

you that you cannot find even a single wild animal in the area.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SHANTI DHARIWAL: Incidents of poaching have been taking place in the area for last several years. One such incident took place there only 4-5 days ago.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It is his question.

(Interruptions)

SHRI JUJHAR SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has said that an Act has been passed which provides for checking illicit grazing. Though it has been declared a Sanctuary by the Government, yet the animals from other areas like outside Kota district have taken shelter in that area. I would like to know whether the Forest department has implemented the Act or withheld it? Animals are coming from outside and they settle there. What is the Government doing in this regard?

SHRI BHAJAN LAL: The hon. Member said that animals from neighbouring districts graze in the sanctuary. You are aware that a severe drought has stricken Rajasthan. There is therefore no ban on animals of those districts entering other districts. It is possible that there might have been some illicit grazing, but the Government is trying its level best to ensure that there is no grazing in the Sanctuary. We have provided full protection in this regard.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTION

[English]

Expert Group on National Council for Safety in Mines

SNQ5. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA:
SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether an Expert Group on National Council for Safety in Mines was set up;

(b) if so, when and with what terms of reference and expenditure incurred in this regard;

(c) the recommendations of the Expert Group;

(d) whether the recommendations of the Group have been rejected; if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the decision conforms to the commitments made by Government at the First Conference on Safety in Mines, especially the grounds given in the orders dated 13 November, 1987; and

(f) if so, the manner in which Government propose to safeguard the interests of the employees?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P.A. SANGMA): (a) to (f) A statement is given below.

Expert Group on National Council for Safety in Mines by S/Shri Basudeb Acharia and Saifuddin Chowdhary

STATEMENT

The First Conference on Safety in Mines held in August, 1958 had inter alia, recommended that suitable schemes should be drawn up for education of mine workers and staff at all levels on the need for safety and the requirements of safety. In pursuance of the recommendation, the National Council for safety in Mines was set up in July, 1963 as a tripartite organisation registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 to undertake, aid and promote safety education in mines. The establishment and the activities of the Council received financial support from the Coal Mines Labour Welfare Fund. With the transfer of the administration of the Fund from the Labour Ministry to the Department of Coal in 1981-82, a decision had to be taken on continuance of the Council, and its financing in the event of its continu-

ance. An expert Group was set up by the Government on 25th June, 1985 with the following terms of reference:-

- (a) Whether there is any justification for continuance of the National Council for Safety in Mines;
- (b) If it has to continue, what should be its structure, role and functions, source of finance etc.

The Expert Group recommended that the continuance of the National Council for Safety in Mines was fully justified. The report was considered by Government. It was felt that safety was primarily a management function. A substantial programme on mines safety had in fact been taken on hand by Coal India Limited after the nationalisation of coal mines. The National Council for Safety in Mines had also not been able to devote its attention to the unorganised sector in mining, on account of lack of resources. It was, therefore, decided by the Government that the National Council for Safety in Mines should be wound up. In the organised sector, the management should themselves be made responsible for safety education. As regards unorganised sector, the Director General of Mines Safety should be given the responsibility and that the organisation of the Directorate General of Mines Safety should be suitably strengthened for the purpose.

The employees of the Council will be compensated as per law, at the time of winding up of the Council.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: The statement is rather disappointing. The task of accidents prevention is concerned not only with its technical aspect, but also with the humanitarian Safety lies in the nature of making people believe in it. The majority of the mining workers, who are illiterate, should be made aware of the safety aspect. This can be done only through propaganda, publicity and seminars, with a missionary zeal. This is being done by the National Council for Safety in Mines for the last 25 years. All these conferences on safety in mining in the past had recommended the utility of this Council, and also

the expansion of the activities of the National Council for Safety in Mines. An expert group....

MR. SPEAKER: What is the question? Put the question.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: An expert working group was set up. It was set up with the following terms of reference:

“Whether there is any justification for continuance of the National Council for Safety in Mines;”

It was the unanimous recommendation of this expert group, where the representatives from the Minister of Energy, and of Labour and representatives from the trade unions were also there--they had recommended the continuance of this National Council for Safety in Mines, and the strengthening of this organization, and also the expansion of its activities.

MR. SPEAKER: What is the question? Ask the question now. Mr. Acharia, I am going to close it now. What is the question?

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: In spite of its unanimous recommendation, Government has decided to wind the Council up. May I know from the Minister: when an expert group which was set up, had recommended, unanimously recommended the continuance of this Council....Why has the government taken a unilateral decision to wind up the National Council for Safety in Mines? (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: You have exceeded everything.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Please order.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: I have already answered both the questions.

MR. SPEAKER: You repeat it.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: You have not answered them.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: Whether the Expert Committee has recommended for continuance of this Council, I have said, yes, I have also said that in spite of the recommendations of the Expert Committee, the Government of India has taken a decision to wind it up. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Why?

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Let him say why.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Look here, you have asked why and he is going to answer why.

(Interruptions)

MR. P. A. SANGMA: Please listen to my answer. (1) Though this Council has done a good work, we already also have a Director-General of Mines Safety who is doing the same type of work. *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Let him finish it.

(Interruptions)

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: You have been having it all through.

(Interruptions)

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: (2) It is the primary responsibility of the management to ensure the safety of the mine workers.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: That has always been there.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: In doing this job, it is their responsibility to do it. *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: It does not matter; whatever is there.....

(Interruptions)

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: (3) This Council has no resources of its own.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: You provide the money.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: It is a tripartite body; it is surviving hand to mouth from the contribution from various departments. The expenditure on establishment on salary and on the wages of the employees comes to Rs.12 lakhs only.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: You don't provide that.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: And the work they are doing is for Rs.6 lakhs. So, they are doing the work which is half of the expenditure which is being incurred....*(Interruptions)* and the most important reasons are which I have stated earlier. But I have also stated in my answer that though we have decided to wind it up, we will ensure that the workers and the employees are not victimised; whatever they have got their legitimate dues shall be given to them according to law.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: I want a categorical answer. It has been stated here that the coalmine labour welfare fund previously was with the Ministry of Law. Now it has been transferred to the Ministry of Energy. About this winding up decision, it is a tussle between the Ministry of Energy and the Ministry of Labour.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Is it true?

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Sir, there is a very loud protest from all sections of the people. Will the Government review the decision to transfer this Council as the fund has been transferred to the Ministry of Energy?

MR. SPEAKER: Why are you hanging to this question? Put the question.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: The Council is to be transferred to the Ministry of Energy. Will you consider this proposal?

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: On a question whether there is any tussle between the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Energy, my answer is emphatically, 'No'. But the most important aspect is, after Government have decided to wind it up, what would be the fate of the employees? There are 60 of them.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Not only employees, but safety of mine workers is involved.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: In my answer I have said that they will get their legitimate dues according to the law. But before this, may I assure the House, because a delegation of the employees has also met me I want assure the House, that as far as practicable the employees of this Council shall be absorbed in the DG Mines organisation. I am also taking up with the Department of Coal that they should also absorb some of them; if there is anybody left who could not be absorbed so that they could get their legitimate dues under the law.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Why can't you transfer this Council to the Ministry of Energy

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: Nothing good can come from this national Government. It is not true that everybody in the conference of Safety in Mines wanted the continuation of the National Council for Safety in Mines. The hon. Minister has said that it had done a good work. Then why have they decided to wind it up? He said that they will compensate the workers and the employees. It is not a question of giving the dues. The question is, the expertise they have, to use it for the safety measures in the mines. What is he going to do about that? I want a firm assurance. If they just try to brush us aside, because we are asking, then we shall direct them to work in the mines and they will understand what it would mean.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: I agree with the

hon. Member that they have a lot of expertise. That is why I have stated, as they have already got certain expertise, then, as far as practicable they will be absorbed in DG of Mines Safety. It is doing the same type of work. We are going to absorb them. That is what I said.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Manning of Unmanned Railway Level Crossings

*496 SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether any study has been made to assess the extent to which unmanned railway crossings are responsible for the railway accidents;

(b) if so, the outcome of such study and the details of the programme to man them;

(c) the total number of unmanned railway crossings, zone-wise as on 31 July, 1987; and

(d) the number of such crossings manned during the last three years, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) and (b). Study of accidents at level crossing, with a view to improving safety has been a continuing exercise. It has been observed that over the past three years, unmanned level crossings, which constitute 58% of the total number of level crossings, have contributed 67% of the total number of accidents at level crossings.

Arising out of a recent study, trials with one train-actuated warning device are already in progress. Based on evaluation of the results thereof, a decision will be taken regarding its adoption on a programmed basis, as an alternative to the present system of manning.

(c) The information is maintained finan-