

**Mr. Speaker:** Next question.

**Coal Supply to Andhra Pradesh**

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\*1005. { **Shri Viswanatha Reddy:**  
          { **Shri Rami Reddy:**  
          { **Kumari M. Vedakumari:**

Will the Minister of **Steel, Mines and Fuel** be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is severe shortage in the supplies of coal to the industries in Andhra Pradesh; and

(b) if so, what are the steps taken to remedy the situation?

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel (Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha):** (a) It is true that the full quota of coal has not moved to some industries in that State.

(b) Special arrangements were made to move supplies to the industries which were affected most and, as a result, the position has improved recently.

**Shri Viswanatha Reddy:** May I know whether it is a fact that coal from Singareni is moved far away from the Andhra State and that is why there is shortage of coal for the Andhra industries?

**Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha:** For the Andhra industries, coal is supplied from the Bihar and Bengal belt as well apart from the fact that it is supplied from Singareni.

**Kumari M. Vedakumari:** The Andhra State is already backward in industries. We want to know the cause of short supply of coal. Is it in the supply of coal or wagons? Many industries are affected and many of the industries are closed already.

**Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha:** There has been some short supply of coal

to Andhra because of some unavoidable reasons. Because in the rainy season there were many breaches. At the same time, there was the strike. They were the main reasons. The following steps have been taken to see that the supply of coal to Andhra State is increased. Firstly, the railways have been requested to increase the transport capacity and to remove or reduce the limitations or restrictions imposed by them on the movement of coal, so that more coal could be moved. Secondly, to make up the difficulty of transport, consumers are encouraged to take coal from West Bengal and Bihar coal-fields by rail-cum-sea route through the port of Calcutta. There are some requests also, and arrangements have been made to see that the coal position may improve. Today, the position is slightly better than what is was before.

**Shri M. R. Krishna:** May I know whether the price of coal is very high for the people of Andhra Pradesh who would like to use the Singareni coal for their industries, because they have to depend upon the coal which has to come from Bihar and other places?

**Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha:** The price of coal is already fixed. Therefore, that question does not arise.

**Shri Heda:** In view of the fact that Andhra Pradesh produces more coal than it consumes, may I know why a system has been evolved by which the Andhra Pradesh coal is sent to the other States, and the coal from the other States is brought to Andhra Pradesh?

**Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha:** I have just replied to that. Andhra Pradesh gets its coal not only from Singareni but also from the Bihar and Bengal coal-fields. Just to increase the supply of coal, Andhra Pradesh Government have been requested as also the industries in that State, to have some coal from Korba also. Then, the position may be slightly better. After all, it is not possible to supply

the entire production of the Singareni colliery only to Andhra Pradesh.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. Member's question is different. When Singareni coal is more than sufficient for Andhra Pradesh, why should that be sent away to other States and coal from other States brought to that State?

**The Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel (Sardar Swaran Singh):** May I clarify the position? The supplies of coal are not answered by tonnage but also by certain categories and qualities. There are certain categories of coal which have to be imported for the various users in Andhra Pradesh from the Bengal-Bihar area; then, the States in the south, namely Mysore, Kerala and Madras have not got any coal supply. So, coal has to move to those States also. So, we do not move in this matter of coal distribution on the basis of production. We take several factors into consideration, such as categories, rationalisation of movement, what best the railways can do and so on.

**Shri Ranga:** In view of the fact that recently complaints and deputations have been received by Government that there was not proper co-ordination between the railways and the coal authorities and as a result of it, the quantities moved into Andhra Pradesh have been in short supply, may I know whether Government have considered the advisability of having an inter-departmental committee at a high level in order to see that there is co-ordination between these two departments, and the supplies are made available to Andhra Pradesh in time?

**Sardar Swaran Singh:** It is not correct to say that there has been no co-ordination between the railways and the coal distribution authorities. There is constant consultation. I myself meet my colleague the Railway Minister after every two or three weeks to review the position. At the present moment, the movement is

very smooth, and the railways are doing the maximum which they can do.

**Shri Thirumala Rao:** Has the attention of Government been drawn to the fact that the Government Ceramic Factory at Gudur has been closed down for want of coal recently, causing great loss to the Government and also loss of employment to the labourers?

**Sardar Swaran Singh:** I would require separate notice for that.

**Kumari M. Vedakumari:** There is not only lack of co-ordination between the railways and the Steel, Mines and Fuel Ministry, but when every request goes before the Coal Commissioner for the purpose of allocating the priorities as between the various industries, there is some mismanagement at the stage of allocation also. So, I request the coal may be distributed equally to the Andhra Pradesh industries also. At present, we are paying extra transport charges also because we have to get coal from Bengal-Bihar area.

**Sardar Swaran Singh:** I could not follow the question except that the hon. lady Member is not fully satisfied with the allocation.

**Kumari M. Vedakumari:** I shall repeat the question. There is not only lack of co-ordination between the railways and the Ministry of Steel, Mines and Fuel in the matter of allotment of wagons for coal, but there is mismanagement at the level of the Coal Commissioner while fixing up the priorities for the industries and making the allocations. We want to know whether the mistake is at the level of the Steel, Mines and Fuel Ministry or the Railways or the Coal Commissioner? What is the difficulty, and where does the difficulty lie?

**Sardar Swaran Singh:** I have already submitted that there is complete co-ordination, consultation and

joint handling in the matter of movement of coal. It has to be remembered that nearly 50 million tons have to be moved, which roughly comes to one-third of the total capacity of the railways. The Coal Controller lays down the priorities, and the top priorities are the steel mills and other such industries, the power-houses etc. I have often indicated what the priorities are. Then, those priorities have to be fitted with the number of wagons that are available. In that exercise, I would not be surprised, if some low-priority users have not received coal in the requisite quantity at the requisite time.

**Several Hon. Members rose—**

**Mr. Speaker:** May I suggest one thing? Hon. Members from different parts of Andhra Pradesh appear to be interested in this. Therefore, may I suggest to the hon. Minister that he may have a small conference of all the members coming from Andhra Pradesh, and iron out the differences, if there are really any?

**Shri Ranga:** The other Ministers also should be there, and not merely the Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel.

**Shri Ram Krishan Gupta:** What about the other States? (*Interruptions*).

**Mr. Speaker:** Very well. From time to time, these matters can be easily resolved by sitting together across the table and talking over the matter. The whole of India is concerned with this problem of coal supply, movement of wagons, from which colliery the supply has to be earmarked and so on. The Central Hall of Parliament House is there, and I always keep it at the disposal of hon. Members. Therefore, the hon. Minister, if he has no objection, may permit a number of hon. Members to meet him, and he can sit together with them and iron out those differences.

**Sardar Swaran Singh:** There is no question of any objection. Hon. Members are most welcome, and they can

meet me at any time. Actually, they are meeting me from time to time. We have had two meetings of the informal consultative committee recently, which fairly represents the hon. Members from different sides of the House, and if there are any particular matters which they want to urge, I am at their disposal.

**Mr. Speaker:** Very well, he can fix up a meeting on the 24th instant.

**Shri D. C. Sharma:** This is an all-India problem, and the hon. Minister must take into confidence all the Members of the House.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. Minister may fix up a meeting on the 24th December, 1960 or at some other time, when all the hon. Members may meet him. This seems to be a general complaint from all States and not only from Andhra Pradesh. So, the hon. Minister may, as quickly as possible, and as early as possible before the hon. Members go away, sit together with them and try to find out a solution. I am only interested in seeing that no complaints are brought before the House.

**Shri Braj Raj Singh:** He alone should not be there. Unless the Railway Minister is also roped in, nothing is going to come out of it, because the question of wagon shortage is also there. The coal is there at the pit-heads, but it is not being moved for running the industries. That is the whole difficulty.

**Mr. Speaker:** If a date is fixed, I shall ask the Railway Minister or his deputy also to be present.

**Shri P. C. Borooah:** May I ask one question?.....

**Mr. Speaker:** Assam has got oil and no coal.

**Shri P. C. Borooah:** Assam has coal also.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. Member also may be present at that meeting.