

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY : When the Central Government directive is there and when the local Government does not act, what is the Central Government going to do? [Interruptions] In any case, I want to know what is the loss suffered by Government on account of the illegal mining?

SHRI DALBIR SINGH : Sir, I agree that the illegal mining reports in those areas do come to the notice of the Government. We have been writing about it to the State Government authorities. They have been taking action also. But, in spite of being so strict and in spite of being so vigilant about it, things do happen there. There have been attacks also on the officers. There have been incidents of ugly types. All types of things are happening. The House must know that there are so many illegal acts done by various people, by various anti-social elements in this country and this is one of the illegal things. Government is there to take action if it is discovered. I may inform the House that production in that colliery has not been affected. Rather it has increased during this period.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER : Sir, the Minister, in his reply, has stated regarding illegal mining, the Energy Ministry has contacted the local police and the local Government officers. I want to know whether the Energy Ministry has any intelligence wing to enquiry about the total number of the illegal mines being operating there in the areas of the Eastern Coal fields, especially in Bihar?

I would also like to know whether any steps have been taken to stop it? Regarding this particular question, I would like to know whether the people who were doing illegal mining in that area have been arrested and what steps have been taken to stop illegal mining? What is the total amount of revenue loss on account of illegal mining?

SHRI DALBIR SINGH : Sir, as I have already stated reports of illegal mining are coming to the notice of the Government and

Government has been taking it up with the State Governments. As to how many cases are there it is difficult to say because illegal mining is being done in the areas which are abandoned but whenever anything comes to our notice we take action.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY : Sir, the way the hon. Minister has been answering it seems there is no Government. Everyday we are shouting about the mafia. You assure the House that you will stop it because you are running the Government.

(Interruptions)

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : Sir, I would like to know whether the Minister is aware of the fact that the State Governments are legalising the illegal mining like in the name of carbonaceous cell? The State Governments are giving working permission to different people in the name of carbonaceous cell which is a high ash content coal. Coal is an associated mineral with fire-clay and china-clay. The State Governments in the name of fire-clay and china-clay are allowing to remove the coal from the under seam. If so, I would like to know whether the Minister will put a ban on the State Governments giving working permission in the name of carbonaceous.

SHRI DALBIR SINGH : Sir, whatever my friend is saying comes under the purview of the State Governments. It is a separate question. I have nothing to say.

[Interruptions]

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY : It is the property of the Central Government. It is your duty to protect it.

PROPOSAL TO ENHANCE DRUG PRICES

*750. SHRI AJIT BAG :
SHRI R.P. DAS :

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) Whether it is a fact that Government are intending to enhance the prices of drugs soon as desired by the organised pharmaceutical producers of the country ;

(b) If so, whether the said price rise will cover all items of drugs including life-saving drugs; and

(c) if so, how Government are going to protect the interest of common man from such price rise?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI VASANT SATHE) :

(a) There is no general or specific proposal to increase the prices of drugs. The prices of drugs are regulated under the provisions of Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1979 and revisions in the drug prices are allowed based on the recommendations of an expert body, namely, the Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

SHRI AJIT BAG : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has given an evasive reply. It has been reported in the newspapers that the organisation of the pharmaceutical producers like Pfizer, May and Baker and Glaxo were pressing on the Government for raising the prices of drugs. The new Drug Policy was announced in 1978, but the pattern of drug production has been continuing to remain the same. The motive force of production of drugs has always been the profit making by the drug firms. The need of the suffering people has never been considered while producing drugs. In view of this, I would like to know whether it is a fact that the multi-national drug companies are producing vitamins, tonics, nutritive supplements and such other products much beyond their licensed capacity, and whether there is a deliberate attempt to cut the production of essential drugs like PAS, streptomycin, INH under the plea of less of profit? If so, what steps is the Government going to take to stem this rot?

SHRI VASANT SATHE : As a matter of fact, in the revision of prices, the prices of quite a few essential drugs have been reduced. But the question of price increase depends on the raw material. Most of the raw material is based on petroleum products. If the petroleum raw material prices go up, naturally the prices of other products based on that would also go up. I may invite the attention of the House to the fact that compared to other wholesale prices, the prices in the field of drugs, the percentage increase has remained under control. For example, right from 1975 - 76, with 1970-71, as base hundred taking all the commodities together, the point increase was 173, going up to 288. In 1982-83, in the field of drugs because of the control exercised by the Government, the increase was from 118 points to 176 point. It was 176 in 1982-83 as against 288 of other commodities.

You will see from this that as far as drugs are concerned, Government is anxious to see that the prices do not go up beyond reasonable limits. But if certain basic costs go up, it is bound to get reflected in the price of drugs.

SHRI AJIT BAG: I would like to know whether it is a fact that drugs like streptomycin, INH, PAS, Dapsone, DEC, Citrate and other life saving drugs are in short supply? If so, what steps are the Government going to take to see that they are available in abundance to the needy people? What Steps are the Government going to take against the various clever moves of the multinationals to hoodwink the Drugs Price control order, 1979 to defraud the public of crores of rupees?

SHRI VASANT SATHE : No complaint has come to the notice of the Government that any particular essential drug is in short supply. If it is a temporary phenomenon the moment we get such a complaint we take action to see that supplies are rushed to that particular area. It may be seasonal or it may happen in some areas sometimes, but we take immediate measures to overcome that.

SHRI SUNIL MAITRA : Sir, my original question was in two parts. One is that so far is the tonic, vitamins etc. are concerned, the multi national drug companies are producing them more because they fetch profit in astronomical figures. The second part of my question was that because these life-saving drugs do not attract much of the profit, the multi-national drug companies are deliberately producing them in less quantity. In view of this statement, I would like to know whether th Hon. Minister will inform the House what has been the actual quantum of production of the life-saving drugs by the Multinationals operating in India during 1979-80 and 1981-82 ?

SHRI VASANT SATHE : Sir, actually there is no definition, even internationally of what the Hon. Member is calling as 'life-saving drugs'.

SHRI SUNIL MAITRA : All right you please give me the figures about the production of Streptomycin by these companies.

SHRI VASANT SATHE : Sir, I have no ready figures for every drug which the Hon. Member might have in mind. I am willing to supply to him the information. He may give the names of the drugs which he considers as essential drugs and I will collect the figures and give them to him.

DR. A. KALANIDHI : Sir, I would like to know whether there is any proposal to reduce the price of Streptomycin, which is an essential drug in the 1st line of management of tuberculosis and also the price of other drugs which are considered essential drugs in the treatment of tuberculosis? Sir, we have accepted the slogan, Health for all by 2000 A.D. Therefore, I would like to know in my second question whether the Hon. Minister will put a restriction that only after producing a particular quantity of Eltroxin, Daprone etc, licence will be given for the manufacture of other drugs to the multi-nationals? This is necessary because Eltroxin, Phenobarbitone and Daprone are going out of the market. The reason is that they are to be sold very cheap and the profit they get is.

So, the multi-nationals are hesitating to produce them in enough quantity according to the requirement. So, my question is whether there is any proposal in the Ministry to restrict such a tendency and to reduce the price of Streptomycin, which is a very essential drug?

SHRI VASANT SATHE : Sir, I had already given a reply in regard to all the anti-TB drugs, in reply to Question No 347 of 22nd March. But I may inform the House that price of certain anti-TB and anti-Leprosy drugs like Rifampicin have been reduced. The price of the bulk of Rifampicin has been reduced by 25 to 30 percent and this is also reflected in the formulation. Then, Ethambutol, again an anti-TB drug, price of the bulk has been brought down from Rs. 837 to Rs. 804. Then Sir, the price of Sulphamethoxazole and Trimethoforim has been brought down by 55%.

SHRI SUNIL MAITRA : This is besides the fact that they are producing it less.

SHRI VASANT SATHE : Actually there is no fall in production in spite of bringing down their prices. If any production takes places lower than the sanctioned level, we will encourage others to produce the same. In this connection, I would say that we do not depend upon the multi-nationals.

औषध निर्माता कंपनियों द्वारा कर्मचारी भविष्य निधि राशि का जमा किया जाना

*752 श्री भीम सिंह :

श्री सत्येन्द्र नारायण सिंह :

क्या श्रम और पुनर्वास मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि अनेक औषध निर्माता कंपनियों कर्मचारी भविष्य निधि में अपना अंश नियमित रूप से जमा नहीं करती हैं ;