

when there is a fire underground, poisonous gases (mostly carbon monoxide) are given out. Adequate precautions have already been taken to nullify the effect of such poisonous gas emission. These precautions include strict follow up of Coal Mines Regulations, 1957 and rigid implementation of the recommendations of the Director General of Mines Safety made from time to time. Besides, the Coal Miners have been trained and provided with self-rescuers in degree-III and degree-II gassy mines to meet any eventuality.

[*Translation*]

Coal Deposit in Bihar

309. SHRI YOGESHWAR PRASAD : Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether rich deposits of coal have been found in Baluniath under Palamu, district Bihar and the M.E.C. (Mineral Exploration Corporation Ltd.) has done a lot of work in this regard ;

(b) whether keeping in view the poverty and unemployment conditions prevailing in these most backward areas of Palamu, Hazari Bagh and Gaya districts, Government propose to undertake mining operations in these areas in the public interest ; and

(c) if so, by what time and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL MINES AND COAL (SHRI VASANT SATHE) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[*English*]

Distribution and Price Fixation of Coal

310. SHRI VIJAY KUMAR RAJU : Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES

AND COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a uniform system of distribution and price fixation for coal supplied by Coal India Limited ; and

(b) if so, on what basis priorities are fixed ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL, MINES AND COAL (SHRI VASANT SATHE) : (a) and (b) There is no statutory control on the distribution of coal, except in respect of coking coal for metallurgical use. However, as a substantial portion of coal is despatched to the consumers by rail the actual supplies of coal continue to be regulated under a system of sponsorship in regard to allotment of wagons, which is governed by the Preferential Traffic Schedule General Order issued by the Ministry of Railways. For such allotment of wagons, priorities are fixed by the Government for different sectors keeping in view the relative importance of the consuming sectors in public interest.

As regards price, Government only fix pithead prices of coal (on FOR colliery basis) The prices at the consumer end vary depending on the mode of transport, distance from the colliery, taxes etc.

Setting up Defence factories in Bihar

311. SHRI VIJAY KUMAR YADAV : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether demands have been made from time to time for setting up Defence factories in Patna or elsewhere in Bihar ;

(b) if so, whether Government of Bihar have submitted any proposal in this regard ; and

(c) if so, Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO) : (a) to (c) Requests had been received in