

**Collapse of Houses in Jharia Town
caused by subsidence of Land
due to Underground Fire**

*894. SHRI A.K. ROY : Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether he is aware that a large number of houses collapsed in Jharia town (Dhanbad, Bihar) in the morning of 22nd March, 1982 as the land subsided due to the fire in the underground mines ;

(b) if so facts in detail ;

(c) whether any arrangement was made for rehabilitation of the persons whose houses collapsed ;

(e) if so, steps taken thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN) : (a) to (e). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (c). There was a subsidence near No. 2 pit of Bhalgora section of Simlabahal Colliery of Kustore Area on 22-3-1982 covering an area of 140 Sq. Metres. This subsidence was an extension of the old subsidence in the adjoining areas which was depillared by 1947 by the erstwhile private Management. The above area has been known to be affected by the underground fire in the old goaves. The part of the area, which was free from unauthorised constructions, was blanketed with Matti but the area occupied by the unauthorised occupants, could not be blanketed. Bharat Coking Coal Ltd. also made efforts for getting the unsafe area vacated through verbal and written notices and also through FIR's filed with the police against unauthorised occupation. In spite of this, the unauthorised

occupants continued to live in hutments. In all 26 families were affected from subsidence on 22-3-82 and they were given immediate help by BCCL, as soon as they came to know about the accident. The affected persons were also evacuated in BCCL's vehicles. Officials from BCCL and DGMS have inspected the site for further investigations. 32 persons who occupied 20 adjacent houses have also been shifted due to apprehension of extension of subsidences.

(d) and (e). The safety of the Jharia town is threatened by old fires all around for which central measures are being undertaken. BCCL have formulated projects for fighting fires in Jharia Coal fields and 4 big fire fighting projects at an estimated cost of about Rs. 38 crores, are under implementation.

SHRI A.K. ROY : Sir, this is a most important question. It is connected with the existence of one of the oldest coal towns in the country. After the subsidence I personally visited the area. It is not true that the area which subsided was warned before. The area which was warned remained intact but the areas which were not warned subsided. It is also true that all the occupants—more than 200 of them—are all unauthorised. Some of the occupants are authorised. Their old buildings have been found to have collapsed. Fortunately the incident happened in the morning. Otherwise, there would have been a disaster causing the death of many.

I met the officials there on the spot and they were also taken by surprise. It means and they admitted also, that they did not have a complete idea of underground fire and the underground geography of the area. That is most important and a most dangerous thing. The coal experts should know before hand what is the underground fire, where is the fire, where is the cavity and where the most dangerous thing can take place. In view of this fact

I would like to ask the Minister whether he will undertake a comprehensive survey of the underground geography in Dhanbad and Jharia coalfields giving you the full knowledge and secondly whether you will see that those inhabitants who were not unauthorised but authorised by the State Government are rehabilitated at the cost of the Coal India Ltd.

SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN : These fires are all pre-nationalisation fires, i.e. before nationalisation there had been 70 active fires in this region and we have been trying to contain them and we have planned out projects costing Rs. 38 crore to kill the fires at four places. As stated in my answer, this subsidence was an extension of the old subsidence in the adjoining areas which was depillared before 1947 by the erstwhile private management. The above area has been known to be affected by the underground fire in the old goaves ...*(Interruptions)* Let me complete. This is the main point. As I said, we have planned out a complete reconstruction programme for this area and it will cost over Rs. 5000 crores including opening of mines, movements of the township and so forth. We have planned out various stages.

Now, as the question of compensation is concerned, the information given to us is that all these unauthorised families were warned before. They were unauthorised families and 26 such families were affected. We are giving them, though they have no right to it, ex-gratia relief of Rs. 1000 per family. 32 families where the subsidence has not occurred so far have been removed and we are giving them Rs. 500 per family. So far as the authorised families are concerned, the State Government and the Centre will jointly evaluate the land and the price of the house and due market compensation will be given to them.

SHRI A. K. ROY : Though I have not got the answer, I would like to know at least one point. Is there any plan with the Government to evacuate the Jharia township in the near future and if so, the details thereof.

SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN : The plan is in different stages and for the next 25 years we do not plan to evacuate the township.

(Interruptions)

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Gap between Power Generated and actually consumed and paid for

*881. **SHRI RAJESH PILOT :** Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) have Government taken any study of wide gap between the power generated to power actually consumed, recorded and paid for ;

(b) are these gaps several times more in magnitude than they would have been if the transmission losses are abnormally heavy ; and

(c) if so, steps taken to plug the gap ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN):(a) and (b). The system losses in the country are estimated to be of the order of 20%. Studies have shown that the transmission losses range from 4 to 6%, the rest of the loss comprised technical losses in the sub-transmission and distribution system and unaccounted losses arising from billing errors, defective meters, pilferage etc.