

hon. Minister tell us what is coming in his way for announcing the committee to examine the whole bonus scheme ?

SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR : We have to finalise the personnel with the Chairman and finalise the terms of reference. All these things are being done and soon we will take a decision.

Common Welfare fund for mine workers

*42. **SHRI NIHAR LASKAR :** Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to set up a common Welfare Fund for the workers of mining industries ; and

(b) if so, the way of levy and collection of cess needed for the proposed welfare fund ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA):

(a) Proposal for setting up of a Common Welfare Fund, which will cover workers employed in certain mining industries, is under consideration.

(b) The details of the proposal, including the manner of levy and collection of cess, are being worked out.

SHRI NIHAR LASKAR : It is welcome thing that Government has in principle accepted the proposal. But why have they not covered other sections of the employees, but have covered only a few sections ?

SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA : There are certain mining industries like coal, mica, iron ore where this reserve fund exists. There are certain others like dolomite, limestone ; we are processing these things and we will have them there. There are some mining industries left out and for them we are finalising this.

SHRI NIHAR LASKAR : How soon are they likely to finalise ?

SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA : We have addressed the State Governments concerned and the ministries of the Centre and also the Union Territories in the matter. We have not received them comments so far.

Immediately we received them, we will finalise this.

SHRI R. S. PANDEY : That this fund is going to be created is a welcome step. How much area of welfare is going to be covered ? What are the salient points ?

SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA : These include housing facilities, water facilities and such other amenities which are needed by the workers most.

श्री रामाबतार शास्त्री : मुझे यह जानना है कि अभी कोकिंग कोल की 214 खानों को आपने अपने हाथ में लिया और वहाँ के मजदूरों को जब तक वे प्राइवेट हाथों से, ये सहूलियतें नहीं मिलती थी तो उनके लिए कोई इस तरह के वेलफेयर फंड की व्यवस्था कर रहे हैं ताकि उनके लिये भी आग बढ़ने का रास्ता मिले और उनकी दिक्कतें दूर हों ?

श्री बालगोविन्द वर्मा : माननीय सदस्य ने जो अपना अग्रिहेशन प्रकट किया है, मैं बताना चाहता हूँ कि यह कोकिंग कोल, कोल माइन्स के अन्तर्गत आता है और यह तमाम सुविधायें जो मिल रही हैं कोल माइन्स को वेलफेयर फंड में वह उनको भी मिलेगी ।

श्री रामाबतार शास्त्री : अब तक नहीं मिल रही थी ।

श्री बालगोविन्द वर्मा : मिल रही थीं, आपको भ्रम है ।

U. S. Arms from Vietnam Diverted to Pakistan

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*244. **SHRI N. K. SANGHI :**
SHRI CHINTAMANI
PANIGRAHI :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Indian Embassy in Washington has formally drawn the attention of the Government of U.S.A. to a news that U.S. are being diverted from Vietnam to Pakistan ; and

(b) if so, whether any reply has been received from U.S. Government in this regard and if so, the reaction of Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SWARAN SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The U.S. Government has told us that they have checked these reports appearing in the Press, and there is no evidence at all that any demilitarised or surplus equipment under U.S. control has been transferred from Vietnam to Pakistan.

SHRI N. K. SANGHI : Sir, the matter is very serious and there is a big credibility gap between what America says and what they do. From the statement read out by the hon. Minister it is seen that Americans have not categorically denied this, but they have said that there is no evidence regarding supply of arms from Vietnam to Pakistan. May I know from the Minister whether he has taken any step to find out if arms are not being supplied to Pakistan from Vietnam through third countries ?

SHRI SWARAN SINGH : This relates to supply from Vietnam. We have not got any other evidence to indicate definitely that any surplus military equipment is being passed on to Pakistan from Vietnam.

SHRI N. K. SANGHI : It is a fact that American troops are withdrawing from Vietnam in large numbers and they have large arms and ammunitions there.

MR. SPEAKER : Why do you raise such hypothetical questions ? I am not going to allow it.

SHRI N. K. SANGHI : I want to know whether he has made any enquiry from the Indian consulate in Vietnam as to how the disposal of American arms from Vietnam is being planned.

SHRI SWARAN SINGH : We have made inquiries ; there was some suspicion that we received, but when we got it verified, we could not get a confirmation for that suspicion.

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI : The hon. Minister had promised in this very

House that Government were trying to get a satisfactory reply from the U.S. Government so far as the diversion of armaments from Viet Nam to Pakistan and their supply through third parties were concerned. When the hon. Prime Minister had gone to the U.S.A., the U.S. Government had categorically said that no armaments would ever go to Pakistan. That was a welcome gesture that they had said so. But may I know whether the hon. Minister is satisfied with the reply of the U.S. Government so far as the diversion of armaments from Viet Nam to Pakistan was concerned ? Is that reply satisfactory to our Government ?

SHRI SWARAN SINGH : I have given the factual information. I am not expected to give my satisfaction or non-satisfaction. My satisfaction is of the same order as that of the other hon. Members.

SHRI H. N. MUKERJEE : The House must have been intrigued by the reference to the U.S. Government only telling us that they find no evidence in regard to this matter. The House has a right to find from the hon. Minister his ascertainment of what exactly the U.S. Government have in mind, in view of their past record of continued prevarication, when they made this kind of very ambiguous statement ?

SHRI SWARAN SINGH : I have already said that we could not get any independent confirmation of the actual transfer of US-origin arms from Viet Nam to Pakistan.

SHRI H. N. MUKERJEE : Does that mean that we accept the fact of the U.S. Government repudiating something in this kind of ambiguous manner which in view of their past record is something most reprehensible ?

SHRI SWARAN SINGH : It is for us to assess their denial. But if the denial is there, it is my duty to inform the House that the U.S. Government have denied that they have supplied any arms from Viet Nam source to Pakistan.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE : The hon. Minister has replied like the Oracle of Delphi. We do not know whether the arms are being smuggled to Pakistan via

Viet Nam or not. May I know specifically whether or not there is any evidence in the course of the inquiry which came to their notice, to the effect that Viet Nam arms were being smuggled to Pakistan ? Was there any evidence whatsoever ?

SHRI SWARAN SINGH : I have already said that there is no evidence to that effect.

SHRI AMRIT NAHATA : Are Government aware that there is a deeprooted conspiracy to Vietnamise the Bangla Desh liberation struggle ? Are Government aware that some top American advisers in South Viet Nam are now in Pakistan advising the Pakistan military junta to adopt the same tactics in Bangla Desh as had been adopted in Viet Nam.

MR. SPEAKER : He cannot put everything into this question. That does not arise out of the main question which relates only to arms.

SHRI AMRIT NAHATA : Whether it is arms or advisers it is the same thing. When the advisers are there first, the arms are bound to follow. Are Government aware that efforts are being made to adopt the same tactics as in...

MR. SPLAKER : I am very sorry, I cannot allow this question. After all, there should be some relevance to the main question.

SHRI BISWANARAYAN SHASTRI : In view of the statement that the U. S. arms have not been transferred from Viet Nam to Pakistan, may I know whether the U.S. arms are transferred from Viet Nam to some other countries first and then to Pakistan ? Is the hon. Minister aware of that fact ?

SHRI SWARAN SINGH : No, Sir.

SHRI PRABODH CHANDRA : Apart from finding out from the U.S. Government, have Government made any other effort to find out the real truth about this ?

SHRI SWARAN SINGH : Yes, we have, and I have given the result of that.

Application of Mines Act to Stone Quarries

*245. **SHRI RAJA KULKARNI :** Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to bring the stone quarries within the purview of the Mines Act and the rules made thereunder ;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor ; and

(c) whether Government are considering to establish a Labour Welfare Fund for the stone quarries ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA): (a) and (b). Stone quarries already come within the purview of the Mines Act and the Rules and Regulations made thereunder. However, some provisions of the Act do not apply to small mines engaged in extraction of building stone, etc.

(c) Yes.

SHRI RAJA KULKARNI : Will the Minister say whether the provision concerning the appropriate Government, Central or State, has been made applicable to the quarries and mines under the Act ?

SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA : The matter was discussed with the appropriate Governments in the Indian Labour Conference. No discussions were arrived at. We are considering this matter and we will take the appropriate decision at the appropriate time.

SHRI RAJA KULKARNI : Regarding the Labour Welfare Fund, is there any proposal for a separate Labour Welfare Fund or is there any fund which exists for the mine workers ?

SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA : There will be a separate mines labour welfare fund separate from these for iron ore, mica and coal mines.

श्री हुकमचंद कछवाय : मन्त्री सहोदय ने अभी कहा है कि छोटी खानों पर यह कानून लागू नहीं होता है। लेकिन कुछ लोग छोटी-छोटी प्राइवेट खानें इसलिये चाहते हैं कि उन