

an>

Title: Need to check prevalence of Silicosis and Tuberculosis among labourers engaged in quarrying of stone in Rajasthan and take immediate measure for treatment of Afflicted persons.

SHRI HARISH MEENA (DAUSA): I wish to draw the attention of the Government towards the miserable working condition of labourers engaged in different stone mining Industries of the country, particularly in Rajasthan. It has been found that no safety/precautionary measures are taken in most of the mining centres. The recent report by the National Institute of Miners' Health (NIMH) conducted at Karauli District of Rajasthan stated that 23.2% of mine labourers are suffering from respiratory problems and out of them 78% are found affected with serious disease like Silicosis and others from Tuberculosis (TB). Silicosis is a dangerous disease, which causes loss in weight and leads to death, if not properly treated on time. The same situation prevails in other districts of Rajasthan. It is well known that mining is main source of livelihood in many districts of Rajasthan and a large numbers of families are dependent on it. There are more than 30 lakh people engaged in mining industries in Rajasthan. There is a constant increase in the number of people affected with these diseases. Condition of workers' family is miserable; women and small children are forced to work in the same condition in mining industry for the survival of their family. Some villages are left with only widows and small children only. Although Government aid is provided to patients affected with Silicosis, but as per Government regulation this should be certified by Pneumoconiosis Board of medical college. Due to delay on the part of Board, many patients lose their life without proper treatment.

I, therefore, urge upon the Government to intervene immediately in the matter to provide early treatment to the affected persons & also provide financial assistance to their families and conduct a comprehensive study involving all persons engaged in stone mining to determine prevalence of silicosis in the area. There is also a need to train local doctors in diagnosis of silicosis as a large numbers of cases are wrongly diagnosed as cases of Tuberculosis. The mine owners and labourers also need to be educated and made aware of health hazards of stone dust and preventive measures required to be taken at the earliest.