

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COAL
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1735
TO BE ANSWERED ON 13.12.2023

Health Hazards to Coal Mine Workers

1735. SHRI GNANATHIRAVIAM S.:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that one of the biggest problems of coal mine workers is that they are suffering from asthma, eye infection and other health problems and they do not have any other option for their livelihood;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and
- (c) whether it is also a fact that the contractors are compromising the protocols related to health problems of mine workers and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF PARLIAMENT AFFAIRS, COAL AND MINES
(SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI)**

(a & b): No Sir, there are no reports to indicate asthma, eye infection or any other health issue as the biggest problem of coal mine workers as compared to general population. Safety measures are in place to ensure and maintain their health and livelihood.

CIL has robust network of healthcare facilities. Every employee and worker are provided extensive healthcare. Neyveli Lignite Corporation India Limited(NLCIL) has open cast mines which are adequately mechanized. Therefore, there is no deployment of manual labour for mining activities. And there is no risk in acquiring occupational related illness. NLCIL maintains occupational health services (OHS) for cohort of miners engaged in mining units and executives/ supervisors and workers engaged over a long haul almost covering their entire working lives and monitor the health parameters from their recruitment to their retirement. This helps in early detection of health problems either associated with work place environment or due

to occupational stress and faulty behavioral response to cope up with stress and planning of health care interventions at appropriate time. Thus it plays a significant role in impacting the company's bottom line results through promotion and preservation of robust workforce.

Singareni Collieries Company Limited(SCCL) provides medical and health care to the employees and contract workmen. SCCL has also Seven Area Hospitals (821 Bed Strength), 21 Dispensaries, providing specialists services including Chest Physicians/ Ophthalmologist scattered over 6 Districts of Telangana where mining operations are on progress. SCCL is also conducting awareness programs on occupational diseases to employees at Mines and Departments. There are 12 Occupational Health Service centers scattered all Areas of SCCL to look after the Occupational Health Services and also to monitoring the chronic diseases of the Employees and during PME, employees/contract worker shall undergo eye refraction test and Chest radiography, if they found any health problem , they will be given medical treatment in company hospitals.

(c): CIL conducts Initial Medical Examination (IME) for newly joining employees/contractor workers and Periodical Medical Examination (PME) for existing employees/contractor workers at prescribed, regular intervals at the hospitals and dispensaries maintained by CIL. In addition, there is provision of regular healthcare facilities available at various hospitals and dispensaries of the company for contractor workers and employees, and 395 private hospitals have been empaneled pan India level for company's employees and their entitled family members. From April, 2018 to March, 2023 Initial Medical Examination has been conducted on 74550 persons and Periodical Medical Examinations has also been conducted on 311945 persons during the same period of time.

NLCIL conducts Initial Medical Examination (IME) for all workers engaged in mining units including Society/Short term/Outsourced and other contract workmen. And Periodical Medical Examination (PME) also carries out for Society/ Short term/Outsourced and other contract workmen on par with regular employees once in three years irrespective of age in par with the regular employees of NLCIL. The OHS (Occupational Health Services) unit at NLC India Hospital implements Periodic Medical Examination (PME) program as per DGMS guidelines to monitor the occupational health and well being of miners. PME covers the entire mining

population once in 3 years irrespective of age as per DGMS guidelines. OHS also complies with continuous monitoring of health and wellbeing of employees engaged in mines, including contract workmen, are covered under Periodic Medical Examination program within a time span of 3 years. This cycle is repeated periodically that enables OHS to have proper perspective on occupational health and wellbeing of miners. PME also focuses on prevention for any occupationally related respiratory illness through appropriate investigations like Chest X Ray and Lung Function Tests. OHS also undertakes Master Health Checkup for executives and non-executives from across all units as preventive health strategy.

SCCL provides also medical treatment to Contract workmen in its hospitals.
