

machinery has representatives of the trade union leaders.

**SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA :** What is the machinery to determine the representative character ?

**SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR :** Verification is the machinery. In 1968, if I mistake not, verification had taken place and in the current year we shall have the second verification. Verification will be done to determine the representative character. I know the breakaway (*Interruptions*). The trade union leaders know it very well.

**MR. SPEAKER :** When you put a question, you should try to be as concise and brief as possible. The question may be linked with previous parts if you want ; they may be linked together but it must be one single question. The Minister should also avoid giving long replies.

**SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR :** There are four questions in one question.

**MR. SPEAKER :** Much depends on you also ; if you give a long reply it becomes more difficult for you. We go to the next question.

#### Closure of Collieries in Asansol Coal Belt

\*93. **SHRI B. K. MODAK :** Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRAM AUR PUNARVAS MANTRI) be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the large-scale closure of collieries in Asansol Coal belt during the last one year ;

(b) the total number of collieries closed down from 1970 upto date ;

(c) the total number of employees rendered jobless due to the same ; and

(d) the action Government propose to take to reopen these collieries ?

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRAM AUR PUNARVAS**

**MANTRALAYA ME UP MANTRI) (SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA):** (a) and (b). Attention of the Government has been drawn to the closure of 15 collieries out of about 200 collieries in the Asansol Coal belt.

(c) 8000 approximately.

(d) Out of these 15 collieries, 5 collieries were got re-opened due to the persuasive efforts made by the Officers of the Central Industrial Relations Machinery and one by bi-partite settlement.

**SHRI B. K. MODAK :** It is evident from the reply of the hon. Minister that there has been widespread closure of collieries in the Asansol belt. What are the reasons for the closure of the collieries and what steps have the Government taken to open the collieries which are still closed ?

**SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA :** Out of 200 about 15 collieries were closed and out of them five had been reopened. There are many causes for the closure : serious mining difficulties, financial losses, exhaustion of the coal, etc. Under the circumstances we cannot compel the closed collieries to start again. Efforts are being made to find out whether they could be opened or not but we cannot compel them.

**SHRI B. K. MODAK :** What steps have the Government taken to see that proper compensation or retrenchment benefit is given to the miners of the closed mines by the management ?

**SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA :** Under the Industrial Disputes Act there is provision that if a worker has worked for more than a year in an undertaking, subject to the provisions of sub-section (2) he is entitled to notice and compensation in accordance with the provisions of section 25 (f) of the Act. If a worker is retrenched under section 25 (f) he will get one month's notice and wages as a condition of retrenchment. So, when there is retrenchment, then these sections apply. But when the collieries have been closed, then we cannot compel them to make any payment as a condition precedent.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS *rose*—

MR. SPEAKER : I will call one by one, side by side.

SHRI S. R. DAMANI *rose*—

MR. SPEAKER : How are you interested ?

SHRI S. R. DAMANI : I am very much interested.

SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT : What is the total annual output of coal from those collieries and to what extent has this adversely affected the coal supply in this country ?

SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA : This does not arise out of the question. Separate notice may be given. (*Interruption*)

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS *rose*—

MR. SPEAKER : Did you give the reply to that question ?

SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA : Yes, Sir I have said that it does not arise and that a separate question may be tabled for that. (*Interruption*)

MR. SPEAKER : I have seen the question again. This is regarding the closure of collieries.

श्री नरेन्द्र कुमार साहू : रेलवे है या नहीं यह निर्णय आपका होना चाहिये। इसको मिनिस्टर तय करेंगे या आप करेंगे ? यह एक व्यवस्था का प्रश्न है कि वह निर्णय कौन करेगा। अगर आपके स्थान से यह सवाल रेलवे नहीं है तो आप मना कर दें, लेकिन आप इसको गेडमिट कर दें और मिनिस्टर कहें कि यह अराइज नहीं होता, यह ठीक नहीं है।

MR. SPEAKER : I am sorry you are also irrelevant. I am sorry I cannot allow that question. This is not within the scope of this question.

SHRI S. R. DAMANI : May I know from the hon. Minister whether it is a fact that much stock of coal has accumulated at the pit-heads and are piling up, and, on the other hand, the factories are suffering on account of the non-availability of coal and that in certain cases the stock of coal in the consumer industries is enough for only two or three days ? If so, may I know from the hon. Minister whether any steps are being taken to remedy the situation, and—

MR. SPEAKER : You are completely lost in your question. May I request you to sit down ? I sometimes have to be a little lenient to the new Members, but what about you ? You are completely lost in your question. Ask a direct question.

SHRI S. R. DAMANI : I am putting a direct question. Is it not a fact that the accumulation is due to wagon shortage and the industries are not getting sufficient coal for their requirements ? May I know whether the Minister is aware of this and what steps are the Government going to take to remedy the situation ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRAM AUR PUNARVAS MANTRI) (SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR) : The hon. Member is right in saying—

MR. SPEAKER : It is only between you two. I have not been able to follow his question.

SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR :—because, the coal movement depends on the wagon movement, and there is a serious bottleneck. On this point, I would advise the hon. Member to address his question to the Minister concerned, namely, the Railway Minister. Regarding the second part, the closure is not due to the wagon shortage ; the reasons are stated here, as my colleague has stated.

It is because of certain other reasons that these 15 collieries are closed.

DR. RANEN SEN : When the Minister says that due to mismanagement of

financial loss some collieries have been closed, may I know whether Government have made any serious study of this question and not simply taken the information doled out by the companies? It is known to us that many companies refuse to pay bonus and other dues and they have closed the collieries to deprive the workers of their legitimate dues.

**SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR :** We have made a study. I am prepared to give colliery by colliery the reasons for closure, but that will be a long exercise. But I certainly agree that in some cases there is an element of bypassing the present obligation as far as possible.

**SHRI R. N. SHARMA :** About section 25F of the Industrial Disputes Act, the minister said closure is not retrenchment, whereas it has always been treated as retrenchment. How does he come to the conclusion that closure is not retrenchment of workers?

**SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR :** On the question of retrenchment, it is obligatory on the employer to give notice and make payment. But on the question of closure, though it is obligatory, it is difficult to give notice. That is the distinction. (*Interruption*)

**MR. SPEAKER :** Next question.

**Demand for Increase in Supply of Boiled Rice to Kerala**

\*94. **SHRI C. JANARDHANAN :** Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE (KRISHI MANTRI) be pleased to state :

(a) whether there was any demand from Kerala Government to increase the supply of boiled rice to that State; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (KRISHI MANTRALAYA MEN RAJYA MANTRI) (SHRI ANNASAHAB P. SHINDE) :** (a) and (b). The Government of Kerala have, from time to time, been demanding supply of a much quantity of coarse boiled rice for public

distribution in the State as possible. While Kerala is being given a substantial share of the coarse boiled rice available in the Central pool, the availability of coarse boiled rice and even of boiled rice of medium and fine varieties being limited, it is not possible to make the entire supply to Kerala in the shape of boiled rice. Supply of raw rice against part of their requirement is inescapable.

**SHRI C. JANARDHANAN :** Time and again, we, the Kerala members are raising this question of boiled rice in this House. In the last Lok Sabha also we asked a question and almost the same answer was given. When we hear such answers the people of Kerala are forced to think that the Central Government are treating us with callousness. Anyway, we are not asking for the entire amount of coarse boiled rice. We are used to such rice. Now it is the monsoon season there and within a few days, the whole coastal region will be flooded and if you give raw rice to those areas, surely cholera will break out there and this Government will have to spend more to check the cholera. Under these circumstances, will the minister reconsider the matter and send some more boiled rice to Kerala?

**SHRI ANNASAHAB P. SHINDE :** The position of supply of rice in the country as a whole including Kerala is very easy. The difficulty is about boiled rice. Even there we are doing whatever is possible. Out of the total coarse boiled rice available 27,000 tons were given to West Bengal and 2,27,000 tons to Kerala. So the maximum that is possible to be given to Kerala. Therefore I do not know why the hon. Member is complaining. The other types of rice are easily available in the country and even the Kerala depots are full with rice. There is limitation only on the supply of boiled rice.

**SHRI C. JANARDHANAN :** I was referring to boiled rice and not to some other varieties of rice. If the position of the Central Government is so difficult on this issue will the government consider the repeated demand of the Kerala Government to supply rice from Andhra to Kerala through the FCI?