

### Recommissioning Of Chasnala Mine

\*941. SHRI S.R. DAMANI : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have examined the prospects of recommissioning of Chasnala mine ;

(b) if so, what is the present position ;

(c) whether the extractable reserves warrant the time and money being spent for the restoration of the mine, and if so, the details thereof ;

(d) the amount so far spent to make future operation perfectly safe ; and

(e) the manner in which the people who suffered loss of employment have been cared for ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI BIJU PATNAIK) : (a) to (e) : A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

#### Statement

(a) and (b) : Yes, Sir, The following steps have been taken so far, in this direction:-

(i) No. 1 horizon has been dewatered and important installations repaired. It is being further strengthened by clearing the faults and supporting the roadways ;

(ii) The connection between the old workings and the new mine has been sealed off by the construction of a dam ;

(iii) Permission of the Director General of Mines Safety has been solicited for dewatering the second horizon and establishing essential services as well as driving a pair of headings to approach the thin seams other than the one in which the accident took place. This is being done with a view to take advantage of the infra-structure already existing for mining of thin seams. These seams are also of equally good quality ; and

(iv) An Advisory Committee has been constituted to advise IISCO on the problems that may arise from time to time in the recommissioning of the underground mine.

(v) The estimated reserve in the property within the first and the second horizons alone are estimated at about 43 million tonnes. These are the best quality coking coal. According to the techno-economic survey conducted by the Central Mine Planning and Design Institute Limited

Ranchi, rehabilitation of the mine is desirable for the economic and social benefits arising out of the reopening :

(d) The amount so far spent by the management of Indian Iron and Steel Company are as under : —

	Rs.
(1) Land for jore diversion .	4,73,000 <sup>9</sup>
(2) Embankment . . .	3,09,197
(3) Dam Construction . .	28,31,390
(4) Cost of techno-economic survey by CMPDI . . .	4,50,000

(e) No one has suffered loss of employment as a result of the closure of Chasnala deep mine. The workers have been mostly deployed on the open cast mines or in other jobs.

SHRI S.R. DAMANI : May I know from the hon. Minister what action has been taken by the Government to re-employ those workers who have been thrown out of job on account of this accident, that is, closure of the mine ?

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK : If the hon. Member would care to read the statement which I have laid on the Table of the House he will find that in the last paragraph, I have stated that as a result of the closure of the deep mine, the workers who became unemployed have been employed on the open cast mines and in other jobs. They have already been employed.

MR. SPEAKER : What are the other jobs ?

SHRI S.R. DAMANI : What are the other jobs you have prescribed ?

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK : The hon. Member wanted to know whether they have been employed. There are so many other jobs.

SHRI S.R. DAMANI : May I know whether the Government has set up any permanent committee of experts to undertake periodical inspection of all the mines from the safety point of view ; and if so, whether private experts are also associated with its apparatus and instructions from the safety point of view of the mines ?

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK : If the hon. Member cares to read from the statement, it is already there in item No. iv of the statement. "An Advisory Committee has been constituted to advise IISCO on the problems that may arise from time to time in the recommissioning of the underground mine."

**SHRI VINODBHAI B. SHETH :** Such accidents occur due to the negligence, faulty planning and inefficient working of the officers. In that case, would you like, once again, to think over for denationalising the coalfields ?

**SHRI BIJU PATNAIK :** No, Sir.

**SHRI VAYALAR RAVI :** This was one of the catastrophes and tragedies that happened in the Chasnala mine and there was a big uproar in Parliament itself. The Government has appointed a commission and spent a lot of money. The Coalfields Authority has also appointed lawyer officers. May I know from the hon. Minister whether it is a fact that you have not taken action against any of these officers who are responsible for this incident; and if so, what is the reason ?

**SHRI BIJU PATNAIK :** Although it does not arise out of this question, I have answered this question. The Labour Minister has written to the leader of the opposition and the leader of the other groups to advise on this matter. We have not received any answer from them. Please ask them to give us answers.

**SHRI VAYALAR RAVI :** My complaint is that some vested interest has developed in that office.

**SHRI BIJU PATNAIK :** If the hon. Member thinks that I have developed vested interest with some of the officers, then I cannot think as well of him as I used to think.

**SHRI HARIKESH BAHADUR :** When this Chasnala Mine disaster took place, at that time, Dr. S. S. Saluga, Institute of Technology, Banaras University, had fabricated a water lift pump and he has already demonstrated that pump over there. But that pump was not used by the officers of that particular department, where this accident had taken place. Dr. Saluga was telling, if that pump was used, many lives would have been saved. But, actually, that pump was not used.

**MR. SPEAKER :** We hope that such accidents will not happen hereafter.

**SHRI HARIKESH BAHADUR :** I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether such types of indigenous devices which have been fabricated by our Indian Scientists will be utilized in future in order to save human lives. (*Interruptions*) They had asked for a Russian pump. If they had fabricated that pump and if they had used that pump, it was hoped, at least, 200 persons would have been saved.

**SHRI BIJU PATNAIK :** When I took over the portfolio, I had myself called and discussed the entire matter with him. One of these days when he is ready, I am going to see the pump under demonstration which he has promised to show. I have not yet heard from him.

### **Interlinking of Telephone Exchange**

\*342. **SHRI GEORGE MATHEW :** Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether STD telephone services will be extended to all exchanges where there are more than 250 telephone connections; and

(b) whether all telephone exchanges within a radial distance of 10 miles from the principal exchange will be interlinked ?

**THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BRIJLAL VERMA) :**

(a) No, Sir.

(b) Interlinking will be done gradually as and when adequate material and financial resources become available.

**SHRI GEORGE MATHEW :** The hon. Minister has replied 'No' to part (a) of my question. I want to know whether there are any guide lines fixed for the establishment of STD telephone services in the country.

**SHRI BRIJLAL VERMA :** Yes; there are some guidelines. When there are more than hundred calls on a line in a day then it becomes justified to have STD.

**SHRI GEORGE MATHEW :** Regarding linking of the small exchanges to the principal exchange, the hon. Minister has said that it will be done as and when materials become available. Is there any time limit fixed for completing this job ? Will the Department takes its own time—as much time as they want or need—or has Government fixed any time limit for completing this job—linking of exchanges within a radius of ten miles ?

**SHRI BRIJLAL VERMA :** As regards 10 mile radius, we have fixed some norms. First of all, we have to connect by STD all the capitals in the country. After this, we are going to the Divisional level; all divisional headquarters will be connected by STD. Then we go to the district level. These norms have been fixed and we are going according to these norms.