

(a) whether industries in Karnataka have been severely affected due to short supply of coal;

(b) if so, the reasons for the short supply;

(c) whether, there is shortage of railway wagons to transport coal to Karnataka; and

(d) if so, the remedial steps taken in this regard to improve the coal supply in Karnataka?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI KALYAN SINGH KALVI): (a) to (c). Some complaints have been received from consumers in Karnataka about inadequate availability of coal. The main reasons for shortfall in supply of coal to consumers in Southern region has been shortfall in production in Singareni Collieries Co. Ltd. due to strikes and disturbed law and order situation. To overcome the shortage, alternative arrangements were made to supply coal to Southern region from Western Coalfields Ltd. (WCL) and South Eastern Coalfields Ltd. (SECL). Since alternative arrangements involve movement of coal over longer distances, railways have expressed some capacity constraints specially during the busy season.

(d) Coal supplies to consumers in Karnataka and other Southern States are being closely monitored in consultation with the coal companies and Ministry of Railways.

#### **Assistance to Bhopal Gas victims**

750. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item captioned "Minister accuses Centre of neglecting gas victims" appearing in the "Hindu" of 17th

October, 1990;

(b) if so, what Central assistance has since been given, if any, for the relief of these victims; and

(c) the reasons for the inordinate delay in providing compensation to the gas victims?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRISATYA PRAKASH MALVIYA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). The Government of India has released Rs. 101.62 crores to the Government of Madhya Pradesh in the form of medium term loans and ways and means advance to meet expenditure on relief and rehabilitation of the gas victims. The Government has also accepted in principle to write off the medium term loans given to the State Government during 1984 to 1989 in connection with Bhopal Gas Tragedy to the extent of Rs. 91.62 crores, alongwith interest thereon.

The Settlement Order dated 14th/15th February, 1989 of the Supreme Court directing the Union Carbide Corporation, USA and Union Carbide India Ltd. to pay a total sum of \$ 470 million in full settlement of all claims is the subject of several review petitions and the Government are supporting these review petitions. The matter is, presently, sub-judice in the Supreme Court.

Pending decision on the Payment of compensation, the Central Government has already sanctioned an amount of Rs. 300 crores for making payment of interim relief to all persons residing in 36 severely affected municipal wards of Bhopal at the time of Bhopal Gas Leak Disaster in December, 1984, at the rate of Rs. 200/- per month for a period of 3 years w.e.f 1.4.1990.

As on 17th December, 1990, the position regarding interim relief is as under:

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(i) No. of notices issued to beneficiaries	:	7,89,518
(ii) No. of notices served	:	5,09,470
(iii) No. of beneficiaries identified	:	4,00,323
(iv) Accounts opened	:	3,99,110.

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**Grievances of Group 'B' Railway Officers**

751. SHRI RAJVEER SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have taken steps recently to solve the grievances of Group 'B' Railway Officers including their cadre review; and

(b) if so, details of the steps taken so far in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA): (a) and (b). The main grievances of Indian Railway Group B officers are:

- (i) Abolition of discrimination between Group A and B Officers in the matter of pay scales;
- (ii) Removal of anomalies in the matter of allotment of scales of Group B and highest Group C cadre;
- (iii) Restoration of Concordance Table for the purpose of fixation of pay;
- (iv) Restructuring of Group B (Class II) Gazetted cadre of the Indian Railways and career planning for them;
- (v) Implementation of recommendations under Para 23.11 of the Fourth Central Pay Commission by way of giving

effective share against the Group A cadre strength.

All these issues have been examined from time to time and the position has been appraised to the Federation. All these matters relate to Central Government's decisions which are equally applicable to all Government Departments.

**Electrification of Vijayawada-Visakhapatnam Line**

752. SHRI Y.S. RAJA SEKHAR REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to electrify Vijayawada-Visakhapatnam line; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith estimated cost of the project and the progress made so far in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

[*Translation*]

**Petrol/Diesel Pumps in Maharashtra**

753. SHRI HARIBHAU SHANKAR MAHALE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state: