

Title: Requested the Government to consider the demands of the coal-workers to withdraw the Bill to denationalize coal industries as well as to convert the seven subsidiary factories in West Bengal and Jharkhand into one company in order to avert the proposed nation-wide strike of the workers.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (BANKURA): Sir, more than seven lakh coal workers from all over the country will be on strike for three days from 3rd December. They have served notice. All the trade unions, from Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh to Centre of Indian Trade Union, have joined hands. Seven lakh workers will be on strike. Their demand is that the Bill to denationalise coal industry should be withdrawn. This Bill was introduced last year in Rajya Sabha. It was considered by the Standing Committee on Energy and a Report was presented with a dissenting note by five Members of Parliament.

They have also demanded that three subsidiaries, which are in the States of West Bengal and Jharkhand – Eastern Coalfields Limited, Bharat Coking Coal Limited and Central Coalfields Limited – should be converted into one company.

श्रीमती कान्ति सिंह (बिक्रमगंज) : सभापति जी, गृह राज्य मंत्री जी ने हमें आश्वासन दिया था कि वे हमें सुनेंगे लेकिन वह बाहर जा रहे हैं। (व्यवधान)

सभापति महोदय : आप बैठ जाइये, आपका नाम जब पुकारा जाए, तब अपनी बात कहियेगा।

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : The number of workers is more than three lakhs. These three subsidiaries are incurring losses. The demand of the trade unions is to convert the seven subsidiaries into one company so that these three subsidiaries, which are in the State of West Bengal and the State of Jharkhand, could come out of the BIFR. If they were converted into one company, the coal company would be viable.

Another major demand relates to the National Coal Wage Agreement, which was signed and approved one year ago. The period of that agreement has also been completed but the arrears to the workers have not been paid.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please come to the point now.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : The arrears to the workers should also be paid and in order to have a new wage revision agreement a Joint Coal Consultative Committee should also be formed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Basu Deb Acharia, please come to the main point....(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : If the strike starts from Monday, the entire industry of the country would suffer. I have written to the hon. Speaker and I want the hon. Coal Minister to respond and clarify. I demand that the major demands of the seven lakh coal workers should be considered by the Government and the strike, for which notice has been given by the workers, should be averted. The Coal Minister should come forward to resolve the problems of the seven lakh coal workers of the country. ...(Interruptions)