

12.43 hrs.

**CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER
OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

FIRE IN GIRIDIH COLLIERY

Shri Vajpayee (Balrampur) Under Rule 197, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Labour and Employment to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon

"A fire in a section of the Giridih Colliery on the 2nd March, 1959, resulting in the death of four persons"

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Employment and Planning (Shri L. N. Mishra). Government regret to report to the House a tragedy which occurred on the 2nd March, 1959 at the Kurhurbaree Colliery in the Giridih Sub-Division of Bihar involving the loss of 4 lives. This Colliery is owned by the National Coal Development Corporation (Private) Limited and is under the charge of a qualified manager. According to the information available, the accident was due to an underground fire. The Colliery is served by two pits namely, Koli-maran and Bhaludanga. At about 4-30 A.M. on the 2nd March, 1959 when the mining sirdar and an electrical fitter were visiting the pumps at the Bhaludanga pit on a routine inspection, they found the return airway full of smoke and irrespirable atmosphere. The electrical chageman who was alerted of the danger rushed to the spot with the electrical fitter and his helper, but all the three were overwhelmed by the foul air and died. The pump attendant who was present at the pump house had also met with the same fate earlier. Rescue operations were carried out by the local rescue team which was later assisted by the rescue teams rushed from Jharia

Immediately on receipt of information a Regional Inspector of Mines

proceeded to the mine and later in the day the Additional Chief Inspector also visited the mine. After discussion with the Regional Inspector and the manager and other officials, it was decided to seal both the pits. Sealing operations were commenced at 6.30 P.M. and completed at 2 A.M. on the 3rd March, 1959. As a precautionary measure the workings of the adjoining Jatkuti incline and sariabad pit were also stopped. Normal work has since been permitted to be resumed in these workings as an inspection of the workings by the Additional Chief Inspector of Mines on the 6th March, 1959 revealed that the atmosphere there had not been affected by the fire in the sealed pit.

The sealing of the pits has resulted in the loss of about 15 per cent of the total output of the colliery and has affected the employment of about 450 persons.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty (Basirhat) I want to know after how many hours after the accident actual rescue operations started and also whether it is a fact that without detecting the location of the fire, the sealing of the pits was ordered, if so, why?

Shri L. N. Mishra: The local rescue operations started immediately within an hour, it was detected at 3.30 and rescue operations started at 4.30.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty. Why was the location of the fire not detected?

Shri L. N. Mishra: The location was detected and the pits were sealed.

Shri Vajpayee. The tragedy occurred on 2nd March and I gave notice of my motion on the 5th. Whenever such tragedies occur and the House is sitting, it is for the Minister to come to the House and inform the House about it.

Dr. Melkote (Raichur) Is this the complete report that has been obtained or are any further investigations proceeding?

Shri L. N. Mishra: Investigations are going on and reports are expected.

Mr. Speaker: I have already said that with respect to the railways and air services, whenever there are major calamities and casualties, they will be reported to the House by the Ministers themselves. That applies to mines also. So, hereafter, whenever any casualties occur, they will be reported to the House for such action as the House may think proper. Hon. Members may pursue it and say let there be further enquiry and so on

Shrimati Benu Chakravartty: There have been two or three accidents in between and there is complete silence from that side

Mr. Speaker: The hon Minister will make a statement as quickly as possible with respect to the other accidents elsewhere

Shrimati Ila Palchoudhuri (Nabadwip): There have been two or three accidents in two months in Hazari-oagh. It is up to the Minister to let us know the reasons for so many accidents in that Government-owned colliery

Shri L. N. Mishra: Every accident has its own cause; the causes are not common for all accidents. We are making enquiries and reports are being laid on the Table of the House

APPROPRIATION (RAILWAYS)
No 2 BILL

The Minister of Railways (Shri Jagjivan Ram): I beg to move*:

"That the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the service of the financial year 1958-59 for the purpose of Railways be taken into consideration."

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

"That the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the service of the financial year 1958-59 for the purpose of Railways be taken into consideration"

The motion was adopted.

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

"That clauses 1 to 3, the Schedule, the Enacting Formula and the Title stand part of the Bill"

The motion was adopted

Clauses 1 to 3, the Schedule, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill

Shri Jagjivan Ram: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed"

Mr. Speaker: The question is

"That the Bill be passed"

The motion was adopted

12-50 hrs.

GENERAL BUDGET—GENERAL
DISCUSSION—contd

Mr. Speaker: The House will now take up general discussion of the budget. Shri D C Sharma will continue his speech. He has already taken seven minutes

Shri D. C. Sharma (Gurdaspur): I think I have taken only 3 minutes and not 7 minutes

The year 1958 was a year of crisis in the economy of our country. There was an unprecedented food crisis, though the statement that our Food Minister made in the Rajya Sabha yesterday makes us think that we may not be in the midst of a crisis like that in future, and that given normal circumstances we may be

*Moved with the recommendation of the President.