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Title : Reported study of Sambalpur University forecasting disaster in Ib valley area of Orissa due to continuous operation of open cast mine by Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) without following rules and procedure.

SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA (SAMBALPUR): Madam, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Union Government, particularly the Ministry of Coal regarding a very serious situation that has arisen in the Ib Valley area in Orissa.

Sambalpur University, which is the leading University in the State, has undertaken a study, and has a very alarming revelation. The study says that the Ib Valley will turn into a desert because of continuous operation of open cast mining by the Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) without following rules and procedures. There are reports of reduction of rainfall in the area, increase of temperature and decrease of humidity.

Due to release of tonnes of coal dust and overburden of open cast mine, there is serious air pollution. There is report of water pollution due to mining activity in the area, which is going on since last several decades. The authorities of the MCL are not undertaking plantation satisfactorily in the mining area and also adequate sand filling has not been done.

Therefore, Madam, a serious situation has arisen. A survey was undertaken by Seismologists, which indicates that Orissa comes under the earthquake belt Zone IV. The Ib Valley, the Talcher area, the Badrama area, which is a forest area in the Western Orissa, the Riaml area and particularly the Hirakud Basin, where the famous and the longest Hirakud Dam is situated, come under this Zone. The most alarming thing is that a crack is said to have formed in this belt in deep under earth. An earthquake may be a catastrophe in this region.

Moreover the people of the area where MCL is undertaking mining work are suffering from many lung diseases like TB, BP, Hypertension, etc.

My request to the Central Government, particularly to the Ministry of Coal is that they should take a serious note of it, and prevail upon the MCL authorities to at least adopt all the rules and procedures, the Mining Safety Rules while undertaking mining work.