Importance of coal in the Indian Economy

Coal is the most important source of commercial energy in India. Reserves of coal in seams up to a depth of 600 metres and of thickness of 1.2 metres and above are estimated at 35,444 million tonnes. Of these 24,604 million tonnes have been categorized as proved reserves. Of the balance, 375.5 million tonnes are indicated reserves and the rest are inferred reserves. The bulk of the coal reserves are of the non-coking variety. The coal industry is concentrated in Bihar, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, a part of Uttar Pradesh, Orissa, parts of Maharashtra and Andhra. Among these States, Bihar is the leading producer and accounted for 44 million tonnes or 41 per cent of the total output in 1970. Madhya Pradesh with 25 million tonnes accounted for 23 per cent of the output and in West Bengal,


production was 19 million tonnes or 18%. The major consumers of coal are, the power industry, steel, cement, fertilisers, textiles, paper and brick manufacturing industries.

The re-emergence of coal as the most important source of commercial energy

It is quite likely that but for the sustained increase in oil prices since 1973, the coal industry would not have attained the eminent place that it occupies in the energy plans of the country. With the dramatic increase in world oil prices, a complete reassessment of the importance of coal in the national economic growth became necessary. It in this background that against a modest public sector investment of Rs.110 crores in the Fourth Plan, the outlay for the coal sector in the Fifth Plan was raised to 1025 crores. Production was expected to reach 124 million tonnes at the end of the Fifth Plan. These expectations, however, did not materialise and production remained at about 101 million tonnes. Continuing coal shortage had a pervasive impact on the overall economic growth of the country.

3 These figures which show the location of the industry were obtained from the Coal India Limited.  
4 Sixth Five Year Plan, Government of India, Planning Commission, page 238.
Analysis of reasons for non-achievement of targets revealed that deficiencies in internal management at different levels, absenteeism, labour unrest, shortage of power and bottlenecks in movement of coal were the major constraints. According to Planning Commission estimates, from a consumption level of around 103 million tonnes in 1979-80 the demand is expected to rise to 168 million tonnes in 1984-85. A tentative estimate places the demand at the end of the decade in the range of 230-250 million tonnes. According to the Working Group on Energy Policy, the requirement of coal by the end of the century may exceed 400 million tonnes. The Planning Commission target is 165 million tonnes at the end of the Sixth Plan. To achieve this, the Plan provides for an outlay of Rs.2353 crores on the Coal India and Rs.220 crores on the Singareni Collieries.

NATIONALISATION AND RE-ORGANISATION OF THE INDUSTRY

As a result of its overwhelming importance in the national economy, in the Industrial Policy Resolution

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6 Sixth Five Year Plan, Government of India, Planning Commission, Page 239.
of 1948, coal along with iron and steel, aircraft, telephone, telegraph and manufacture of wireless apparatus, was listed for sole monopoly of the State. At the time of independence, coalmines were owned and managed by a number of employers in the private sector, coming from different clan. There were British companies, Marwari companies, Punjabi, Gujarati and other concerns and local interests which had built up their own culture of management. Nationalisation came in phases. As the first step towards rational and scientific development of the coal industry, the National Coal Development Corporation (NCD) was set up in 1956 and it took over 11 Railway Collieries which became the nucleus for its further expansion. In the same year, the Government of Andhra Pradesh acquired the majority shares in the Singareni Collieries Company. In the second phase, 214 Coking Coal Mines were nationalised on 17th October, 1971. After an interval, lasting two and a half months, a Government company under the name of Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) was set up on 1st January, 1972 and the management of these nationalised mines was passed on to the company. With
the passing of the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973, all the remaining coal mines in the private sector, barring a few captive mines of the Tata Iron and Steel Company, were nationalised. A Government company called the Coal Mines Authority Limited (CMAL) was set up and the control of the nationalised non-coking coal mines was vested in this company. Some of the non-coking coal mines in the Jharia field, however, were handed over to the BCCL. The WCCL became a subsidiary of the CMAL. On 1st November, 1975, the Coal India Limited (CIL), a holding company, was formed. The coal mining industry owned by the Government of India is now under the four major subsidiaries of the CIL. These are:

1. Eastern Coalfields Ltd. (ECL)
2. Bharat Coking Coal Ltd. (BCCL)
3. Central Coalfields Ltd. (CCL)
4. Western Coalfields Ltd. (WCL)

The following table gives the totals of production of coal in the subsidiaries of the Coal India Limited.
Table I

Production of coal from the subsidiaries of the Coal India Ltd.

(Million tonnes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Production (Million tonnes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1973-74</td>
<td>67.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974-75</td>
<td>79.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-76</td>
<td>88.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976-77</td>
<td>89.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977-78</td>
<td>88.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>90.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>91.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>100.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Organisation of the Coal India Limited

For the purpose of this study it is necessary to understand the organisation in the Coal India, its subsidiary companies and their field set up. The Head Office of the Coal India is at Calcutta. At the head of the organisation is the Chairman who is also the Managing Director. The organisation chart of the Coal India Limited is given on the following page.

*Source :- Coal India Limited.*
This study requires a detailed examination of the Personnel Division of the Coal India Organisation. The Division is headed by the Adviser Manpower and Industrial Relations and is constituted as follows:

Personnel Division

Personnel Department Industrial Relations Executive Establishment Medical Services

*Source: Coal India Limited.*
The Coal India which is a holding company, decides the policy on all important matters. The subsidiaries are required to execute and implement these decisions.

The important functions assigned to the Coal India are:

1. Formulation of policy for industrial relations and wages;
2. Setting of targets for production and monitoring production;
3. Central marketing;
4. Import and bulk purchase of machinery;
5. Corporate finance and budget;
6. Administration of the Coal cadre and training.

The following table gives the employment under the Coal India and its subsidiary companies.

*Table II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Employment (in 000s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>618</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* Coal India Limited.
Executive grades under the Coal India and Subsidiaries

To manage such a vast work force, production and related matters, the Coal India which controls the executive cadres of its subsidiaries, employs about 9500 officers whose basic salaries range from Rs.725 to Rs.2750 per month. These officers have come from three separate streams. More than 4000 officers are from the private sector coal companies which were nationalised in 1971 and 1973. About 2200 officers came from the erstwhile National Coal Development Corporation. The remaining were absorbed from the Coal Board. The following statement shows the executive grades in the Coal India and its subsidiaries, according to pay.

*Executive grades and pay structure.*

E-1 675-30-1035-40-1235
E-2 725-40-1325
E-3 1050-30-1650
E-4 1350-50-1750
E-5 1550-60-1850-75-2075
E-6 1850-10-2450
E-7 2000-100-2500
E-8 2250-100-2750

*Source : Coal India Ltd.*
In the Personnel Departments of the subsidiaries, the following designations are in existence.

E-1 Welfare Officer
E-2 Welfare Officer—/ Personnel Officer
E-3 Senior Personnel Officer
E-4 Deputy Personnel Manager
E-5 Personnel Manager
E-6 Deputy Chief Personnel Manager
E-7 Additional Chief Personnel Manager
E-8 Chief Personnel Manager

Organisation of the subsidiary companies

The responsibility for achieving production targets is with the subsidiary companies. It is they who have to shoulder the burden of maintaining a proper climate of industrial relations. Each subsidiary company is headed by a Chairman who is also its Managing Director. He is assisted by other functional Directors who look after Production and Technical matters, Planning, Finance, Personnel and Commercial functions of the company.
Organisation of the Area

The Area is the level immediately under the Head Office. It consists of a number of collieries and is under an Area General Manager. The Area General Manager is directly responsible to the Director Technical in matters of production and to the Director Personnel for Industrial Relations. Where the Area includes a project, he is also responsible to the Director, Planning and Projects. The chart below gives the Organisation of the Area.

*Organisation chart of the Area

General Manager

Area Personnel Officer and
Area Operations Manager Area Engineer
Industrial Relations Officer (Electrical
Agent/Superintendent of (Mechanical)
collieries)

Area Engineer
(Civil)

Agent/ Superintendent
of collieries

Area Finance Manager

*Source : Coal India Limited
Contd..
The Area Personnel Manager who is an officer in the B-5 grade, renders assistance to the General Manager in matters of Personnel Management and industrial relations. In addition to implementing the industrial relations policies laid down by the Company, the Area Personnel Manager also carries on negotiations with unions at the area level. He advises the various units under the area in matters of industrial relations, handling of industrial disputes, disciplinary cases and implementation of decisions.

The Area Personnel Manager has the following organisation with him.
Organisation at the colliery

Below the Area level, the functional unit is the colliery. In recent years the companies have placed Superintendents or Agents as overall incharge of every colliery. The day to day management of the colliery is conducted by the colliery Manager who holds a certificate under the Coal Mines Regulations framed under the Mines Act, 1952. The Colliery Manager is assisted by a team of specialist officers. A typical organisation in a colliery is given on the following page.

* Source :- Coal India Limited.
Organisation of the Singareni Collieries Company

The Singareni Collieries Company Ltd. is the oldest public sector undertaking in the coal industry in India and carries on its activities in the Godavari Valley of Andhra Pradesh. The Company was incorporated in England in 1886 under the name, The Hyderabad(Deccan) Company Limited.

*Source:– Coal India Limited.*
In 1956, the State Government of Andhra Pradesh acquired the majority share holding in the Company. The Government of India started participating in the equity of the Company in 1960. The growth of the Company has been phenomenal during the last 10 years. In 1971, the Company was operating 22 mines with 32,155 employees. At the end of 1980, the Company was working 51 mines and had 66,687 workers. The Godavari Valley Coalfields where the Company operates, has proved coal reserves to the extent of 2680 million tonnes. The table below gives the production and employment in the Singareni Collieries Company from 1973 to 1980.

**Table III**
Production and Employment in the Singareni Collieries Company.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Production (in million tonnes)</th>
<th>Employment (in 000's)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>5.04</td>
<td>36.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>5.31</td>
<td>41.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>6.18</td>
<td>47.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>7.36</td>
<td>49.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>8.30</td>
<td>55.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>8.91</td>
<td>60.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>9.40</td>
<td>64.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>10.09</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* The Singareni Collieries Company
Management and Personnel Department

The Company is managed by a Board of Directors presided over by a Chairman. Of the 7 Directors, 4 represent the State Government and 3 represent the Government of India. The Chairman who is also the Managing Director, is appointed by the State Government with the concurrence of the Government of India. The Company is divided into three areas namely Kothagudem, Belampalli and Hanagundam. Each area is under the administrative control of a General Manager. The work of these General Managers is coordinated by the Chief General Manager with headquarters at Kothagudem. The Chief General Manager is assisted by Heads of Departments in various disciplines such as Finance, Engineering, Planning, Purchase, Marketing and Personnel. In a similar fashion, the General Managers at the areas have supporting staff in each discipline. The Chief Personnel Officer is assisted by the Senior Personnel Officer for Industrial Relations and two other officers for personnel and welfare work. At the area level, there is a Senior Personnel Officer assisted by two other Personnel Officers. Each Division has a Personnel Officer who
is assisted by an Assistant Personnel Officer. At the mine level, there is a Welfare Officer who is to look after the statutory requirements relating to Welfare of workers.

State of Industrial Relations in Coal

With the sustained increase in oil prices since 1973, the Planning Commission was compelled to review the priorities for investment in the energy sector. The outlay on coal which was Rs. 110 crores in the Fourth Plan had to be raised to Rs. 1025 crores in the Fifth Plan. The production target to be attained at the end of the Fifth Plan (1978-79) was placed at 124 million tonnes. But, although the demand for coal built up adequately, production failed to pick up and stagnated at a level of 101 million tonnes a year.

In analysing the causes for this lack of growth, the Planning Commission found that apart from shortage of power and bottlenecks in the movement of coal, labour unrest and absenteeism among workers were major contributory factors. Despite nationalisation, industrial relations in coal were far from

7 Sixth Five Year Plan, Government of India, Planning Commission, page 238.
satisfactory. An important indicator of the health of an industry is the loss of man days. The Labour Bureau, Simla maintains data on the man days lost due to industrial disputes. The following table gives the loss of man days in the coal industry.

*Table IV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Man days lost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>3,33,138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>1,27,678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>5,24,664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>18,41,739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>16,26,176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>16,66,479</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These figures show that except for a dip during the year 1976 when emergency was in force, the loss in terms of man days due to industrial disputes has been enormous.

* Source - Labour Bureau, Simla.
Absenteeism in the coal industry

Statistics on mandays lost due to industrial strife alone do not fully indicate the totality of the state of industrial relations. Bad relations lead to inattention to work, accidents, damage to machinery, malingering and a host of other undesirable tendencies which generate inefficiency and impede production. The attention which workers pay to their jobs in an industry can be gauged by the rate of absenteeism. The higher the rate of absenteeism, the lower the attachment to the job. Enquiries with the industry revealed that absenteeism has been a continuing source of worry and in fact, the Coal Department had set up a Study Group in 1978 to go into the problem. The following table shows the extent of absenteeism in the coal industry.

Contd....
The data shows a rising trend in absenteeism in the coal industry. Nationalisation in 1972 and 1973 has not reversed the trend. In fact, the rate of absenteeism has, since 1972, shown a steady rise, culminating at the alarming level of

19.7 per cent in 1977. In effect, this means that one out of every five workers in the coal industry is absent on any working day. For the Coal India with its work force of over 6 lakhs, about 1.2 lakh workers are absent on any single day. The Coal India study on absenteeism has recognised the gravity of the problem. The report, however, does not include any estimate of loss of production caused by absenteeism. As in the case of mandays lost due to industrial disputes, there are no ready made methods available to compute the impact of such a state of affairs on the productivity in the Industry. But the loss is not limited to the value that could have been added if the worker had not been absent. Dislocation of production process due to absence of the worker would put the loss at much higher levels. The situation, therefore, calls for a comprehensive examination of the causes for the unsatisfactory state of industrial relations in the coal industry.

Wages in the Coal Industry

Wages matter most to all workers and for that reason, the contribution of differences over wages to
industrial strife can be more than of any other single factor. Traditionally, the position regarding wages in an industry is examined first and in great detail, while looking into the causes of unrest. Trade unions, employers and Government had to pay a lot of attention to evolving a just and proper wage structure over the years, before a system encompassing the entire coal industry could be achieved.

The All India Industrial Tribunal

In 1954, the Government of India, with a view to bringing about uniformity in the wage structure in the coal mining industry, constituted the All India Industrial Tribunal. To this Tribunal disputes regarding wages were referred. The award given by the Tribunal on 18th May, 1956 is popularly known as the Masumdar Award after its Presiding Officer. 8

This Award, standardised the wage structure for

8 Award of the Industrial Tribunal (Colliery Disputes), Government of India, Ministry of Labour.
different categories of workmen employed in coal mines
all over the country for the first time. The Award
fixed the minimum wage for a workman of the lowest
category at Rs.69-1-0 per month of 26 working days
or Rs.2-10-6 per day on the basis of three consumption
units to a male worker. The components of this
minimum wage were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic wage</td>
<td>Rs.0-15-0 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dearness Allowance</td>
<td>Rs.1-6-6 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statutory BI</td>
<td>Rs.0-5-0 per day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With some modifications made by the Labour Appellate
Tribunal, the award remained in operation for the
next five years.

**Wage Board for Coal Mining Industry**

During the months of January and February, 1962
many of the unions in coal industry demanded setting
up of a Wage Board and simultaneously served notices
on employers terminating the Coal Award. A Wage Board
was constituted on the 10th of August, 1962 with
Sri Salim M. Merchant as Chairman and Shri P.N.
Chakravarti and Shri S.S. Marathe as independent members.
Shri Basiklal Vorah, Shri R. Lall and Shri J.G. Kumaramangalam represented employers. Shri Kant Mehta, Shri Deven Sen and Smt. Maitreyee Bose represented workers on the Board. The Board made two interim wage recommendations in 1963 and 1965. The final report of the Wage Board was received by Government on 13th February, 1967. After considering the report, Government accepted the recommendations in respect of the following matters:

(a) Minimum Wage;
(b) Dearness Allowance;
(c) Wage structure of time rated and piece rated workers;
(d) Pay scales of clerical, technical and supervisory staff;
(e) Coal Mines Bonus Scheme with the retention of the condition relating to minimum attendance;
(f) Allowance including underground allowance.

The recommendations as accepted by Government came into operation from 15th August, 1967. According to the Wage Board Award, the hitherto ten categories

9 Award of the Wage Board on Coal Industry, Government of India, Ministry of Labour.
of workman were compressed into six categories and the
minimum wage of the lowest paid surface workman was
fixed at Rs.5, exclusive of attendance bonus.

**Joint Bi-partite Wage Negotiating Committee-I**

With the nationalisation of coking coal mines
on the 1st May, 1972 and Government taking over
management of the non-coking coal mines from
31st January, 1973, coal mining came to be almost
totally in the public sector. The Wage structure was
covered by the recommendations of the Central Wage
Board as accepted by the Government of India and
implemented from 15th August, 1967. However, there
was, by 1973, a persistent demand from the workers for a
review of the wage structure. Bowing to this demand
the Government of India, on the 14th of August, 1975
set up a Joint Bi-partite Wage Negotiating Committee
for the entire Coal Mining Industry in the country.
The Committee comprised of representatives of the four
Central Trade Union organisations of that time namely,
INTUC, AIUC, HMS and CTU and an equal number of
representatives of the management of the five coal
producing companies. This, for the first time in the
history of the coal industry, introduced the principle of bi-partite collective bargaining for wages. The Committee was asked to decide its own terms of reference for conducting negotiations for a final settlement of the wage structure as also other conditions of service in the industry. The recommendations of the Committee were finalised in May, 1974. The recommendations had considerable financial impact and Government, by now the almost sole employer, took time in making up its mind. The workers organisations kept up the pressure and for the first time Central Trade Union Organisations in the coal industry combined to give a strike call for 24 hours on 7th October, 1974. The strike took place as scheduled and a huge majority of workmen stayed away from the collieries on that day. This appears to have hastened Government approval and the final agreement of the Committee as accepted by Government became available on 11th December, 1974.¹⁰

¹⁰ National Coal Wage Agreement I, Memorandum of Agreement, 11th December, 1974.
The National Coal Wage Agreement-I

The agreement which came into effect from the 1st of January, 1975 covered all categories of employees who had been covered by the recommendations of the Central Wage Board in 1967. The minimum wage of an unskilled category worker was fixed at Rs. 325 per month of 26 working days or Rs. 12.50 per day at the average All India Consumer Price Index Number 246 (Base 1960 = 100).

The minimum wage comprised of the following:

(a) Basic wage of Rs. 260 per month or Rs. 10 per day.

(b) Attendance Bonus at 10% of basic wage, Rs. 26 per month or 1 rupee per day.

(c) Fixed dearness allowance at Rs. 39 per month or Rs. 1.50 per day. Apart from this minimum wage, workers became eligible to receive a variable Dearness Allowance at the rate of Rs. 1.30 per month or 5 paise per day for each point of rise or fall in the quarterly Index above 246.

The Joint Bipartite Wage Negotiation Committee-II

The first agreement was to be in operation for four years till the end of December, 1978. In September, 1978, the Government of India reconstituted the Joint Bipartite Committee. The Committee was
asked to consider and negotiate on modifications and revision of the National Coal Wage Agreement and other related items. There were ten representatives of management on the Committee and an equal number represented workers. For the managements, the Coal India and its subsidiaries had seven members. The Singareni Collieries Company Ltd., the Tata Iron and Steel Company Ltd. and the Indian Iron and Steel Company Ltd., shared the remaining seats. On the workers side, the Bhartiya Mazdoor Sangh figured for the first time as a member of the Joint Bi-partite Committee.

The first meeting of the Committee was held on 13th November, 1978. The workers representatives presented a joint charter of demands on 5th December, 1978. After the Sixth meeting of the Committee held on 20th April, 1979, the workers representatives gave notice of strike from 18th May, 1979 on the ground that expeditious settlement was not forthcoming.

The Minister for Energy Shri P. Ramachandran and the Minister for Labour Shri Kavindra Varma intervened at this stage and as a result, a broad framework of an agreement was reached after further discussions. The
final agreement on wages and other related conditions of service became available on the 11th of August, 1979.

The Agreement which came into effect from the 1st of January, 1979 fixed the minimum wage of an unskilled category I worker at Rs.512 per month or Rs.19.692 per day. At the All India Consumer Price Index Number at 333 this minimum wage comprised of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Per month</th>
<th>Per day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Basic wage</td>
<td>Rs.512.00</td>
<td>Rs.19.692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Attendance Bonus at 10% of basic wage</td>
<td>Rs.51.20</td>
<td>Rs.1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Computed fringe benefit on Attendance Bonus called special D.A.</td>
<td>Rs.12.00</td>
<td>Rs.0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Fixed Dearness Allowance</td>
<td>Rs.68.20</td>
<td>Rs.2.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Variable Dearness Allowance</td>
<td>Rs.7.80</td>
<td>Rs.0.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Variable Dearness Allowance was to be revised at the rate of Rs.1.30 per month or 5 paise per day for each point in the quarterly Index.

Other Important Features of the Agreement

An important feature of the National Coal Wage Agreement II, Memorandum of Agreement, 11th August 1979.
Agreement is that apart from covering all aspects of wages comprehensively, it also incorporates details of other terms and conditions of employment relating to all categories of workers in the coal industry. Thus, the National Coal Wage Agreement II has separate chapters dealing with Underground Allowance, Leave, National and Festival Holidays, Housing, House Rent Allowance, Social Security, Retiring Gratuity and Medical facilities. The Agreement encompasses details of such matters like sick leave, casual leave with pay, recovery of electricity charges, leave travel concession, washing allowance, ambulance facilities, payment of overtime, city compensatory allowance and facilities for children of workers. The purpose is to reduce areas of friction by eliminating uncertainty as far as possible.

Analysis of the nature of disputes in the coal industry

Having examined in detail the position regarding wages in the coal industry, it is now necessary to analyse the extent to which wages and other matters contribute to industrial unrest in the industry. Table below gives the percentage of disputes by
causes for all industries falling in the Central sphere of industrial relations under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947.

*Table VI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wages, Allowances and Bonus</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>32.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel including Retrenchment</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiscipline and Violence</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (which do not fall in any specific category)</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>38.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table shows that differences over wages, allowances and bonus account for the highest percentage.

* Source: Labour Bureau, Simla.*
of industrial disputes in industry in general as compared to other factors. Table below shows the corresponding position in the coal industry.

*Table VII

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wages, Allowances and Bonus</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel (including retrenchment)</td>
<td>69.4</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>69.7</td>
<td>68.6</td>
<td>70.2</td>
<td>69.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiscipline and Violence</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (which do not fall in any specific category)</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source - Ministry of Labour*
that while in industry in general differences over wages contribute to 26.0 per cent to 42.1 per cent of industrial disputes, in the coal industry differences over wages account for 9.3 per cent to 10.4 per cent of industrial disputes. On the other hand, while differences over personnel matters accounted for 19.6 per cent to 31.9 per cent of disputes in industry in general, in the coal industry, as much as 68.6 per cent to 70.2 per cent of the disputes arose out of personnel matters. This analysis goes to prove that the comprehensive bipartite wage agreements in the coal industry have succeeded to some extent, in reducing the number of friction points as far as wages and allowances are concerned. While the position on the wage front is not unsatisfactory, industrial relations on the personnel side of the coal industry are in extremely bad shape and will therefore form the core of this study. About 70 per cent of the disputes in the industry arise out of personnel and related matters. Most of these disputes arise out of individual grievances relating to conditions of service like regularisation of workers, categorisation, promotions
and retrenchment. Under normal arrangements most of such disputes should form the subject matter for the grievance machinery in the industry. That they constitute the overwhelming proportion of industrial disputes coming up for conciliation is indicative of a very serious situation. In other words, it shows that the grievance machinery in the coal industry is not functioning satisfactorily. The next chapter is therefore devoted to an intensive examination of grievance management arrangements within the Industry. Management and labour have an equally important role to play in this area.