

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939, be taken into consideration".

The motion was adopted.

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

"That clause 2 stand part of the Bill".

The motion was adopted.

Clause 2 was added to the Bill.

Clause 3 was added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

Shri Raj Bahadur: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed".

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed".

The motion was adopted.

17.27 hrs.

MOTION RE: COAL MINES RESCUE RULES

Mr. Speaker: The House will take up consideration of motions for modification of the Coal Mines Rescue Rules, 1959. The time allotted for this is 2 hours.

Who are the hon. Members who want to participate in this discussion? Shri S. C. Samanta has tabled some motions. But he is absent. Then, there is Shri T. B. Vittal Rao. Does anybody else want to speak? I find that there is none. So, I shall call the hon. Minister after Shri T. B. Vittal Rao finishes.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao (Khammam): But where is the Minister in charge?

Mr. Speaker: Is there anybody to take charge of this item?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): I am taking charge, for the present.

Mr. Speaker: Has he been instructed, or is he taking charge voluntarily?

Shri Raj Bahadur: I have just now been instructed.

Shri Rane (Buldana): The Minister in charge is just coming.

Mr. Speaker: There is the Whip, and there is one Minister here. So, there are sufficient people to take note of the points, and they will answer. The Minister in charge will come and answer.

Shri Raj Bahadur: I shall be taking note of the points.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: I beg to move:

Rule 3 [sub-rule (1)]

(1) This House recommends that in the Coal Mines Rescue Rules, 1959, laid on the Table on the 6th August, 1959, in clause (i) of sub-rule (1) of rule 3, for the word "President" the word "Secretary" be substituted. (8)

["The" Rule 3[sub-rule (2)]

(2) This House recommends that in the Coal Mines Rescue Rules, 1959, laid on the Table on the 6th August, 1959, for sub-rule (2) of rule 3 the following be substituted, namely:—

"(2) *Election and term of office of the Chairman:* (i) There shall be a Chairman for the Rescue Station Committee who shall be elected by the members of the committee from among themselves. He shall hold office for a period of two years.

(ii) As soon as may be after the constitution of the Rescue Station Committee under rule 3 a meeting of the committee shall be convened by the Secretary for electing the Chairman. The Secretary

to the Government of India, Ministry of Labour and Employment shall preside at such meeting.

(iii) For filling up a casual vacancy in the office of Chairman a meeting of the committee shall be convened by the Secretary and the election shall be held. The Secretary to the Government of India, Ministry of Labour and Employment shall preside." (9)

Rule 4 [sub-rule(1)]

(3) This House recommends that in the Coal Mines Rescue Rules, 1959, laid on the Table on the 6th August, 1959, in sub-rule (1) of rule 4, for the word "three" the word "two" be substituted. (10)

Rule 5

(4) This House recommends that in the Coal Mines Rescue Rules, 1959, laid on the Table on the 6th August, 1959, in rule 5, wherever it occurs, for the word "President" the word "Chairman" be substituted. (11)

Rule 5

(5) This House recommends that in the Coal Mines Rescue Rules 1959, laid on the Table on the 6th August, 1959, in rule 5, for the words "Chief Inspector" the words "Secretary to the Government of India, Ministry of Labour and Employment" be substituted. (12)

Rule 8

(6) This House recommends that in the Coal Mines Rescue Rules, 1959, laid on the Table on the 6th August, 1959, for rule 8, the following be substituted, namely:—

"8. Powers and duties of the Chairman: The Chairman shall preside at the meetings. In his absence one of the members may be elected by the Committee to preside at that meeting only." (13)

I welcome to a certain extent this revision of the Coal Mines Rescue

Rules. These are very important, for, after nearly twenty years, we are revising these rules. I am very glad that for the first time, representation is given to the coal-fields other than Bengal-Bihar coal-fields. As regards the Singareni coal-fields, there are 25,000 miners working in these coal-fields in Andhra Pradesh; there are nearly 30,000 miners working in Madhya Pradesh, but up to this day, there has not been a single rescue station there.

Rescue stations and rescue squads play a very important part in this mining industry. Whenever an accident takes place or accidents like explosions, fire or flooding take place in the mines, those personnel who are trained in this rescue work can go and rescue the people. It has happened in our country that these rescue men could save some lives. When one of the coal mines was flooded in 1957, some men had been saved, and it was amazing to find after a lapse of 11 days that some 9 miners were brought to the surface alive. There are instances in foreign countries where people were rescued even after the lapse of 15—21 days from coal mines. Rescue work in our country is in a very infant stage. I do not know why Government have not given enough importance to this work. If you read the annual report presented to us only a few days ago, you find there are only two rescue stations in India. One is in Dhanbad and the other at Sitarampur in the Raniganj coal field. The number of workers trained in this work is very low. That is about 1,000 to 1,300. If you take the whole mining population in the coal fields, it is 3,70,000.

Mr. Speaker: In all coal fields in India?

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Yes.

So there is much to be done. During my trip to Poland, I visited some of the rescue stations there. I found the number of the apparatuses and the number of personnel in charge far far greater. Not only that. Sufficient

[Shri T. B. Vittal Rao]

emphasis is being given to rescue work. This is one aspect. Rescue squads go in when an accident takes place and rescue people who are behind the fire or have been trapped in mines.

There is one more important aspect which this rescue squad can attend to. That is to extinguish the fire or, if there is any gas, see that the gas is diluted and sent out. They are specially trained for this work. If there are not trained personnel, the fire may spread or the gas may increase. This has been occurring. I am glad that in the last report, it has been mentioned that our rescue stations squad were able to retrieve the Porbellia colliery which was sealed for mining operations for well over 3 years. This mine contains 40 million tons of metallurgical coal.

In our country, there is a huge shortage of metallurgical coal. With the three steel plants going into operation and with the expansion of the two in the private sector, we are going to face a shortage of metallurgical coal. In this situation, the rescue squad going in and retrieving the Porbellia colliery is a very noteworthy thing.

Only the other day I along with the Minister and one or two MPs saw a fire in one of the mines. That was in the Bowrah colliery. This also is a mine which contains very good coal, metallurgical coal. It was burning and the flames and smoke could be seen for several miles.

Therefore, I need not elaborate the importance and significance of these rescue stations. For the first time, in these revised rules, representation is being to Singareni coal fields. But there are no rescue stations established as yet either in Madhya Pradesh coal fields or in the Singareni coal fields. I ask the Minister when these rescue stations are going to be established in these areas which have been neglected, though mining operations in these areas have been carried on for the last 60 years.

Therefore, I strongly urge upon the Minister not to wait until the cess is

collected until funds are realised for the establishment of these rescue stations. The establishments of rescue stations in these two coal fields is an immediate necessity.

We need not wait for funds to be collected by the levy of the cess. Afterwards, the amount that has been spent in the establishment of these stations could be adjusted against the cess amount realised.

The amount which we collect by levying a cess of 1.9 nP on every ton of coal raised is not very sufficient. It will not meet the expenditure for the establishment of these rescue stations. Last year, a sum of Rs. 8½ lakhs only had been collected while we raised in the country coal worth about Rs. 70 crores according to the revised price. This sum is very insignificant and we may not be able to establish many more rescue stations.

I have moved some amendments to the Coal Mines Rescue Rules which have been laid on the Table of the House. One of the amendments is to the effect that the person nominated by the Chief Inspector of Mines should not be the Chairman of this Rescue Stations Committee but shall be the Secretary to the Committee. The Chairman of this Committee should be one who should be elected by the members who have been nominated or appointed on this Committee. The inspectorate as it is today, as everybody knows, does not consist of very talented persons. There are in coal-fields people far more talented in mining engineering. That is why if the person nominated by the Chief Inspector of Mines is made Chairman of the Committee, the best of men will not be appointed to this Committee by the mining managers' association or the trade unions or the owners themselves.

Therefore, I have suggested that a non-official should be the Chairman of this Committee. Recently we have seen even in our Zila Parishads that the Collector is not the President. First Government thought that the

Collector should be the President, but subsequently the Act was amended and a non-official made Chairman. The best talented person should be the Chairman of the Committee.

Secondly, a non-official should be the Chairman of the committee which is to operate the finances running to about nearly Rs. 8½ lakhs.

Then, I have said that the first meeting to be convened for the purpose of the election of the chairman should be presided over by a very responsible person; and that responsible person, I have put down as the Secretary to Government. In this case it will be the Secretary to the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

The term of office of these nominated members or those appointed is put down as three years. I want it to be reduced to 2 years. This is very essential in view of the fact that some representatives of some organisations are there on this committee who do not really represent labour at all. There have been changes. Therefore, if the term is kept at 2 years, once in two years we can nominate such of those persons who are really representatives of the organisations of that particular section for whom representation has been provided in the rescue rules.

Some of the amendments are mere procedural matters. If my amendment is accepted, other things are merely procedural, how a vacancy has to be filled if the chairman of the Rescue Station Committee resigns and so on and so forth.

If my amendments are accepted they will go a long way in improving the working of the rescue stations. It will also enable the establishment of rescue stations in outlying coal-fields which are not there now. Therefore, I strongly commend my amendments to the House.

Shri S. C. Samanta (Tamluk): Sir, I beg to move:

Rule 3 [sub-rule (1)]

(1) This House recommends that in the Coal Mines Rescue Rules, 1959, laid on the Table on the 6th August, 1959, in clause (i) of sub-rule (1) of rule 3, the words "who shall be the President" be omitted. (1)

Rule 3 [new sub-rule (1A)]

(2) This House recommends that in the Coal Mines Rescue Rules, 1959, laid on the Table on the 6th August, 1959, after sub-rule (1) of rule 3, the following sub-rule be inserted, namely:—

"(1A) The members shall elect one of their members as President." (2)

Rule 3 [sub-rule (2)]

(3) This House recommends that in the Coal Mines Rescue Rules, 1959, laid on the Table on the 6th August, 1959, in sub-rule (2) of rule 3, after the words "The President" the words "in consultation with the members of the Committee" be inserted. (3)

Rule 18 [sub-rule (1)]

(4) This House recommends that in the Coal Mines Rescue Rules, 1959, laid on the Table on the 6th August, 1959, in sub-rule (1) of rule 18, for the word "two" the word "three" be substituted. (4)

Rule 38A [New]

(5) This House recommends that in the Coal Mines Rescue Rules, 1959, laid on the Table on the 6th August, 1959, after rule 38, the following rule be inserted, namely:—

"38A. Only one team at a time can be sent underground but the Superintendent of the Rescue Station or any other responsible officer in the absence of the Superintendent can send an additional team or teams if he is satisfied that the circumstances permit and require it. (5)

[Shri S. C. Samanta]

Rule 39 [new sub-rule (6)]

(6) This House recommends that in the Coal Mines Rescue Rules, 1959, laid on the Table on the 6th August, 1959, after sub-rule (5) of rule 39, the following sub-rule be added, namely:—

“(6) Air sampling instrument shall be part and parcel of the breathing apparatus donned by the leader of the brigade who shall take air samples.” (6)

Schedule

(7) This House recommends that in the Coal Mines Rescue Rules, 1959, laid on the Table on the 6th August, 1959, after item No. (15) of Schedule I, the following item be added, namely:—

“16. Two portable haldane gas analysis apparatus or the like to be maintained in working order.”
(7)

I commend my amendments for the consideration of Government. As you know, the Government, the public, the coalminers and the colliery owners are all trying to avoid accidents in coal mines and in other mines also. It is true that prevention is better than cure. But, when something happens we must try to do our best to lessen the gravity of the accident.

In England in 1938, in the report of the Royal Commission on Safety in Coal Mines it was suggested that in each big coal mine there should be some rescue organisation; or else, within an area of 7 or 10 miles, all the mines joined together should have some organisation. In India we have accepted that principle and we had 2 rescue stations, one at Dhanbad and the other at Sitarampur which covered the whole of India. But now we find that it is very insufficient and there are big areas in distant places where such arrangements should be made. So, we are glad that by the

amendment of the rescue rules Government has taken the decision to open other rescue stations in the country.

Sir, these rules have been framed under the rule-making powers of Government under the Mines Act. The committee used to choose its own Chairman or President. But now it has been said that the Chief Inspector of Mines will nominate one of the inspectors to the rescue committee and he will be the chairman. I think this is not right. I would request Government to give thought to this and restore the position as it was.

Different interests are represented in the committee and why should the Chief Inspector of Mines whose responsibility is there in every aspect of the Mines Organisation be given the power to nominate the chairman? I have no objection to his nominee being there on the committee, because he has the responsibility for the whole thing. But other sections who have been represented on it should not be debarred from being chairman of the committee. I would like to know from the hon. Minister what difficulties be found when there was this system of electing the chairman by the members of the committee. If there had been any difficulty we must know it. But, from our point of view, we find that the organisation was going on well. The procedure that was there should remain. So, I have given an amendment to the effect that the Chief Inspector's nominee will be there but the members of the committee will elect their chairman from amongst themselves.

My second proposition is this. Now the President shall appoint a person to act as the Secretary of the committee. But I propose that the President, in consultation with the committee, shall appoint this Secretary.

Then my suggestion is that in 18(1) not less than three competent instructors including the Superintendent shall be employed at each rescue station to train the rescue workers.

Whenever a superintendent is absent from office the competent instructor who is there has to act as superintendent. If there be only two competent instructors, when the superintendent is absent the training work will suffer.

12.50 hrs.

[PANDIT THAKUR DAS BHARGAVA in the Chair.]

That is being felt by the organisation. If there is to be not less than two, generally two are appointed. I would therefore request the hon. Minister to put it at not less than three so that the organisation's work will not suffer. I am referring to rule 18(1) which says that not less than two competent instructors, including the superintendent, shall be employed. If there are two competent instructors including the superintendent and if the superintendent is forced to be absent, there will be only the other person who will be the superintendent and there will be none to give instructions. Because of my practical experience, I am suggesting this amendment.

I want to add one new section 38(A). My amendment No. 5 reads:

"Only one team at a time can be sent underground but the Superintendent of the Rescue Station or any other responsible officer in the absence of the Superintendent can send an additional team or teams if he is satisfied that the circumstances permit and require it."

In the Chinakuri accident, we find that at 9.45 P.M. there was the accident and at 10.45 P.M. the rescue teams began to come. At least two parties were present and then the other parties came. But only one party was sent down. The occasion may demand that two or three parties should go to different quarters in search of persons. There may be a necessity. According to the rules framed one party can be sent. That party will come back and the other

party will go. The accident took place at 9.45 P.M. and the rescue work was completed at 4 A.M. Within this time only three parties could enter. I would like that power should be given to the superintendent or the officer in-charge of the mine there to use his discretion to send more than one team at a time if circumstances require it.

I now come to my amendment No. 6 which is for the additional of a new sub-rule (6) to rule 39. It is also my experience that in courts they ask why sample of air was not taken when the rescue party went underground. Therefore, I say here that air sampling instrument shall be part and parcel of the breathing apparatus donned by the leader of the brigade who shall take air samples. When the leader goes underground with his party in search of persons they should automatically take air samples so that after examining that the next step can easily be taken.

In the schedule I wanted to add this and my amendment No. 7 to the schedule reads:

"16. Two portable haldane gas analysis apparatus or the like to be maintained in working order."

They should be in the rescue station. It is very necessary. So, I request that this should be taken up.

Over and above this rescue organisation, its work and other things, some researches should be done in the Central Institute of Mines to see how accidents can be avoided besides seeing how rescue work could be done when accidents happen. We are glad that the quality and the number of persons that have been produced in these rescue stations are really high. I had an opportunity to see and examine them in the court. In the other rescue stations that are going to be formed in different parts of the country, the same number of persons should be trained. Even in the south or extreme east, if there are rescue

[Shri S. C. Samanta]

stations, where there are less number of mines, I would request Government to send people from Bengal and Bihar there to have training so that the needs of the rescue organisations could be met.

If the men who are working in the mines are trained, if and when accidents happen they can get hold of the situation. It takes one hour or more for the rescue party to reach the mine when an accident happens. If some preliminary work is being done by those who are working there, it will be good. I am glad that this system has been taken up by the Government and in every mine, especially big and moderate mine, there should be sufficient trained people who, at the time of the accident, will not wait for the help of the rescue stations but they will themselves begin to work according to the instructions of the officer responsible there. That arrangement is being done and we hope that in future every big mine will have sufficient number of trained persons, trained in these rescue stations. These rescue stations can produce two brigades or three brigades at the station; they can also give training to those persons who are sent from different mines for training in the rescue station. That work is commendable and we hope that in the near future every coal mine will be equipped with a number of such persons who would come forward and not let the accidents in mines do that much mischief as they want to do.

13 hrs.

Sir, I hope the hon. Minister will give thought over the suggestions I have made and accept them.

Shri Aurobindo Ghosal (Uluberia):
Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Coal Mines Rescue Rules of 1939 were very much old and anti-dated and were subject to much criticism. The present rules are certainly an improvement over

the old rules, but still there are some lacunae as pointed out by the amendments of Shri Samanta and Shri Vittal Rao.

Sir, the rescue problems are intimately connected with the safety issues of the coal mines and the magnitude of the tragedies of these coal accidents can be reduced if timely rescue operations are taken. Specially, the rescue parties are to be very cautious. They are to look after the safety of persons involved in the accidents and also their own safety during the rescue operations. They are just like the Fire Brigade system.

Firstly, I strongly object to sub-rule (1) of rule No. 3 where the Mine Inspector has been proposed to be the President of the Rescue Station Committee. My objection is on two grounds. Firstly, the Mine Inspectorate is too inadequate. We are running the whole show with the staff depleted by 50 per cent. A Mine Inspector cannot even inspect a mine once in three years, whatever, of course, might be the reason. Why are you saddling this inspector with more responsibility, with the responsibility of looking after the rescue operations which is more time absorbing and onerous? Secondly, rescue parties not only do rescue operations but they also serve as an important agency through which the cause of accidents can be known or verified to a great extent. They play an important role in the enquiry into the causes of ignition in Chinakuri accident. As the Mine Inspector might be one of the parties to the accident, he should not be made the President or some other responsible person whereby influence can be exerted.

In this connection, I would like to mention one thing, that if you could implement the old safety rules, that is, the rules which are in existence, most of these accidents could be avoided. But we have found that

there is no adequate staff to implement the old rules, the old rescue rules or the safety rules nor is there any co-ordination in the different departments of the Labour Ministry—the Ministry, the Coal Commissioner's Department and the Mines Inspectorate.

The Deputy Minister of Labour (Shri Abid Ali): The Coal Commissioner is not under the Labour Ministry.

Shri Aurobindo Ghosal: In the Safety Mines Conference representatives of all these different departments were quarrelling in the conference itself and differing from each other. In that connection, in the open session of the Safety Mines Conference the late Shri P. C. Bose of Dhanbad opined that it would be better if the hon. Minister could bring co-ordination between the different departments which will help in preventing mine accidents. Therefore, that co-ordination is also lacking. The suggestion of Shri Samanta should, therefore, be accepted.

Regarding Rule No. 38, there is no provision as to how many teams can be sent underground for rescue operations. It is provided that at a time only one team should go underground. In the case of Chinakuri also it has been found that before a team came up another team was sent down. If the accident is widespread and is a very dangerous and serious one, the Superintendent of the Coal Mine Rescue Station must be authorised to send two teams for rescue operations. This was decided in the Chinakuri Enquiry also, because two teams are necessary to have proper rescue operations carried out if the accident is a widespread one, if the accident has been on a wide scale. It is an enabling clause. That power should be given to the Superintendent so that he can send, if he thinks fit, a second team for rescue operations underground.

Lastly, regarding air-sampling instruments I have to say something. Due to inadequate samples of air the Chinakuri Enquiry Committee had to suffer. Therefore, the Judge of that Enquiry has on page 2726 of the *Gazette of India* said like this:

"As to the second ground of criticism, although there is nothing in the Coal Mines Rescue Rules, 1939 which govern rescue operations, to indicate that only one brigade at a time has to be sent underground....etc. etc."

That is regarding sending two teams underground. Regarding air samples on page 2687 he has said like this:

"This statement of his was left unchallenged in his lengthy cross-examination, and there is hardly any reason why it should not be accepted. It would certainly have been better if more air samples on the surface had been taken and if more samples of the underground air had been taken by the Rescue Parties or others who went underground after the first explosion."

Naturally, an amendment in that line has been brought by Shri Samanta and it should also be accepted by the hon. Labour Minister.

With these words, Sir, I would request the hon. Minister to accept the amendments brought forward by Shri Samanta.

Dr. Melkote (Raichur): Mr. Chairmen, Sir, the amendments brought forward by the Government at this juncture are very welcome because they improve the situation from what it has been so far. Rescue parties are necessary in mines for various obvious reasons. There is the sudden collapse of roof, sudden flooding of mines, sudden emission of foul gas and due to non-ventilation after explosives are used people take in foul gas and accidents occur. For all these and other causes rescue parties

[Dr. Melkote]

have got to be sent up. They should be of sufficient number and the number depends upon the nature of the mine itself.

More parties may be necessary and may have to be set up particularly in coal mines. I am aware of one instance in the Hatti gold mines. Even in gold mines accidents of this nature occur. I remember of a case where five or six persons died from poisonous gas. The reason there was that an explosive was used as detonator, foul gas was emitted, insufficient ventilation was caused and when people went down they inhaled that foul gas and succumbed. By the time the rescue party went down they died. People were actually afraid whether they could go in, because they did not know what would happen to them. In such things length of time takes place and even if rescue was possible it was made impossible because people did not know the source of danger. These and other causes have led the Government to set up these bodies. It is the duty of the inspectorate to see from day to day that every aspect of the rules in regard to the safety in mines is conformed to by the management, but once an accident occurs it should not be the inspectorate as such which should take up the matter, because it inspects the mines and after finding it all right and making a report, it is difficult for them to proceed in the case of accidents. So, it becomes the function of the rescue parties not merely to rescue those who have been affected but to bring—and they do bring—very valuable information to the surface. If they are subjected to the service rules, there are to be under the inspectorate, and naturally the evidence that they would give will be vitiated. Therefore, the rescue party should be a separate organisation by itself. These parties should be in sufficient numbers and the evidence that they adduce should be untampered.

While welcoming this measure, I feel that a rescue party in sufficient numbers should be set up and the operation of this Act should be made applicable even to such mines as the Hatti gold mines and other mines where the depth may be sufficient to cause accidents that are prevalent in the country. When the accidents occur, it is difficult to imagine that the people will be bold enough to volunteer themselves to work there, unless they know that if something happens there is sufficient attempt on the part of the company and the Government to rescue the miners from out of the disaster. I would, therefore, commend to Government the idea of enlarging the scope of this Act so that it could operate in respect of other mines in the country.

Shri Abid Ali: I am thankful to the hon. Members who have participated in this discussion and have given the benefit of their experiences in the coal fields and particularly to the hon. Member from West Bengal, Shri S. C. Samanta, for the help which he has given to the committee for some years. He was good enough to accept our request to work on the committee of enquiry about which he made a reference, and there too he was of considerable assistance to the court. Since then he has been taking a keen interest in the avoidance of accidents in mines by giving us suggestions from time to time.

Some hon. Members have mixed the two things—accidents in mines and rescue operations. These are quite separate departments, so to say, although they are very much interconnected and interdependent. The hon. Member who made a reference to the accident enquiry committee said that the person who is connected with the inspectorate should not be allowed to preside on these committees because he is the party concerned. As I have said earlier, these are separate functions and whatever may be the cause of the accident,

after the accident, everyone is very much anxious and active in the area to rescue those who are entrapped or to extinguish the fire and take part in other rescue operations.

Reference was made to accidents and to the working of this department, although they are very much unconnected with this particular discussion. Perhaps hon. Members are under some misapprehension because some people say that accidents in mines are increasing. This year has been somewhat a good year because of the kindness of God and because in the history of Indian mining—so far as the records up to date are concerned—we have the least number of persons who have died this year because of the accidents in mines.

Let me compare our mining accidents with the position obtaining in other countries. I have the figures for Canada, France, Germany, Japan, United Kingdom, United States of America and Africa. The maximum is that of Canada with 2.65 per thousand workers. The death-roll is 2.65 per thousand. The minimum is in the United Kingdom. It is 0.62. The figure for India is 0.72. So, we are the second best in the world, and still some Members, in their enthusiasm to criticise the department, forgetting the figure which they generally come across and the information which we also supply from time to time, say that accidents are increasing and that the working of the mines department is not very satisfactory. I hope that they will take some lesson from these figures and will be kind enough to the department which is certainly doing very, very good work.

Shri D. C. Sharma (Gurdaspur): From where can they get these figures?

Shri Abid Ali: They have to explain. May be in dream! With regard to the suggestions which have been made, particularly about the

appointment of the chairman, this particular section is in operation since 1939. Up to this time, we have no restrictions about the election and every time the inspector has been elected as the chairman. There was not even one year when there was any suggestion for electing any other person except the inspector. Taking the clue and the advantage of this experience and also the necessity when public funds are expected to be spent, we have provided that there should be an official chairman. This is an additional reason. But the main reason is that, since 1939 up to this time—these 20 years—not even on one occasion was a non-official elected as chairman. Therefore, the persons who are appointed in the committee themselves feel the necessity of having an official chairman and we are only acknowledging the existing fact.

About the suggestion that it should be for two years and not three, because if the trade unionists or other persons representing other organisations are appointed, they may lose their representative character, I may say that that suggestion for recalling them can be considered.

13.18 hrs.

[**MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER** in the Chair]

But it takes time for the people, after appointment, to get themselves acquainted with the working of this section. So, some reasonable time should be allowed to them to gain experience.

Shri S. C. Samanta: According to the coal mines regulations and rescue rules, 1939, there is a provision for election. "The members shall elect one of the members as president". If he was not appointed by the Chief Inspector of Mines . . .

Shri Abid Ali: That is what I say. That is the position. He is elected, and always an official is elected. So, the amendment, as I said earlier, is

[Shri Abid Ali]

only acknowledging the existing fact. No non-official up to this time has been elected; in spite of the power having been vested in the committee to have their own chairman elected, they have elected an official. The additional reason that I have submitted is, where these funds are.

Shri S. C. Samanta: Then where does the necessity arise to appoint one? Let it remain as it is.

Shri Abid Ali: Because of this additional reason, no one is appointed. I am repeating.

About co-ordination, some officers were mentioned. I interrupted and said that we are not connected with it and they are not under the Labour Ministry. All the departments which are working under the Labour Ministry have got co-ordinated working through the Labour Ministry itself. In case any particular defect has come to the notice of hon. Members, they will be obliging us by pointing it out the same and we shall be very glad to look into it and do whatever is necessary for ensuring proper, effective and useful co-ordinated working.

A suggestion was made that workers should be trained. It is a very good suggestion. This was also mentioned at the safety conference. Certainly we shall take it up with all earnestness and seriousness, because those who are actually in the mines should know how to rescue themselves, how to avoid accidents and if accidents occur, how to minimise their severity.

I am glad that hon. Members have appreciated that this department is doing good work and have felt the necessity of its expansion. We desire to increase the present cess and make it 1.9 nP or 2 nP, so that it may have more income. Hon. Members have been suggesting that its operations should also expand, both so far as the area and the place where it is

working are concerned. The intention is to have more rescue stations and I hope that this proposal also will materialise soon.

There is an amendment about the nomination of the Chairman and there are certain other consequential amendments to it. As I have said I am not accepting those amendments. But some other amendments are acceptable. One such amendment is amendment No. 3 where Shri Samanta has suggested:

"In sub-rule (2) of rule 3, after the words "The President" the words "in consultation with the members of the Committee" be inserted".

Then, so far as amendment No. 6 is concerned, I am moving a sort of alternative amendment to what has been suggested by Shri Samanta. I hope he will also like the amendment to go in this form:

I beg to move:

Rule 39 [new sub-rule (6)]

(1) This House recommends that in the Coal Mines Rescue Rules, 1959, laid on the Table on the 6th August, 1959, after sub-rule (5) of rule 39, the following sub-rule be added, namely:—

"(6) Whenever the Superintendent or a person authorised by him or an Inspector specifically requires air sample(s) to be collected by a brigade, the leader of the brigade shall carry an air sampling apparatus."

There is one more amendment No. 7 to the Schedule. The suggestion made by Shri Samanta is,

"Two portable haldane gas analysis apparatus or the like to be maintained in working order."

What I am suggesting is:

"Two portable haldane gas analysis apparatus or similar apparatus".

I hope he will welcome this change.
I formally beg to move:

Schedule 1

(2) This House recommends that in the Coal Mines Rescue Rules, 1959, laid on the Table on the 6th August, 1959, after item No. (15) of Schedule 1, the following item be added, namely:—

“(16) Two portable Haldane Gas Analysis Apparatus or similar apparatus.” (15).

I hope the explanation which I have given concerning the other points will be welcomed by hon. Members.

Shri S. C. Samanta: What about my other amendments?

Shri Abid Ali: I am not accepting them.

Shri S. C. Samanta: When the Superintendent is absent, that man will have to work as Superintendent or Instructor.

Shri Abid Ali: Under the existing rules, not less than three competent instructors shall be employed at each rescue station to train rescue workers, whereas under the revised rules not less than two competent instructors shall be employed. This reduction was made as the rescue stations proposed for the coal fields of Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Bombay are smaller ones and there is no need for appointment of three instructors. The requirement of two is the minimum and there is no bar to employing more instructors, if necessary. The staff at the Jharia and Sitarampur Rescue Stations will be maintained at its present strength. The rescue stations which we are proposing to open will be of much smaller strength, as their sphere of activity will also be much smaller. For the existing rescue stations, the present rule as it is will apply.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I am putting those three amendments first which the Government are prepared to accept.

329(Ai) L.S.D.—6.

The question is:

This House recommends that in the Coal Mines Rescue Rules, 1959, laid on the Table on the 6th August, 1959, in sub-rule (2) of rule 3, after the words “The President” the words “in consultation with the members of the Committee” be inserted (3).

The motion was adopted.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The question is:

Rule 39 [new sub-rule (6)]

This House recommends that in the Coal Mines Rescue Rules, 1959, laid on the Table on the 6th August, 1959, after sub-rule (5) of rule 39, the following sub-rule be added, namely:—

“(6) Whenever the Superintendent or a person authorised by him or an Inspector specifically requires air sample(s) to be collected by a brigade, the leader of the brigade shall carry an air sampling apparatus.” (14).

The motion was adopted.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The question is:

Schedule 1

This House recommends that in the Coal Mines Rescue Rules, 1959, laid on the Table on the 6th August, 1959, after item No. (15) of Schedule 1, the following item be added, namely:—

“(16) Two portable Haldane Gas Analysis Apparatus or similar apparatus.” (15).

The motion was adopted.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I shall now put all the other amendments to the vote of the House.

Amendments Nos. 8 to 13, 1, 2 and 4 to 7 were put and negatived.