

from the Hon. Minister whether there is any proposal to have one type of signalling system because the number of accidents take place due to defective signalling systems which are still in existence in our country? We are now importing 6,000 horse power electric locomotives. Our production unit at Chittaranjan has the capacity to produce this type of 6000 horse power electric engines. I would like to know whether any proposal is with the Government to start production in production our unit of Chittaranjan Locomotives of this type of electric locomotives of 6000 HP. If so, what is the target date?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : The Hon. Member knows that we are importing 186000 HP Thyristor type electric locomotives. They have already started arriving in this country. These 6000 HP locomotives are coming with the transfer of technology clause and they will be produced eventually in Chittaranjan Locomotive Works. That is certainly our intention.

As far as signalling is concerned, it is one of the key development areas identified under the 5 Mission Areas that we have adopted and it will be our attempt and the group that is being set up for signalling and telecommunication will be going into train control and signalling systems, solid type devices controlled by micro process and computer aided system provided for continuous train control and protection. So, the upgradation of signalling and telecommunication is already taking place; but we hope to give it a further impetus after this group has gone into it in detail. I hope that we will then be able to have our own indigenous technology and become world leaders in this area also. Upgradation of signalling and telecommunication is a continuous on-going process and the improved system is implemented in phases.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI PREMALABAI CHAVAN : Mr. Speaker Sir, I want to know from the hon. Minister whether steps are being taken by him to promote indigenous technology?

MR. SPEAKER : The hon. Minister has already replied to this.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have already replied to this.

[English]

Environmental Havoc due to Coal Mining Projects

*428. **SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY :** Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether according to the views expressed by the mining engineers of repute, coal mining projects are playing havoc with the environment;

(b) if so, the nature and extent of problem identified; and

(c) the remedial steps taken or proposed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI):

(a) According to experts, coal mining projects have serious environmental implications.

(b) The main environmental problems caused by coal and other mining projects are :

—land degradation;

—water pollution including acid drainage;

—atmospheric pollution;

—adverse impact on health of the workers; and

—disruption of the social life of the affected population.

The total area under mining leases in India is 7854 sq. km. Area degraded by

mining operations is, however, less than the area under mining leases as the entire leased area has not been worked so far.

(c) The remedial steps taken include :

- Impact assessment of new mining projects before deciding whether they should be implemented or not;
- Effective implementation of Environmental Management Plans for the approved projects; and
- Monitoring of the conditions imposed for environmental safeguards.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY : I am happy that the Minister has admitted that coal mines are creating havoc with the environment in the areas concerned. I believe that the Government has come to know about the workshop that took place at Lucknow. There, the renowned mining engineers submitted that remedial measures that are supposed to be taken by the agencies are not at all adequate.

For instance, the land reclamation project is not properly drawn and also not being properly implemented. I want to know whether this question of safeguarding the environment, protecting the environment and protecting the population in those areas has been considered by the authorities who are mining the area for the coal. Is there any central agency under the Central Government which is monitoring the whole thing and seeing that the things are properly implemented ?

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI : Monitoring of the coal-fields is being done regularly. The Ministry of Environment and Forests also monitors it and issues guidelines to the mining institutions. As far as the degradation of the area where mining takes place and the rehabilitation of those people who are affected because of degradation that matter is being taken up with the State Governments and Coal

authorities. At the highest level a meeting is going to be held to sort out the problems and to see that the affected persons are rehabilitated.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY : Subsidence is a great problem in the coal mines area and Government is aware that plan has to be drawn to shift Jharia town to save the population and to build a new habitat for these people. Similarly Raniganj area is being affected by the subsidence of earth. I would like to know whether you are going to take similar measures to see that this town is saved from subsidence or some other measures taken to save the population and rehabilitate them in other areas ?

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI : As far as Jharia mining area is concerned that is located within the territory of Bihar. Bihar State Government has put up some project for shifting of the population which is affected by the Jharia mining area and for that purpose a meeting is being called where the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Coal and the Bihar Government will take a view. I will take note of it that a similar meeting may be called for Raniganj also where the West Bengal Government should be asked to come with a project for rehabilitation of the people in that area.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : West Bengal Government has already forwarded a proposal.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI : We have passed Environment Protection Act, 1986. Under Section 7 of that Act any industry or mine discharging the pollutants in excess to the prescribed standards has to be punished. I would like to know has any standard been fixed and rules framed under this Act also whether the implementation is taking place ?

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI : For most of the industries standards have been fixed. We are taking steps for the other industries on priority basis. That process is going on for fixation of the standards. Lot of action has been taken under the

Environment Protection Act to contain and minimise the pollution and to take the wrong-doers to task.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA : Mr. Speaker Sir, the hon. Minister has admitted that coal mines are the cause of large-scale environmental pollution. I have had the opportunity to visit every coal mine in India. The Singrauli coal mines are located in my constituency. On visiting Neyveli I found that a very effective method of environment control has been planned there. Plants have been grown extensively to cover the entire area with 'greenery'. Officers of the Forest Department have made similar arrangements with both Singrauli and Neyveli Corporations. I want to ask the hon. Minister whether the Forest Department will also launch such a programme? Will the scheme being implemented in Neyveli and Singrauli be implemented at other places also? Land is acquired under the Coal Bearing Areas Act but no rehabilitation work is carried on. Adivasis and other people are left to the mercy of god. I want to ask the hon. Minister whether the Government will do anything to rehabilitate Adivasis and others affected thereby?

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI : Sir, before a coal mine is approved, it is seen that an environment management plan is prepared. Rehabilitation schemes for those affected are included in the environment management plan.

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER : Shri V. Sreenivasa Prasad.

Amendment to Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974

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°429 **SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD :**
SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Union Government pro-

pose to amend the existing Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974;

(b) if so, whether Union Government propose to confer more powers on the State Governments to control pollution and also to impose stringent penalties on defaulters; and

(c) if so, the details of the amendments Government propose to make and whether State Governments would be advised to effectively implement pollution control measures?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.....I am sorry.

MR. SPEAKER : Got lost in the forests.

[*Translation*]

Forests are useful but sometimes people are lost in the forests.

[*English*]

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI : (a) to (c) A proposal to amend the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 is under the consideration of the Government.

SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD : Sir, I would like to draw the memory of the hon. Minister. Sometime back, at Jaipur, the Minister in his inaugural address at the National Workshop on Industrial Pollution Control and Management said that a number of legal and administrative actions have already been taken for prevention and control of industrial pollution.

Sir, this has not been strictly implemented. For example, in my constituency, there is a place called Nanjangud. It is a pilgrimage centre. It is also called as a southern Kashi. There is a river by the name of Kapila. At this place, quite a good number of industries—both big and small—