

Minister may change but the reply is the same. The workers in the other public undertakings have been given bonus. May I know why the Coffee Board Workers who are also working just like the other workers are not being given bonus? Why are Government adopting a negative attitude towards them so far as bonus is concerned? Will Government take a decision on this matter without further delay?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT : I have said that there will not be any more delay.

SHRI A. K. GOPALAN : The question of bonus for the Coffee Board workers has been pending for the last seven years. I do not know whether the hon. Minister knows that some of the disputes and demands of the Coffee Board workers were in the court, and there was a compromise between the Commerce Ministry and the representatives of the Coffee Board workers at a meeting where I was also present, and some compromise was arrived it, and the cases were withdrawn on the compromise that some issues would be settled then and the bonus also would be given immediately. But seven years already over and I would like to know the reason why there is delay in settling the issue. The Coffee Board workers include the Coffee House workers as well as those in the estates. May I know why Government have been thinking over this problem for the last seven years without arriving at a decision? While the cases in the court were withdrawn there was a compromise that when the other questions were settled this also would be looked into. May I know the basic reason for this delay? Will the hon. Minister immediately find out whether there was a compromise and some settlement some years ago, and if so, what the settlement was, and see that this matter is also settled immediately?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT : I confess that I am not aware of this settlement and whether it has been delayed by seven years, and whether the settlement relates to this particular matter. The payment of bonus is under the terms of the Act. As I have explained, firstly, the main difficulty was in regard to the question whether the Bonus Act would apply to the Coffee Board. There is a legal difference on that question on the ground whether the Coffee Board is an industry or not. That

question has to be gone into first. There are differences of opinion about it. Then, there is the question of its repercussions. Even if we allow it here, what would be its repercussions on the other boards? There, definitely, the legal opinion is absolutely very clear that in the case of the Tea Board, Silk Board etc. this should not apply and it does not apply to them. So, the question of its repercussions on those boards is also there. This needed inter-Ministerial consultations and this has caused some delay. But I may assure the hon. Member that I shall look into it and a decision will be taken with the utmost expedition.

SHRI LOBO PRABHU : May I know from the hon. Minister whether the Coffee Board workers have contributed to the increased production of Coffee which would entitle them to a bonus? Secondly, I would like to know whether if this bonus is paid, it will not be reflected in the prices of Coffee which are already too high both in the internal and in the external markets.

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT : He is asking me for an opinion.

SHRI LOBO PRABHU : I want to know the facts.

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT : He has expressed an opinion, and he wants me to confirm it. I am not in a position to confirm it.

SHRI TENNETI VISWANATHAM : May I know why the hon. Minister is thinking of mixing up the Coffee Board with the other Boards and thinking of its repercussions on other boards? Each case must be taken by itself? May I know whether the hon. Minister will consider and settle this agelong question which has been pending for a very long time. The Coffee Board itself is endeavouring to give the bonus. So, why should Government come in the way?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT : I only spoke of the considerations which came in taking a decision. But as I have said, a decision will be taken as early as possible.

Shortage of Coking coal for Steel Plants

*5. **SHRI DEVEN SEN** : Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND METALS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Steel Plants are facing difficulties in getting supply of coking coal;

(b) whether it is due to the fact that the private sector is not stepping up the production of coking coal;

(c) the coking coal reserve in the lease areas of private firms and in the lease areas of the National Coal Development Corporation;

(d) whether it is also a fact that eight Companies have lease holdings which cover the major part of coking coal reserves; and

(e) if so, the steps contemplated to ensure adequate supply to the Steel Plants ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETRO-CHEMICALS AND MINES & METALS SHRI JAGANATH RAO. (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) This information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House later.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) The private sector coal companies holding huge reserves of coking coal have been advised to take adequate steps to exploit these reserves and increase coking coal production so as to meet the increasing demand of the steel plants. TISCO and IISCO, who own captive mines, have also been called upon to become self-sufficient within the next 7 or 8 years and not be dependent on the market collieries for supply of coking coal.

श्री बेबेन सेन : मेरे प्रश्न के खंड (बी) की तरफ नजर देते हुए मंत्री महोदय बताएंगे कि कौन-कौन 8 कम्पनीय हैं जिनके दखल में कोकिंग कोल रिजर्व का ज्यादा हिस्सा है और वह लोग उत्पादन में ढीलापन क्यों भरस्यार कर रहे हैं ? अगर ढीलापन वह कर रहे हैं तो सरकार

की तरफ से क्या कार्यवाही उनके खिलाफ की जा रही है ?

मंत्री महोदय यह भी बताएंगे कि अगर वह लोग किसी कारण से अपने घनदर साजिश कर के हमारे इस्पात कारखाने को कमजोर करने के लिए कोकिंग कोल का उत्पादन कम कर रहे हैं तो उन का कोकिंग कोल रिजर्व का एरिया छीन लिया जायगा या नहीं ?

SHRI JAGANATH RAO : It is not correct to say that steel production has been suffering for want of supply of coking coal. It is true that the private owners of these captive mines have not been producing as much as they could.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : Deliberately.

SHRI JAGANATH RAO : Not deliberately the quantum of offtake is the incentive for the mineowners to produce as much as possible ; the offtake being small, they did not produce as much, but they have been instructed to produce as much as possible and not to depend upon the market for their supplies of coking coal.

श्री बेबेन सेन : मंत्री महोदय ने नाम नहीं बतलाया उन 8 कम्पनियों का मैंने पूछा था कि उन 8 कम्पनियों का नाम बतलाया जाय ।

SHRI JAGANATH RAO : I can give the names. The names are : Turner and Morrison, East India Coal Co., Bird & Co., Raniganj Coal Association, H. K. Vohra & Co., Thapar and Bros., TISCO and IISSO.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : The Tates are controlled by Atulya Ghosh. So they can not touch them.

श्री बेबेन सेन : क्या यह बात सच है कि इस्को ने इजाजत मांगी थी कोकिंग कोल का उत्पादन करने के लिए और यह इजाजत नहीं दी गई ?

SHRI JAGANATH RAO : I want notice. I am not aware of it.

SHRI S. K. TAPURIAH : What is the extent of coking coal reserves in the leased areas of NCDC ? What has been the production in the public sector units in the country in the last two or three years and has it shown an increase or decrease ?

SHRI JAGANATH RAO : As the House is aware, NCDC came into existence only in 1956. By then private owners had the areas leased to them. Production in public sector collieries is being stepped up gradually.

SHRI S. K. TAPURIAH : It is behind the private sector.

SHRI JAGANATH RAO : The private owners having got the leases much earlier and the NCDC having come into the field in 1956 only, there is a lag. It is perhaps roughly two-thirds in the private sector and one-third or slightly more in the public sector.

SHRI S. K. TAPURIAH : Whether it has come late or earlier or whether it is two-thirds and one-third, the point is this. There may be 5 per cent increase in the public sector and 3-10 per cent increase in the private sector ; we want to know the percentage of increase in production, not the area of reserves.

SHRI JAGANATH RAO : Percentage also depends on the area.

SHRI S. K. TAPURIAH : No, no ; he is misleading.

DR. RANEN SEN : In spite of the assertion of the hon. Minister, is it not a fact that in the last two or three years production, both in the public sector and in the private sector, of cooking coal, has not increased ? If so, have Government gone into the reasons therefor ?

SHRI JAGANATH RAO : I have said increase in production depends on offtake. It is expected that by 1973-74, requirements of coking coal would be to the tune of 31 million tonnes and by then it is expected that

production will go up and there will not be any lag between demand and supply.

DR. RANEN SEN : My question was whether in the last two or three years production both in the public sector and private sector is not up to the mark, and if so, what steps Government propose to take to see that it comes up to the mark.

SHRI JAGANATH RAO : I cannot understand what he means by 'not up to the mark'. There has been no deficit ; there is no want of coal for the steel plants and the demand could be met easily.

SHRI S. KUNDU : The Minister has said that he is asking the private firms to produce more coking coal and he has fond hopes that they will do so. In case they fail to do so, has he got any plan to see that they produce ? Is he contemplating to put them under certain regulations or to delicense them ?

SHRI JAGANATH RAO : That is a matter of future action.

B. G. Line From Samastipur to Darbhanga

*6. SHRI YAMUNA PRASAD MANDAL :

SHRI BHOGENDRAS JHA :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a proposal for laying a broad gauge line between Samastipur and Darbhanga on the North Eastern Railway ;

(b) if so, the steps being contemplated to complete the project ;

(c) whether there is any proposal to extend the same facilities (broad gauge Line) up to Sitamarhi, N. E. Railway ; and

(d) if so, when ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS SHRI PARI-MAL GHOSH) : (a) Yes, Sir.