

ILO Assistance to Control Environmental Pollution in Specific Industrial Areas

*63. SHRI ANAND SINGH† :

SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH :

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether in the wake of the environmental disaster in Bhopal in December last Government have enlisted the assistance of the International Labour Organisation to control pollution in specific industrial areas; and

(b) if so, what steps have so far been taken to utilise the services, aid and advice of the International Labour Organisation in this regard and to identify the pollution prone areas for the purpose ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI T. ANJIAH) : (a) Dr. G. Kliesch, Chief of occupational Safety and Health, International Labour Organisation, Geneva, visited our country in the first week of February, 1985, and held discussions on the technical assistance that ILO can offer. Further discussions on this were held by the Ministry's officials at Geneva. A mission consisting of two expert members is shortly visiting India.

(b) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

Immediately after the news regarding the industrial accident at Bhopal came to the knowledge of the International Labour Organisation, a message was received from the Director General, ILO, Geneva, assuring readiness to provide technical assistance and advice in the field of occupational safety and health and working environment, to the Government of India, as may be appropriate. Accordingly, Dr. G. Kliesch, Chief of Occupational Safety & Health, ILO, Geneva visited India in the first week of February, 1985 and held discussions with the officers of the Department of Chemicals and the Department of Environment. Thereafter Dr. Kliesch had a final meeting with the Secretary, Labour, and the following decisions were taken :

— ILO will identify the expert who may hold preliminary discussion with the Central Labour Ministry, the Director General of Factory Advice Service & Labour Institutes, and the selected State Governments, to assess the areas in which technical assistance can be provided under the International Programme for the Improvement of Working Conditions and Environment.

— The proposed project may be in two stages. Stage one may deal with immediate requirements arising out of the extraordinary situation created by the Bhopal accident, Stage two may provide for long term assistance for building up of infrastructure for training and education for the industry and the workers.

2. In pursuance of the discussions held at the official level and the report made by Dr. Kliesch to the ILO, ILO is deputing a mission consisting of two experts, who will be coming to India later this month and early April '85. The extent and nature of technical assistance by the ILO or other international agencies will be known only after the mission's report and proposals are received.

3. The areas which we have identified for technical assistance will include :

— Major hazard control system in dangerous manufacturing processes, including chemical industry ;

— System of selection criteria for national and international agencies or specialists for services in special emergency cases in hazardous processes in the industry ;

— Preparation of project proposal(s) on preventive and monitoring system for occupational health ;

— Special training programmes (national and/or regional) on chemical safety.

4. Government is fully alive of the imperative need of controlling and preventing environmental pollution caused as a result of toxic and hazardous processes and industry. As soon as an action plan has been developed on the basis of ILO's

recommendations, effective measures will be taken towards their implementation.

SHRI ANAND SINGH : Sir, the hon. Minister has identified the areas for technical assistance. Most of the distilleries in U.P. do not observe the safety rules or abide by the laws causing severe pollution. They flout them purposefully and the Pollution from the distilleries is at a very high rate. In view of this, will this, technical assistance also cover these distilleries, and further more, what steps the Government takes against all distillery owners to ensure that the laws are enforced ?

[*Translation*]

SHRI T. ANJALIAH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, instructions have been issued to cope with all such situations and we are also taking certain steps. We will endeavour that as far as possible such incidents do not occur. We are thinking of importing training in the labour institutes of Calcutta, Kanpur and Madras so that such incidents do not occur. If any incident of such nature takes place we will take action against the factory irrespective of its being Government factory or private factory or chemical factory.

SHRI ANAND SINGH : Sir, a number of factories have been closed down recently. Is it true that about 20 industries have been closed under the existing Central or State laws ? Are any further amendments or changes contemplated by the Government for better enforcement of these laws ? If so, what are they ?

SHRI T. ANJALIAH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have no information of the closure of twenty-five factories. If a separate question is asked as to why these factories have been closed and how they can be recommissioned, an answer can be given to that.

SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH : Sir, effective measures to implement the recommendations of the International Labour Organisation will be taken after we receive the recommendations.

But in the meanwhile what precautionary measures are being taken to prevent this type of incident again ? Secondly, I would like to know whether our existing rules at

national and State level are enough to enforce safety rules and take precautionary measures or not, and if they are enough, how many industries have been punished for non-implementation of the safety rules.

SHRI T. ANJALIAH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, instructions have been issued to all the States in this regard. Reports have not so far been received from all the States. We will ensure that no incident like the one occurred in Bhopal takes place again and if it occurs, the guilty will be punished.

AN HON. MEMBER : May I know the details of the punishment awarded during the last two months ?

SHRI T. ANJALIAH : This does not form part of the main question.

[*English*]

It is a separate question :

MR. SPEAKER : Shrimati Geetaj

SHRIMATI BIBHA GHOSH GOSWAMI : I am Bibha Ghosh.

MR. SPEAKER : I thought it was her because the seat used to be occupied by her.

SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH : What about the implementation of the statutory rules ? Have they been implemented or not ?

[*Translation*]

SHRI T. ANJALIAH : We know that there are statutory rules but these are to be implemented. Whatever these rules are being violated, the guilty will be prosecuted
(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER : Please sit down. It is all right.

SHRIMATI BIBHA GHOSH GOSWAMI : I would like to know whether the problem of pollution in big cities such as Calcutta, Kanpur, Bombay, Delhi and other cities also where environmental pollution has reached an alarming dimension, is also

taken into account. The environmental pollution is not only from industrial sources but from other sources also. Has this problem also been identified as one of the areas for technical assistance?

[Translation]

SHRI T. ANJIAH : You have asked about the environmental pollution. We are conducting a survey in this regard.

[English]

SHRIMATI BIBHA GHOSH GOSWAMI : All the big cities are being surveyed. I think, that is what he says.

MR. SPEAKER : Yes.

SHRI SURESH KURUP : I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the dilapidated condition of the Amonia Plant of FACT at Alwayas has come to the notice of the hon. Minister. It is causing serious threat to the labourers and the people at Cochin.

[Translation]

SHRI T. ANJIAH : It is under the purview of the State Government.

[English]

Losses to Potato Growers

*64. SHRI ANIL BASU† :

SHRI SATYAGOPAL MISRA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the distress sale of potatoes in different parts of the country due to which the potato growers are facing huge losses;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) steps taken by Government to save the potato growers?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI BUTA SINGH) : (a) to (c) In consultation with the State Governments of Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh, which had reported fall in prices of potatoes,

market intervention operations were authorised by the Government at Rs. 50/- per quintal for fair average quality and the losses are to be shared equally by the Central and the State Governments. Later, at the specific request of the West Bengal Government, market intervention for potatoes in West Bengal was also authorised on the condition that Government of India will share losses equally with the West Bengal Government on the basis of a support price of Rs. 50/- per quintal as in other States. All the State Governments have been advised that they should avail themselves of the scheme of market intervention to help the farmers. These operations have had a salutary effect. The progress is closely monitored to protect the interest of farmers.

SHRI ANIL BASU : Mr. Speaker, Sir. I would like to know from the hon. Minister how much quantity of potatoes has been purchased so far State-wise and how much fund has been given to the State Governments by your Ministry.

The second part of my first question is, what is the result of the assurance given by you about the crash programme of exporting potatoes this year.

SHRI BUTA SINGH : Sir, the scheme is operating through National and State Cooperative Marketing Federations and primary cooperative marketing societies in States where the farmers are growing potatoes. In Uttar Pradesh, it started on the 19th of January, 1985. In Punjab, it started on the 18th of January, 1985. In Himachal Pradesh, it started on the 7th of February and in West Bengal, it was authorised for the implementation on the 12th of March.

As far as the quantity purchased is concerned, in Uttar Pradesh, 83,690 quintals have been bought through the State Cooperative Marketing Federation and the primary cooperative societies. PCF is operating in 11 districts. These are : Farrukhabad, Ghaziabad, Etawah, Allahabad, Agra, Mainpuri, Muzaffarnagar, Deoria, Jaunpur, Kanpur and Varanasi. 39 Purchase centres have been established in these districts. In addition NAFED is operating in the districts