unless the mining safety organization is strengthened, unless the mining safety directorate is strengthened with adequate staff and with adequate number of Inspectors and their emoluments raised sufficiently enough so that they can confront the highest managerial officers in the public sector and having raised their emoluments, a ban could be imposed on them from accepting any job in any other public undertaking, the mines safety organization cannot act as an effective policeman. Otherwise, what does happen? Even these days even if it is proved that it is not an accident but a murder or massacre, the Inspector of Mines Safety launches the prosecution in the local court and it goes on and nothing happens. These procedures have to be radically revised and their powers enhanced, the organization strengthened and mining safety must be made very rigidly enforceable because it is necessary not only to save valuable human lives but also to ensure uninterrupted production of national wealth.

श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह : माननीय सदस्य ने कहा कि एक दिन का डी० ए० उनको रिलाफ फंड क लिय दे दिया जाये, मे इनकी ग्राजा का पालन करते हुए आज का अपना डी० ए०, 51 रुपय भना मृतोदय का दता हू ।

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV): I fully associate myself with all the hon. Members who have expressed their concern and sorrow for the families of the workers who have been trapped in the Chasnalla mine. My heartfelt sympathies are with those families who are still under a pressure of great anxiety and still with some little hope they are looking towards the rescue operation that is going on. Really speaking, even today we are not in a position to say what will be the fate of the workers but we are proceeding only in this hope that there are survivors. There are some precedents in mining history that people have been saved and rescued after weeks and that is the reason why the Government is doing everything possible for rescue operation, to pump out the water and nothing is being left out.

As the whole country knows, the entire resources within the country and even from outside have been mobilised. Some friendly countries have offered their help and we accepted these offers promptly as it will perhaps help as in early dewatering of the mine and saving the previous lives of the workers who are unfortunately trapped.

While Speaking in this debate many suggestions have been made and I must say, they are useful suggestions. Some people have tried to find out the reasons thereof. Perhaps, this is a sheer guess. It will not be appropriate for me to say at this stage as to what were the reasons and circumstances responsible for this great tragedy as

the Government has appointed a court of enquiry. We, therefore, leave it to the court of enquiry to go into those reasons and details. At this stage, I can only assure the honourable members and this House that if the court of enquiry will come to this conclusion that any particular officer howsoever high he may be due to his negligence or failure in his duty has been responsible for this great tragedy, no mercy will be shown to him and Government will take immediate action against that officer.

I have placed before the House the possible efforts that are being made. The latest report was trying to get from the spot so that I may place the same before the House.

Hon. Member, Dr. Ranen Sen was a little uncharitable to me when, he said that I was sitting at Chandigarh I got the report on the 27th December, afternoon. The first thing that was done was that my colleague, the Labour Minister and myself got into touch with all the officers on the spot. We gave the instructions that throughout the length and breadth of the country from wherever rescue apparatus can be made available, may be acquired and no effort should be spared to help them. Immediately after that I brought it to the notice of the Prime Minister because it was a big tragedy and the Prime Minister gave me the same instructions i.e., every possible effort should be made to help them. I got in touch with my honourable colleague Shri R. N. Sharma who represents that constituency. The next morning, we rushed to the spot and we saw that all our organisations BCCL or D.G.M.S., or the Company officers and officers on the spot all were working with the fullest co-operation of the State Government. The local authorities were extremely helpful in this rescue operation. There was perfect and full co-ordination. A newly appointed Administrator of IISCO was asked to co-ordinate the entire duties. A Committee of the Technical personnel was formed.

There were so many difficulties, certain equipments were to be taken from the shaft, the openings were very narrow and the water hundreds of feet below was there. On the 28th evening we were in a position to start de-watering.

It was an unprecedented kind of tragedy. I may be charged or someone can be charged as to why did we not envisage that this kind of tragedy may take place. This kind of tragedy was not expected at all. This mine was inspected during 1975 on 20 occasions by D.G.M.S. but nothing abnormal was found.

Just 12 days before this tragedy, this was inspected by the DGMS on 15th of December and there was no indication to say that this kind of a tragedy might happen. So, it will be completely wrong to lay the blame on the officers there. We have one of our high officers there. They are first class managers. The General Manager only narrowly escaped. He came but just ten minutes before the tragedy took place. He, along with the safety Officer, made the inspection. Therefore, it would be most unfair to say that they were criminally negligent and all that, that they knew that the water is coming that they knew that the wall is going to burst and all that. It would be wrong on our part to blame any person saying that he was doing something wrongly or intentionally.

My friend, Mr. Priya Ranjan Das Munsri said that every possible step should be taken to strengthen the rescue operations, I felt myself that perhaps we should have stronger rescue operations; perhaps our safety measures should be on a much more bigger scale. From the fact of the appointment of a committee, one cannot conclude that there may be certain weaknesses. That is not a correct thing to say and that will not be fair. I wish that we compare ourselves with certain other countries. I do not say that we are completely

[Shri Chandrajit Yadav]

immune from this kind of a thing or that our Safety Organisation is 100 per cent perfect. But, as I said, we are trying to do our best. Maybe, we will have to strengthen it. I would like to make some comparisons with other countries. It is not at all my case that they were 100 per cent perfect. That is not at all my case, Sir.

If you see some figures, you will appreciate what I say. These are the 1973 figures, the latest figures. The fatality rate per 1,000 persons is as follows:

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| Japan—1.58 |
| Canada—1.15 |
| Australia—1.14 |
| U.S.A.—0.89 |
| Belgium—0.89 |
| Czechoslovakia—0.82 |
| India—0.50 |
| W. GERMANY—0.49 |
| U.K.—0.31 |

I entirely agree with the sentiments expressed by hon. Members that everything possible should be done to minimise the rate of accidents. Each and every life of our worker who is working underground, the contributing to the development and progress of the country, is indeed very precious. We should see that every possible effort is made to give safety to his life and person so that he may work with more confidence.

Now, I wish to remind the honourable House that as soon as I got the report, on the next day we reached there. My colleague the Labour Minister was there I met the officers personally who were doing the rescue operations. The Labour Minister stayed behind. Because there was some important co-ordination to be done from Delhi, I came to Delhi and then went to Chandigarh only with a view to pose the latest developments to the Prime Minister. Certain offers of help were received from other countries and we had to consider how to avail of those offers of help.

The Labour Minister and myself were of the opinion that at the earliest the court of enquiry should be announced. Therefore, I wanted to take the clearance of the Prime Minister. We should act as early as possible and be in a position to announce the court of enquiry. That was my purpose of going to Chandigarh. I am the saddest person to-day that we have lost so many precious lives. Immediately I came back I was trying my best to co-ordinate everything possible apart from many agencies from many other countries, officials and non-officials within the country and they were to be contacted so that may expedite the help.

Again the labour Minister and myself went to the place of occurrence and we visited many many families. It was a heart-breaking scene. After all it was a big tragedy and I fully appreciate and share the sorrow that has happened to those families because of this tragedy. To say that because the atmosphere was not very congenial and so I left the place within a few hours is most uncharitable. I must say when we went there Shri Sharma was there who is my colleague who represents this constituency. There were a few thousand workers and we together went and addressed the meeting of the workers. It shows the fullest cooperation, fullest understanding. I must say and without their cooperation the rescue operations would not have been possible. They did appreciate that the tragedy had happened perhaps in a manner which was not expected at all. The Government from the very beginning did not leave any stone unturned and everything possible was done. They were cooperative and there was full understanding. For this I must congratulate the workers. They were doing their work and they had grouped in hundreds and we got the full cooperation from the workers. Shri Mukherjee mentioned about some of our colleagues who are working there and the INTUC people were good enough to take him round the place of occurrence.

and he met some of them and I also met them, I must say that every worker there felt that his first job was to help in rescue operation and nobody put in any blame on anybody and, at that time, nobody even contested that figures which is being said today is much more than 400. It will be a crime to conceal the figure. After all we have lost certain precious lives. If it is 375 or even 400, what does it matter. Why should we commit the crime of concealing the figure. The register or the records show that the figure was 372. Later on we find that in place of one person another person went in his place. Therefore a few more persons may be there. From the enquiry report we can find it out. The list has been published in local newspapers. Today I give instructions that the list should be published even in those newspapers from whose States even one worker is supposed to be involved in that tragedy. We have nothing to conceal. You will say that unfortunately they were not able to save their lives. It so happens that inspite of our effort to save every worker, who is involved in this tragedy, maximum possible thing will be done.

I fully appreciate that certain suggestions have been made that there should be compensation but the rate is very low. Suggestions have been made about group insurance. Even this morning I had a meeting with my colleague, the Minister of Energy. I had earlier a meeting with my colleague, the Labour Minister and we had been talking about this and I want to assure this House that these suggestions, particularly those suggestions, namely that we should increase the rate of compensation—if so, how much—and we should do the group insurance—for this whether we should approach the LIC people or we should have to build up an organisation to do this and also how to strengthen the organisations to see that whatever equipments there are they are operated by the better qualified staff. At least I

want to assure this House that government will give a sympathetic consideration and we shall see that all these things are implemented in a manner that we should be able to take care of our workers.

Sir, I must say many trade union workers including Shri Damodar Pandey were the first to suggest to us that there should be a national welfare fund for the workers and the workers working in the coal industry will come forward and donate one day's salary and let the matching salary be given by the Government and the companies so that we may have a good amount of fund at our disposal if such tragedies happen. Not that we will wait for tragedies to happen. Even the loss of one life is very precious and we have to see as to what can we do for their children's education. We are thinking on these lines. The committee which has been formed under my chairmanship has been formed with this end in view as to what should be the immediate relief given to these families and what should be the long term relief to those who are involved in such accidents. Already one meeting of this committee has taken place and the second meeting is taking place this evening after this debate is over. We are thinking of what can we do for the education of the children of those unfortunate families who are in this difficulty: what we can do for the marriage of the daughters of those people who are trapped; whether we can work out long-term pension or provident fund scheme for those families.

Sir, the Prime Minister has been so good enough and kind enough that she immediately gave Rs 4 lacs from her fund and also told me that we should see that this relief is not given in lump sum but we must work out some schemes for long-term real assistance to these families. We are thinking on these lines and we hope, that we will be able to work out a scheme to everyone's satis-

[Shri Chandrajit Yadav]

faction. Even then I am fully aware that no compensation can compensate those families who have lost either their husbands or sons or brothers or fathers. But after all this tragedy has happened and it was perhaps beyond our control.

Now, the question is as to how to compensate and bring relief and solace to these families. We are trying to do this. It has been said perhaps Mr. Ohri who was the Chief Executive of this mine was involved in an earlier Jeetpur accident. This is not correct. He was not the General Manager at that time of Jeetpur. His brother was associated with Jeetpur accident and he was asked by the company to go from the company but his headquarters at that time were at Burnpur and he was working in the planning organisation.

AN HON. MEMBER: Was he not in the same organisation, namely, IISCO?

SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV He was in the same organisation. But he was at Burnpur. No reference has been made about him. Sir, I will very humbly say this was not the time to take action against the officials. Our first and foremost task was to see that those who knew the nature and character of the mine, we should take their help to dewater the water which was in that mine. That was the most important work and, therefore, we thought any person who knew the mine if we remove him or take any action against him perhaps it was not in the interests of the work which we had given top priority at that time.

Sir, it has also been said that in Jeetpur accident no action was taken on the recommendations of the Jeetpur enquiry committee. This is also not correct. Many suggestions were made. One of the important suggestions about a separate cadre of the safety and ventilation officers should be organised. This suggestion was implemented. Then there was the suggestion that at the mine level the

safety officers should be assisted by the ventilation officers. This suggestion was also implemented. Then there was the suggestion about the revival of the pit safety committee. This was also implemented. There were many other suggestions regarding supervisory officers including engineering officers to be made fully aware of their duties and responsibilities. These duties and responsibilities were clearly defined and they were given to these officers and its compliance has been observed regularly. Certain officers who were found responsible particularly three officials, Sarvashri K. R. Dhandwal, Verma and O. P. Ohri—not this Ohri—were removed from the company and action was taken against them.

Sir, it will not also be correct to say that the DGMS had warned or rather prohibited the working of Horizon No. 1. There was no report like that and there was no indication from that organisation.

Sir, certain suggestions have been made here. Now, the hon. Minister of Energy has appointed a committee. What is the purpose and object behind the appointment of this committee? After this tragedy, it is not that we are shutting our eyes. May be that this tragedy itself has awakened us. As it has been said, it has roused the conscience of the whole country. Why should we not presume that this kind of thing may happen and why should we not do everything possible to prevent such things from being happening?

As I have said earlier, it is normal thing that there is seepage of one million gallons of water in this mine. For the purpose of de-watering, every arrangement was made at the mine level and the work was being done. Certain horizontal pumps were working—five of them—but, unfortunately, they are now flooded. There were also two-three pumps available

at the station and they were used. BCCCL also rushed all the available pumps. Sir, I have earlier expressed our gratitude to the Soviet Union and to Poland whose experts are even today working very hard along with our officers; their pumps are also working. The USA and West Germany have also offered their help. We have also expressed our gratitude to them. But, it took some time to instal the pumps from the Soviet Union. The nature of the mine is such that even though the pumps started working, there were certain difficulties. Even the experts who came could not understand how to work in this complicated situation. Later on, other experts also joined them. Even today, though five pumps are available at the spot, only three pumps are working. The pumps available in our country are of the capacity of 500-800 gallons per minute. The pumps from the Soviet Union which we got are also of 350 gallons per minute capacity. It is not that they are high-capacity pumps and that we are lagging behind in this respect. This is not the case. At the moment, we are able to pump out about 12,000 gallons per minute. Out of this, 75 per cent of the water is being pumped out by the pumps available in the country itself. We ensured that they reached the spot at the earliest opportunity. But, we are extremely sorry, our heart is full of sorrow and pain, that this tragedy has taken place. Certain suggestions have been made. As I said earlier, this accident should not be linked with the safety conditions in the entire coal mines. As I said earlier, measures were being taken. The organisation had been strengthened. But, we feel it our duty that we should go on strengthening this. If there are more modern methods and if there are better qualified people available, we should take advantage of them. If certain suggestions have been made by the Members, why should we not take advantage of those suggestions

and see that the incidence of accidents is reduced to the minimum? With these words, Sir, I would like to assure the House...

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Mr. Yadav, I am told that this pumped out water is polluting the Damodar and other rivers. DVC has issued a warning.

SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV: Let us not go by the BBC, I am very sorry to say that sometimes the BBC comes out with fantastic and baseless news. They came out first with the news that 900 people got trapped in this.

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Not BBC, but DVC.

SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV: Even DVC. Let us not go on the basis of baseless rumours published in some newspapers. I am very sorry to say that some newspapers sometimes unnecessarily and baselessly quote officials when the officials had not made those statements. Even they have been quoted like this in newspapers.

I would like members to bear with me. Dewatering operation is still going on. Today nothing should be published in the press which would unnecessarily demoralise our workers, which would create misunderstanding. We are all occupied with the most important and top priority work of dewatering the mines and providing relief to those families.

It has been said that many money lenders are perhaps harassing those people. I must say that the Bihar Government, particularly the local administration under the supervision of the Deputy Commissioner, Dhanbad, have done commendable work. I will be failing in my duty if I do not pay my gratitude to them. They have done their maximum. As social workers, those people have been working day

[Shri Chandrajit Yadav]

and right. We have seen that they have reached every family. They have taken care of every family. Even the police did extremely good work. They have been giving every possible support. I want to assure the House that nobody would be allowed to be so hard-hearted as to exploit these people. If anybody does so and harasses them, it will be brought to our notice and we will take the strictest action; if it is brought to our notice, the strictest measures will be taken against those people who have the courage to create any kind of harassment to these families.

I want to say a word of gratitude to the social organisations. Many State Governments have come forward with their donations. Many trade union organisations have come forward with their donations. So also many individuals. As you have seen, in this House also there was a proposal about it. Shri Shankar Dayal Singh was saying something about it. The House knows it already. To those who have extended their help in any form, we are very grateful.

This tragedy is, really speaking, a national tragedy. Therefore, our people have extended every possible support and help to these people. I must say that the House has debated this issue keeping in mind that concrete suggestions should come out. We will take all these into consideration. The court of inquiry will go into all the details. We have requested the ex-Chief Justice of the Patna High Court to start the inquiry as soon as possible. On Committee formed by the Energy Minister has already started working. The Committee for the co-ordination of relief under my chairmanship has started working. I want to assure the House that everything possible has been done and our effort will be to see that this kind of tragedy does not occur in future. Whatever has to be done, should be done by the Government.

DR. RANEN SEN: I do not want to make a speech. When I spoke, I levelled certain criticism against the Energy Ministry. I had quoted about the failure of the Energy Ministry to look after mines safety. I said that Mr. Pant was more interested in production and nobody was interested in mines safety. I had quoted the President of the Burdwan District Congress Committee who had openly said in a newspaper that the mines in Asansol and Raniganj are in a very precarious condition. He had asked for a proper inquiry.

SHRI SHANKAR DAYAL SINGH: Do not allow a new discussion. He has already started it.

DR. RANEN SEN: No discussion. Mr. Pant was not here at that time. Now he is here. Otherwise, I would not have raised this point.

The Congress President had stated that a thorough enquiry into the condition of mines, the safety and security aspect of it, has to be made, to find out the actual position.

18.00 hrs.

SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV: That is a wider aspect. The hon. Member has made the suggestion and the Government will look into that

श्री राम महाय प डे (राजनंद गाव) :
जिस चिन्ता और सावधानी और सतर्कता के साथ हम प्रश्न को सम्भाला गया है और पैना, अनाज आद उपलब्ध किया गया है और उनको आश्रय दिया गया है उनके लिए सरकार बधाई की पात्र है। लेकिन एक आश्रय में चाहता हूँ। जो कामगार मांस के नीचे काम कर रहे थे उनके जीवित होने की और सम्भालना नहीं है तो उनके परिवार में जो लोग काम करने लायक हैं क्या उनको टाप प्रायोरिटी देकर कहीं न कहीं सविस देने का प्रयास आप करेंगे ?

SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV: It is a very important question and I should like to say a word. As soon as we reached the site, immediately we announced that not only one person will be given employment but adequate employment to all those families will be given. We have already offered certain employment to those who came forward and offered themselves for employment.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSI: I want to make one suggestion, with the fullest satisfaction on the statements and the answers he has given in the course of this debate. When he sits as the Chairman of the committee, will he be kind enough to consider a major problem? The mine will be closed and possibly there will be no operation there. The workers

who were working there will be without employment. How will they survive?

SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV: We have seen that all those who were working in that mine were given alternative employment. Some of them, about 600 of them are in this rescue operation; others have been shifted to the neighbouring mines. As we have said, we will see that every one of them is given his salary for this month and we shall see that none of them is without a job.

18 05 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, January 15, 1976|Pausa 25, 1897 (Saka).