

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: There have been three major disasters, in 1954, 1955 and 1956. And no searching enquiry has been made, no Commission has been appointed in India similar to the one appointed in the United Kingdom. We started mining coal since the year 1776. It is therefore high time that we appointed such a Commission. Let us not play any more with the lives of the workers. In the interests of the miners, for the development of this mining industry and the industry at large, and the interests of the country, I therefore, commend my motion for the appointment of a high-power commission to go into the safety measures in the mines.

Mr. Chairman: Motion moved:

"That the question of appointing a High Power Commission to examine the problem of safety in the coal mines be taken into consideration."

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Chairman: I have to make an announcement. The Speaker has allotted the following time to the various stages of the Banking Companies (Amendment) Bill:—

General Discussion 3½ hours.

Clause-by-Clause Consideration
1 hour Third Reading ½ hour.

The Government Business will continue up to 4-30 p.m. tomorrow, the 21st December, 1956.

Private Members' Business will be taken up at 4-30 p.m. and continue up to 7 p.m.

MOTION RE. APPOINTMENT OF HIGH-POWER COMMISSION ON SAFETY IN COAL MINES—Contd.

Mr. Chairman: We shall now proceed further with the motion moved by Shri T. B. Vittal Rao.

Shri P. C. Bose (Manbhum North): It is a known fact that the problem

of safety in coal mines is a most difficult problem. As a matter of fact, the number of accidents in coal mines far outnumbers the accidents that take place in other industries. It is not only so in India, but it is so all over the world. From the statistics, however, it is known that the number of deaths per thousand is much less in India than in advanced countries like America, England and other European countries. But still I quite agree with my friend that all attempts should be made to minimise the number of accidents in the coal mines.

The recent happenings, to which reference has been made, are really deplorable. In several mines people were drowned to death, in several other mines explosion took place and people died. So this sort of accidents should, as far as possible, be minimised by taking precautionary measures from beforehand. At Newtonchikhli I understand there was an adjacent mine which was full of water. The people who were working on that side of the mine made a hole into the other mine which was full of water, with the result that water rushed in and drowned all the workers. This is very strange, because in the mining rules it is definitely stated that in any mine where work is carried on, test-holes must be continually made in order to keep away from the adjacent mine which may be full of water. That thing was not probably done in this case. On further enquiry, I understood that the manager did not know of the existence of the mine full of water. In this way, negligence and lack of knowledge of mining account for some of the accidents that are taking place.

I do not agree with my friend that Indian geology is easy. I have some idea of Indian geology and I can say it is not easy. It is very difficult. I have myself seen some mines in Orissa. From below you will see that it is quite all right. It will appear that there is no crack and it does not require any support. But suddenly, one day there will be a crack from