

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

[Shri P. C. Bose]

behind the surface and the whole thing will collapse. So, it is not correct to say that Indian geology is very easy and so the accidents may be altogether avoided.

My friend said that the rescue station people did not rescue the men who survived after remaining in the mine for 18 days. It is unfortunate that my friend does not know that the rescue rules really apply only to those conditions where explosions take place. They are not allowed to go to the mines which are flooded with water. They have got their masks and a particular dress to go into the Gas and rescue the people. I went to the mine and saw actually the people who were rescued. They were far away from the pit in a small area which was dry. It was the duty of the mining men to pump out the water as quickly as possible and find out whether any people were alive. That is what actually happened. Pumping went on for 24 hours day in and day out. The Chief Inspector of Mines and some other inspectors also were there. I do not know how far the company co-operated with them. We have got a committee to report on it, and the report will be published very soon. One of my friends is there. What I understood was that these people remained there for 18 days without any food in a corner. They were able to survive, because there was compressed air. Pumping went on for 24 hours and when they saw light, they ran towards the pit. Some of the people working in the pit picked them up and took them to the hospital. In this way they survived. The rescue station people had no business and they were not supposed to go there. It is no use making irrelevant charges against anybody. As a matter of fact, the Indian rescue station is said to be one of the best in the world. Their achievements and their record are very good. I was a member of it once, but not now.

I do not think the question whether the accidents took place under

the new inspectors or old inspectors is very relevant, because accidents take place as the mines go deeper. Deeper mines become more dangerous. In shallow mines the coal is very very close to the surface, and there is no accident there. Go to all the railway mines in the Hazaribagh District, for instance. There is no accident. *Pukuria khad* is just like a tank. There is no accident because the coal is just near the surface. But when you go through a pit underground and go deeper accidents occur. It has been found that in shallow mines there are no accidents. In India most of the coal mines are shallow. Therefore they use naked lights. There are no safety lamps. But when the mines become very deep gases issue out from the coal seams; there are pockets of gas and then explosions take place. That is how accidents take place. It is difficult at the same time to know when these accidents will occur, because we do not know where these gas pockets are. But still I quite agree that some sort of measures should be taken to study the whole question of safety in coalmines and find ways and means to prevent them as far as possible.

The I.L.O. has got a permanent prevention of accidents committee. They have got rules and regulations. I think our Government also will take these rules and regulations from the I.L.O. and from the British and German mines which are the most advanced and equipped mines in the world and take such measures as are necessary to prevent accidents, as far as possible. So far as this Motion is concerned, I do not really object to it. It may be taken into consideration by Government. But at the same time I understand that new regulations are under consideration and will take effect very soon. Those regulations contain this sort of commissions and committees. That should be given a trial at the same time.

Lastly, I quite agree with my hon. friend that inspection and inspection

is the only means to minimise accidents inspection by qualified, competent men, not by high-power commission. They cannot do anything. It is the competent qualified men, men of experience who should be appointed inspectors and they should frequently visit mines. They should be allowed to see every part of the mine. I say this because many inspectors are not allowed to see all parts of the mine. If there is any difficulty in some part of the mine the management fence it and the inspector is not allowed to go there. When the inspector goes away that part is opened and it is worked. This thing happens. Therefore, I quite agree that a full complement of staff for inspection of underground condition of mines should be appointed and there should be no question of economy in this respect.

With these words, I request Government to bring these regulations as soon as possible and later on see whether this sort of a commission should be appointed.

श्री श्रीनारायण दास (दरभंगा मध्य) :
सभापति महोदय, मुझे खुशी है कि श्री विट्टल राव ने अपने प्रस्ताव द्वारा सदन का ध्यान उस समस्या की ओर दिलाया है जिसे समस्या की ओर साधारणतः हमारा ध्यान नहीं जाता है। जब कभी किसी खान में दुर्घटना हो जाती है और उसमें हमारे बहुत से भाई जो काम करते हैं उनकी मृत्यु हो जाती है तो देश का ध्यान और इस संसद् का ध्यान कभी कभी चला जाता है। मेरा ध्यान भी इस समस्या की ओर इसलिए गया कि जब एक खान में दुर्घटना हुई और गैस विस्फोट हुआ और उसमें ५२, ५३ आदमी मरे तो एक कोर्ट आफ़ इनक्वायरी गवर्नमेंट की तरफ़ से बैठाई गई और मुझे उसमें एक असेसर की हैसियत से काम करने का मौका मिला। मुझे उसकी जवाबदेही निभाने के लिए अपने देश के जो खान सम्बन्धी कानून हैं और उसके अधीन सुरक्षा के लिए जो नियमावलि है, रैगुलेशंस हैं, उनको अध्ययन करने का मौका मिला।

साथ ही साथ चूँकि वहाँ गैस विस्फोट की दुर्घटना हो गई इसलिए बहुत से ऐसे वैज्ञानिक विषय सामने आये जो कि केवल हिन्दुस्तान की खानों से ही सम्बन्ध नहीं रखते थे बल्कि दूसरे देशों के जो इस सम्बन्ध में कानून हैं या रूल्स रैगुलेशंस हैं उनको भी पढ़ने का मुझे मौका मिला। मैं ने देखा कि हिन्दुस्तान में क्या सभी देशों में जितने उद्योग हमारे चलते हैं उनसे सबसे ज्यादा खतरनाक उद्योग यह खान का है। जब हम खान की चीजों का इस्तेमाल करते हैं तो हम नहीं समझते कि कितनी मेहनत से यह चीज हमारे खान के भाई पैदा करते हैं और हम साधारणतः यह भी नहीं सोचते कि कैसी कैसी दुखद परिस्थिति में कैसी कठिनाई की परिस्थिति में हमारे भाई खान के नीचे काम करते हैं और जिस समाज के लिए वह इतनी मेहनत करते हैं और इतनी बहुमूल्य चीजें निकालते हैं, उनके प्रति उस समाज का क्या कर्त्तव्य है, हमारा ध्यान उस ओर नहीं जाता और इसलिए यह सवाल जो बहुत परिश्रम से हमारे माननीय मित्र ने उठाया है और उस सम्बन्ध में अपना जो प्रस्ताव रक्खा है, मैं उसका समर्थन करता हूँ।

मैं आवश्यकता समझता हूँ इस बात की कि जब से हमारे देश में यह खान उद्योग चला, मुझे ठीक समय तो नहीं मालूम लेकिन जब से हमारे देश में खानों में से कोयला और दूसरे खनिज पदार्थ इत्यादि निकाले जाने लगे, तो जो हमारे देश में अंग्रेजी शासन था उसने अपने यहाँ उसका जो भी अनुभव था उसके आधारे पर इस उद्योग को चलाने की कोशिश की। मुझे यह भी आश्चर्य हुआ कि जब मैं असेसर की हैसियत से वहाँ बैठा तो मैं ने देखा कि यद्यपि हम ने सन् १९५२ में एक कानून बना लिया था, माइंस ऐक्ट, लेकिन उसके अधीन जो नियमावलि थी, वह हमारे सामने नहीं आई थी और जब हम कोर्ट आफ़ इनक्वायरी में बैठे तो १९२३ के ऐक्ट के मुताबिक़ जो नियमावलि बनी थी उसके अनुसार हमको

[श्री श्रीनारायण दास]

काम करना पड़ा। यह बात मैं यहां कहे बगैर नहीं रह सकता कि इसका मतलब यह नहीं समझा जाय कि सरकार ने उसमें संशोधन नहीं किया, समय समय पर जितनी भी आवश्यकता मालूम हुई उसने उसमें संशोधन करने की कोशिश की और १९५१ तक उसमें संशोधन हो चुका था। लेकिन फिर भी दुनिया १९२३ के बाद कितनी बदल गयी, कितने वैज्ञानिक अनुसंधान हुए और कितनी तरह के वैज्ञानिक आविष्कार हुए और खानों में काम करने के तरीके में कितने परिवर्तन हो गये, विभिन्न औजारों में काफ़ी परिवर्तन हो गये, शासन में भी बहुत परिवर्तन हुए, उस आधार पर हमारा मत है कि नियमावलि का निर्माण हो जाना चाहिए था लेकिन नियमावलि का निर्माण नहीं हुआ और इसी वजह से यह स्पष्ट मालूम होता है कि यह एक ऐसा गहन और कठिन विषय है कि जिस तरह चुनाव आदि और अन्य प्रशासनिक सम्बन्धी नियमावलि हम बना लेते हैं, उस तरह इस की नियमावलि बनाना आसान नहीं है। इसलिए सरकार को विभिन्न देशों का जो भी अनुभव है, विभिन्न देशों में खानों में काम करने वालों का जो भी अनुभव हुआ है या जो भी सुरक्षा सम्बन्धी तरीकों में परिवर्तन हुए हैं या वैज्ञानिक अनुसंधान हुए हैं, उनका अध्ययन करने में सरकार को समय लगेगा और मुझे मालूम हुआ कि १९५२ के कानून के अनुसार उसमें जो पहले कानून था, जो सुरक्षा सम्बन्धी नियम थे, उनमें दूसरे मुल्कों में इस दिशा में जो वैज्ञानिक अनुभव हुए हैं और अनुसंधान हुए हैं उनके आधार पर यह रूल्स रैगुलेशंस बना कर जल्दी लागू किये जाने वाले हैं।

समापति महोदय, इस जांच के विषय में मैंने देखा कि हमारे देश की जो माइंस इंस्पेक्टरेट है, उन्होंने बड़ी मेहनत से काम किया और मैंने देखा कि जहां दुर्घटना हुई वहां वह पहुंचे और जिस दुर्घटना की ओर हमारा ध्यान गया, उसकी जांच के सिलसिले में मैंने देखा कि यह जो

हमारे देश की माइंस इंस्पेक्टरेट है उसने बहुत ही बुद्धिमत्ता के साथ काम किया है। लेकिन मैंने देखा कि उस सिलसिले में जहां हिन्दुस्तान में लगभग तीन, साढ़े तीन हजार या लगभग चार हजार खानें हैं वहां इंस्पेक्टरेट स्ट्रेंथ है, उसमें काम करने वालों की तादाद है वह बहुत ही कम है और मालूम नहीं इस समस्या की ओर आज तक सरकार का ध्यान क्यों नहीं गया जब कि मेरे खयाल में बहुत पहले उसको तरफ़ ध्यान जाना चाहिए था। मुझे यह भी मालूम हुआ कि जिस रफ़्तार से उसमें आदमियों को बढ़ाना चाहिए था हमने नहीं बढ़ाया। मुझे विश्वास है कि सरकार अब जब कि दो कोर्ट आफ़ इनक्वायरी कमेटीयों की रिपोर्ट आ गई है, तो उसका अध्ययन करके इस विभाग के विस्तार के लिए उपयुक्त आदमियों की नियुक्ति के लिए कदम उठायेगी। मुझे यह भी मालूम हुआ है, मुझे ठीक याद नहीं आता है लेकिन जब यह दोनों इनक्वायरी कमेटीयों की रिपोर्ट पेश हुई थी तो सरकार की तरफ़ से यह कहा गया था कि उसकी अच्छी तरीके से छानबीन करके उसके सम्बन्ध में उन्होंने उपयुक्त कार्यवाही कर ली है और जो अभी १९५२ के कानून के रैगुलेशंस आने वाले हैं, उनमें बहुत चीज़ों का उन्होंने समावेश कर लिया है। जहां तक मेरा खयाल है मैंने उस रिपोर्ट के साथ अपना एक छोटा सा मुद्रा लगाया था कि इस के लिए एक राष्ट्रीय प्रायोग की नियुक्ति होनी चाहिए। वैसे जांच कमेटी ने भी अपनी सिफारिश नम्बर २७ में सिफारिश की है कि एक राष्ट्रीय प्रायोग की नियुक्ति की जाये जिसके जिम्मे यह काम दिया जाये कि हमारे देश में जो जो लोग खानों में काम करने वाले हैं, जैसे कि मैनेजर्स, इंजिनियर्स, बिजली वाले आदि आदि, जो कि खानों में सुरक्षा का प्रबन्ध करते हैं उन सब के अनुभवों को एकत्र किया जाये। और इसमें केवल अपने देश वालों के अनुभव से ही काम चलने वाला नहीं है, हमको दूसरे देशों के

अनुभवों से भी लाभ उठाना चाहिए। हमारे अपने देश में भी अलग अलग खानों में काम करने वालों के अलग अलग अनुभव हैं। किसी एक खान में जो अनुभव प्राप्त हुआ है उसको दूसरी खानों में भी काम में लाने का प्रबन्ध किया जाना चाहिए। मेरा सुझाव है कि जल्द से जल्द यह कमीशन नियुक्त किया जाये और जो भी लोग खानों में काम करने वाले हैं, चाहे वे शासन से सम्बन्ध रखते हों, चाहे वे इंस्पेक्टोरेट से सम्बन्ध रखते हों या दूसरे विभिन्न विभागों से सम्बन्ध रखते हों उन सब के अनुभव के आधार पर सुरक्षा सम्बन्धी कानून बनाया जाये। यह काम तब तक नहीं हो सकता जब तक कि इसके लिए एक राष्ट्रीय कमीशन नियुक्त न किया जाये। हमको उस कमीशन के सामने ये सब सुझाव रखने चाहिए। यह जो खानों में काम करने सम्बन्धी नियम हैं इनमें सुधार करने का काम बहुत महत्व का है और जब कमीशन नियुक्त होगा तभी इसको आगे बढ़ाया जा सकेगा।

एक बात मैं और कहना चाहता हूँ। जैसा कि अभी हमारे एक भाई ने कहा है, हमारे देश में खानों में सुरक्षा के सम्बन्ध में अनुसंधान की बड़ी आवश्यकता है। यह जो गैस का विस्फोट हुआ इसके सम्बन्ध में कोर्ट आफ इन्वैस्टिगेशन के सामने गवाहों ने ऐसे विषय पेश किये जिन पर इस देश में अनुसंधान नहीं हुआ था। दूसरे देशों में जो अनुसंधान हुआ है उसी के आधार पर उन्होंने हमारे सामने इस विषय को रखा। उनसे हमको पता चला कि अमरीका और इंग्लैंड में जो खास खास विषयों के सम्बन्ध में अनुभव हुए हैं वे हमारे लिए वैसे के वैसे लागू नहीं हो सकते। इसी सम्बन्ध में एक आश्चर्य की बात हमारे सामने आई। जब खान से कोयला निकाल लिया जाता है तो उसको बालू से भर दिया जाता है और उस बालू में पानी मिला दिया जाता है। इस तरह से बालू में पानी मिलाकर खान को ऊपर तक भर दिया जाता है। जब बालू का पानी निकल जाता है तो बालू नीचे बैठ जाती

है। हमारे सामने खान के प्रबन्धक ने कहा कि चूंकि पानी निकल जाने के बाद बालू नीचे बैठ गयी, इसलिए बालू और खान की छत में खाली स्थान रह गया। उस स्थान में गैस जमा हो गयी, और चूंकि छत गिरी इसलिए गैस खान में भर गयी और उससे दुर्घटना हो गयी। दूसरे लोगों ने कहा कि जो पानी बालू में मिलाया जाता है वह खास खास अवस्था में घटने के बजाय ऊपर तक आ जाता है। अब यह विषय ऐसा है कि जिस पर हमारे यहां अनुसंधान की आवश्यकता है। इस विषय पर गवाही देने के लिए बहुत से गवाह आये, प्रोफेसर भी आये लेकिन किसी ने अपने निजी तजर्बे की बात नहीं बतलाई इसलिए इसे समझने में गलती हुई। खानों में सुरक्षा सम्बन्धी जिलने विषय हैं उन पर हमारे यहां अनुसंधान होना चाहिए। मुझे खुशी है कि फ्यूअल रिसर्च इंस्टीट्यूट और इंस्टीट्यूट आफ माइन्स में कुछ अनुसंधान हो रहा है और इस दिशा में कुछ प्रगति भी हुई है।

हमारे करीब दस लाख भाई खानों में काम करते हैं, वे बड़े परिश्रम से काम करते हैं उनकी सुरक्षा का हम को पूरा प्रबन्ध करना चाहिए और उपयुक्त नियम बनाने चाहिए। और केवल नियम बनाना ही काफी नहीं होगा उन नियमों को पालन करवाने की आवश्यकता है। यह काम आसान नहीं है। यह काम केवल इंस्पेक्टर बहाल करने से ही नहीं हो सकता बल्कि यह तभी हो सकता है जब कि खानों के सम्बन्ध में काम करने वाले सब लोग, जैसे मैनेजर, सुपरवाइजर आदि सब इस तरफ ध्यान दें। जो लोग कि खान विभाग में काम कर रहे हैं जैसे इंस्पेक्टर और प्रबन्धक आदि, उन्होंने जहां तक उनसे हो सकता है अन्धका काम किया है, मैं उनकी तारीफ करता हूँ। लेकिन मैं समझता हूँ कि अब समय आ गया है कि सरकार को इस विषय पर गम्भीरतापूर्वक विचार करना चाहिए और एक राष्ट्रीय कमीशन नियुक्त करने के लिए

[श्री श्रीनारायण दास]

जल्द से जल्द कदम उठाना चाहिए और जो दूसरे देशों के अनुभव हैं और जो हमारे देश के अनुभव हैं उनके आधार पर अनुसंधान करना चाहिए और ऐसे नियम बनाने चाहिए कि जो लाजों आदमी खानों में काम करते हैं उन ही जान खतरे से बचे और हमारा उत्पादन भी बढ़े ।

Shrimati Reau Chakravartty rose-

Mr. Chairman: I am sorry. There is no time now. I am calling the Minister.

The Minister of Labour (Shri Khandubhai Desai): I really welcome the discussion on this issue, and I must say that I am as much concerned with any accident, major or minor that happens in the mines, as any other Member.

As the House is aware, it has been the regular policy of Government to appoint under the law a court of enquiry, whenever any major or even a semi-major accident happens. We have had, unfortunately, during the last two years, two or three mining disasters which were accidents. One was a mining accident; the other was an accident due to gas; and the third recently happened in the last monsoon, but it had nothing to do with any safety regulations in mines; it was due to heavy rains, and the flood water could not be channelised in the normal course in the surrounding areas for storm water drainage; so, the water rested in the mines, and the accident happened. Even there, we had appointed a court of enquiry. We had also seen to it that the court of enquiry was associated with at least one or two Members of Parliament. We were very greatly enlightened by the impartial way in which those enquiries had been conducted.

It was not a technical or formal enquiry that we had instituted. We wanted to know exactly how happened, whether there was any negligence on the part of our inspectorate, whether there was any negligence on the part of the employers to carry out the regulations, or whether there

were any defects in the existing regulations, and I may assure the House that all possible recommendations were accepted.

As far as the present suggestion for the appointment of a high-power commission to go into the question of safety regulations is concerned, I may at once inform the House that I am not averse to it. As I said, I had never been averse to it, though, many times, I had placed before this House the facts, namely that the total number of deaths in India on an average in the coal mines was less than one per thousand, whereas in the other countries, it was of the order of 1.5 or 2. But I am not satisfied with this. It has been considered that mining is, unfortunately, a hazardous occupation. Whatever steps we might take, unluckily some accidents do happen. But it is for the miners and, if I may say so, the employers, to see that they minimise these accidents as much as possible.

Though the regulations which are today in operation are very old—Shri Shree Narayan Das referred to it—they were revised from time to time from experience. So they are not the old regulations, but are the revised ones, revised in the light of experience gained. Unfortunately, what has happened is that when we passed the 1952 law, in formulating the regulations a very lengthy procedure had to be adhered to, which had taken two or three years. But, as the House is aware, I have placed on the Table in November 1955 emergency regulations which come into force immediately and will last for two years. Most of the regulations which we contemplated as proper regulations were incorporated therein. The new regulations which are now in the final stage, as Shri T. B. Vittal Rao knows, were placed before the Tripartite Committee of the mining industry. They were all gone through threadbare. I could have promulgated the regulations immediately, but I could not do it under the law as they had to be published. They were published in October after taking into con-

sideration all the suggestions made in that Committee. It is already gazetted. Now, I would have to wait for three months in order to get the objections thereto from the various interests concerned. I believe by the end of February or so, because the expiration of three months will be by the 15th February, those regulations will be finalised.

Now, while framing those resolutions, every interest, anybody who has got any knowledge about safety in mines, was invited to offer suggestions, and such suggestions were incorporated. The idea was not to ignore any suggestions made for safety. As Shri T. B. Vittal Rao knows, any suggestion which was reasonable and practicable was accepted by us even though some employers were not willing, we said; 'Nothing doing even if we have to commit mistake, let us commit an error on the safety side'. Even if some more money has to be spent, we have got to do it as the life of human beings is more precious than anything else.

So my reply to Shri T. B. Vittal Rao when he raised this point—the representatives of the miners on the Industrial Committee, Shri Kanti Mehta and Shri Mahesh Desai also pressed for a Commission—was and is that I am not averse to the appointment of a High Power Commission. But I would like to see the working of the regulations and the vigilance of the inspectorate which has now been accelerated during the last few months. I would like to see how those regulations are carried out so that even if a Commission is appointed, it could study the working of the regulations not only as they are but also the administration and working by the staff. Whatever safety measures we may promulgate at any time would ultimately have to be administered by the staff. This, as you know, is a highly technical subject, and while framing regulations we have seen to it that all the knowledge or information which any Commission in the West has was also taken into

consideration. I would like to assure the House that we would not be found wanting in providing as much safety as possible for the miners who are working underground. Here I would like to place before the House one great difficulty which we are going through, not only with regard to coal mines but also to mica mines and gold mines. In the case of gold mines, they are very deep and the regulations there will have to be more drastic. We have dug up to nearly 10,000 or 12,000 feet, we have had some rock burst. Rock burst at a depth of 7,000 to 8,000 feet can hardly be foreseen. Sometimes it happens and it is very unfortunate. The deeper the mines, as Shri Bose said, the likelihood of accidents is a little more frequent. At the same time safety measures have to be taken there also. As I said in the beginning, I really welcome this discussion, because we would not like to keep back anything from the country and the House or from the miners who are called upon to do one of the most hazardous work for the industrial expansion of the country, and particularly now that we are expanding the production of coal from 37 million tons to 60 million tons, more miners will be coming in, and more coal fields will be opened up. It is, therefore, up to us to see that all the modern equipment and science are utilised to make the miners as safe as humanly possible.

Finally I may assure the House that the anxiety which has been shown by Members who have spoken regarding the safety of miners will receive our very serious consideration. As I said, the regulations will be finalised in the next couple of months and we have already instructed our inspectorate to see that they begin acting according to the new regulations—they might consider the regulations as formally legalised—although we are going to finalise them very soon. We should see how this is working. I would not like to see the working of the regulations for a number of years or months, but even simultaneously some high power committee or commission may be appointed—whatever

[Shri Khandubhai Desai]

name you would like to give it you may give—and I cannot say when such a commission will be appointed because one would have to look into it further. But I am not averse to the appointment of some technical committee or commission which may guide us and tell us what further changes or amendments are necessary in the mining safety regulations. I have seen a rule that for putting in new regulations into effect, we have not got to go through the tortuous process of two or three years, but we can immediately put them in after giving a reasonable time for the parties about the amendments. Even if it is necessary to make urgent amendments to the existing regulations, I would have no hesitation to come before the House to amend the original law.

With these few words I hope the Mover as well as those who supported him will be satisfied. I will take all precautions necessary to see that the safety of our miners, who are doing one of the greatest national services and who have undertaken one of the most hazardous jobs, are safeguarded by us as much as is humanly possible.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: I will take only one minute.

Shri Tek Chand (Ambala-Simla): Could the hon. Minister give some broad indication as to the new safety devices that are intended to be adopted? I want just some broad indications.

Shri Khandubhai Desai: I have got about 180 or so regulations and they are in the Gazette. If you so desire, I will ask my Ministry to give a copy of that to Shri Tek Chand.

Shri Tek Chand: I am very grateful.

Shri K. K. Basu (Diamond Harbour): Invite him to tea and discuss it with him.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: I am very glad that the hon. Minister has given an assurance that he would not wait for the working of the regulations before the appointment of this Commission.

Shri Khandubhai Desai: I will not wait.

Mr. Chairman: Now, the discussion is concluded.

19.02 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, the 21st December, 1956.