1070. SHRI BAISHNAB PARIDA:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to bring certain reforms in the mining sector in the country;
(b) if so, the details thereof;
(c) the details of afflictions in the system that are proposed to be addressed to help the workers; and
(d) the fresh actions on streamlining mineral produce especially iron ore to control any kind of black-mailing?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINES AND STEEL (SHRI VISHNU DEO SAI)

(a) and (b): Yes Sir. An Ordinance was promulgated on 12th January, 2015 to amend the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, which inter-alia provides for (i) grant of mineral concessions through auction by competitive bidding; (ii) extension of validity of lease period of existing leases; (iii) establishment of District Mineral Foundation for the benefit of persons and areas affected by mining operations; (iv) establishment of National Mineral Exploration Trust for the purposes of regional and detailed exploration; (v) simplification and removal of delays in the method of grant of mineral concessions; and (vi) enhancing penal provisions to check illegal mining.

(c): As the matters relating to safety, health and welfare of persons employed in mines are covered under the provisions of Mines Act, 1952 and the rules and regulations made thereunder, therefore, no specific provision had been made in the Ordinance relating to mine workers.

(d): Changes brought in the legal framework to streamline mineral production, including production of iron ore, inter-alia are introduction of transparent procedure for grant of mineral concessions through auction; removal of discretionary provisions like renewal of mining leases; increase in tenure of mining leases to 50 years; and transition provisions to ensure that mining operations do not come to a standstill and the manufacturing industry is not deprived of an assured supply of raw material.

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