

at Calcutta on 11 October, 1983, at the age of 76 years.

Shri Anand Chand was a Member of Constituent Assembly during 1947-48 and First Lok Sabha during 1952-57 representing Bilaspur constituency now in Himachal Pradesh. Later he was a Member of Rajya Sabha from 1958 to 1970 and also a Member of Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly during 1977-82.

An able Administrator, he was ex-Ruler of Bilaspur State.

A social reformer, Shri Anand Chand initiated several social uplift measures in the erstwhile State of Bilaspur. He abolished 'Begar' (forced labour), enforced the Child Marriage Restraint Act and introduced complete prohibition.

Shri Anand Chand passed away at London on 12 October, 1983, at the age of 70 years.

We deeply mourn the loss of these friends. I am sure the House will join me in conveying our condolences to the bereaved families.

The House may stand in silence for a short while to express its sorrow.

The Members then stood in silence for a short while.

WELCOME TO THE MAURITIAN PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION

MR. SPEAKER : Hon'ble Members, at the outset, I have to make an announcement.

On my own behalf and on behalf of the hon. Members of the House, I have great pleasure in welcoming Hon'ble Mr. Chattradhari Daby, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Mauritius and the Hon'ble Members of the Mauritian Parliamentary Delegation who are on a visit to India as our honoured guests.

The other Hon'ble Members of the delegation are :

- (1) Hon. Mr. S.C. Goodoory, MLA
- (2) Hon. Mr. K. Gangoosingh, MLA
- (3) Hon. Mr. Marc Hein, MLA
- (4) Hon. Mr. N. Molaye, MLA
- (5) Hon. Mr. I. Nawoor, MLA
- (6) Hon. Mr. S.C. Poonith, MLA
- (7) Hon. Mr. L. Ramsahok, MLA
- (8) Hon. Mr. S.K. Baligadoo, MLA
- (9) Hon. Madame J. Minerve, MLA
- (10) Hon. Mr. C. Uteem, MLA

The delegation arrived here this morning. They are now seated in the Special Box. We wish them a happy and fruitful stay in our country. Through them we convey our greetings and best wishes to the Legislative Assembly, Government and the friendly people of Mauritius.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : एम० एल० ए० का मतलब पार्लियामेंट का मेम्बर है। हमारे लोग यह न समझें कि एम० ए० एल० आए हुए हैं।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : शुद्धिकरण एक्सेप्टेड।

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Revision of Royalty Rates on Coal and other Minerals in Eastern States

*1. SHRI CHITTA BASU : Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Eastern States in the last meeting of the Eastern Zonal Council demanded an upward revision of the royalty rates on coal and other minerals raised by them ; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COAL IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI DALBIR SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir,

(b) As per Section 9(3) of the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957, Central Government can revise the rates of royalty once in a period of four years only. Since the last revision was affected on 13.2.1981, next revision will become due only after February, 1985. At that time the demand of the State Governments will be duly considered.

SHRI CHITTA BASU : Is the hon. Minister aware of the fact that the prominent question before the Eastern Zonal Council held recently was not merely the question of upward revision of the royalty on ore and other minerals but also of the necessity of changing the very method of computation of royalty. I may explain that. At present the royalty is determined on the basis of the quantum of production irrespective of the price. Now the Chief Ministers of the Eastern States together have demanded that instead of that system of computation, the *ad-valorem* system should be introduced, meaning thereby that the royalty should be based on quantum of value of the commodity. Is the hon. Minister prepared to accept this very sound principle of computation? The Eastern States are being denied for the last so many years the actual royalty commensurate with the increasing price of coal and other minerals.

SHRI DALBIR SINGH : A Study Group was appointed in 1979 to get this question examined—revision of rate of royalty and the principles on which rate of royalty be fixed. According to the recommendation of that Group royalty should be fixed on tonnage basis. Another study group was also appointed by the Mineral Advisory Board in 1974. This Group also recommended that the rate of royalty should be fixed not on *ad valorem* basis but on tonnage basis. That is why this principle has been adopted. No doubt, the State Governments are pressurising but there are difficulties. It had been explained to them fully in the meeting to which hon. Member is referring to. So, this principle is being adhered to. The next revision will take place in 1985. So, at that time all these things will be considered.

SHRI CHITTA BASU : From the reply

it appears that neither the Government wants to change the very principle of computation nor they want to think over it as early as possible. According to the reply this question of revision may be taken up only after February, 1985. Will the Government consider the advisability of having a Conference of the Eastern States to discuss the principle of computation bearing in mind that the States get opportunity to step up further resource mobilisation for larger State Plans?

Will the Government consider the convening of a special conference with the Chief Ministers of the Eastern States and finally come to a decision without waiting till February, 1985? Otherwise, the relations between the Centre and the States are bound to go bitter and I think that in the interests of the country, the Prime Minister should take the initiative to see that the matter is amicably settled and no further strain is caused between the Centre and the States.

SHRI DALBIR SINGH : Apart from the rate of royalty which the State Governments are charging they are also imposing cess on the royalty....

(Interruptions)

SHRI DALBIR SINGH : And because of the cess, the State Governments have been getting the benefits on the production of coal.

May I tell the details of this?

	(In lakhs)
Bihar	Rs.
1982-83	8,424

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : What is this figure?

(Interruptions)

SHRI DALBIR SINGH : This is the amount which is realised by the State as royalty. This is the royalty amount realised by the State and—I tell you I am not going

into the details of this as this will take a long time—on this amount, they realise the amount of cess also.

(Interruptions)

SHRI DALBIR SINGH : The States are not being deprived of the benefit. They are realising the royalty, just as they are realising cess on the royalty also.

(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR) : I am sorry. The first part of the question deals with the special conference that is to be convened. That was the poser which was put by the Hon. Member. I submit that in the regional conference, this issue was raised and if it becomes necessary, there should not be any difficulty in convening a conference for the purpose of resolving this issue.

On the question of the principle of computation, which has also been adverted to by the Hon. Member, I must submit that it is fraught with great difficulties, difficulties in the sense that if pit-mouth cost has got to be ascertained, then, in each case of the mine, the cost will have to be found because there are mines which are very deep, there are mines which are not that deep. Then one will have to work out the cost on the basis of each mine. This issue has been gone into by the study groups right from 1956. That is why, they have suggested that the royalty should be imposed on the tonnage basis, on the quantum basis, not on the *ad valorem* basis.

On the question of the larger State plan, I must submit that without going into the details that the State Governments have been imposing the cess, as my Hon. friend was trying to suggest, in all the cases, the cesses that are imposed are more than 100% of the royalty that the States get. This is a tremendous amount that the State Governments are imposing which is also affecting the price of coal.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER : In view of the reply given by the Hon. Minister on the question put by Hon. Member Shri Chitta Basu, I would like to

know from the Hon. Minister, the sub-committees were formed in 1966 and 1979. Now the situation has changed and when the Chief Ministers of the Eastern region unanimously demand that instead of implementing the royalty on tonnage, it should be on *ad valorem*, in view of the present situation and the review of the Centre State relations and considering all these facts, I want to know whether the Government will think over seriously and not wait for February 1985. The recommendations were partial and it was not done fair to the Eastern Region States. So I want to know from the Minister whether he will convene a Chief Ministers' meeting immediately or at the end of December this year and do justice to the Eastern Region and fix up the royalty not on tonnage basis but at *ad valorem*. I want a proper answer from the Minister.

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR : On the question of reducing the tenure, in the main answer we have said that having regard to the Mines and Minerals Regulation and Development Act 1957 statutorily the royalty can only be revised after 4 years. So far as reducing this tenure is concerned, the Mines Department which is the administrative Department with reference to this enactment is already proceeding to reduce it from 4 years to 3 years.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : I think the Minister will agree that there is no direct relation between the tonnage and the price of these products. For example, coal and crude oil are two of the most important commodities in the eastern States which are subject to royalty charges. I would like to know from him to get a proper idea of the proportion of the problem, since the royalty rates were fixed in 1981, what is the percentage increase in the price of crude oil which is obtained from Assam and what is the pit-head price of coal or at least the average pit head price of coal in West Bengal and Bihar. What has been the extent of increase in the price while the royalty remains the same ?

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR : First of all I do not have the figures here, with reference to the percentage of the crude oil and as to how it has risen... (Interruptions)

I will certainly give him the figures and also lay it on the Table of the House within a week.

SHRI JAMILUR RAHMAN : I would like to know from the hon. Minister through you whether the Government of India has received any representation from the Government of Bihar to increase the royalty on coal and other minerals of the State because you are collecting all the cess and leaving nothing in possession of the State of Bihar. Therefore, I would like to know whether you have received any representation from the Government of Bihar to increase the royalty in the matter of coal as well as other minerals which are found in Bihar in large quantities.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : Representation from the former Chief Minister of Bihar.

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR : In fact for the information of the hon. Members, it is the present Chief Minister who raised this issue in the regional conference and not the previous Chief Minister.

If by representation my hon. friend means a written representation, that has not been received from Bihar....

SHRI JAMILUR RAHMAN : All right, a submission if not representation.

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR : The Chief Minister of Bihar along with the other Chief Ministers has raised this issue in the Eastern Regional Conference of Chief Ministers in September last. And that by itself could be construed as a representation. There is no difficulty about that. But, as I said, statutorily it could only be revised after February 1985. Apart from that, I have already mentioned that on the question of resources of the State, every State is charging more than 100% of the royalty by way of cess. In fact, in the case of Bihar, it is charging more than 200%.

आकाशवाणी और दूरदर्शन को स्वायत्तता प्रदान करना

*2. श्री रामविलास पासवान : क्या सूचना और प्रसारण मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि विभिन्न राजनीतिक दलों ने आकाशवाणी और दूरदर्शन द्वारा पक्षपातपूर्ण प्रसारण किए जाने का आरोप लगाया है ;

(ख) क्या सरकार आकाशवाणी और दूरदर्शन को स्वायत्तता प्रदान करने के प्रश्न पर विचार कर रही है ; और

(ग) यदि नहीं, तो सरकार आकाशवाणी और दूरदर्शन द्वारा निष्पक्ष प्रसारण सुनिश्चित करने हेतु क्या कदम उठा रही है ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT) : (a) Some such complaints are at times received.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Clear guidelines exist regarding news coverage by All India Radio and Doordarshan. The Media's aim is to select items on the basis of the news value, and in this they are always guided by the principles of objectivity, fair play and the need to present differing points of view.

श्री राम विलास पासवान : सदन में काफी बार दूरदर्शन और ए० आई० आर० के कार्यकरण पर चर्चा हुई है। हम लोगों को आशा थी कि सरकार उसके बाद कुछ सुधार करेगी और जो एन० टी० आर०, तेलुगु देशम और जम्मू काश्मीर की सरकार के खिलाफ जिस ढंग से ए० आई० आर० और दूरदर्शन का दुरुपयोग किया गया है उसकी इसी सदन में जब चर्चा हुई...

कुछ माननीय सदस्य : गलत है (इंटरप्राइज)

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आर्डर प्लीज।

श्री राम विलास पासवान : हम लोगों को आशा थी कि सरकार इसके ऊपर गम्भीरतापूर्वक विचार करेगी और सदन की जो राय है उसको