

that the various economy measures introduced for enhancing efficiency are successful. Cases of late coming to office and irregular attendance are strictly dealt with

7. New immigration laws and their effect on the former employees of the High Commission

Government are seized of the recent immigration laws and their effect on the erstwhile employees of the High Commission who have of their own accord been staying in the U.K.

8. Appointment of High Commissioner

The appointment of Shri B. K. Nehru, India's High Commissioner has since been announced: he is expected to take charge of the post in London shortly.

Shortage and High Prices of Coal in Eastern Region

2680. SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the fact of acute shortage and high prices of coal in the whole of Eastern region;

(b) if so, the current position with regard to supply and prices of coal in this region; and

(c) the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI SUBODH HANSDA): (a) and (b). There is presently a gap between the demand and supply of coal for the lower priority consumers. Movement of coal for brick burning and soft coke for domestic consumption which enjoyed a lower priority have been effected to a greater extent. It is possible that the traders occasionally charge higher prices than what would be reasonable even

though ex-collery prices have been increased. No authentic information regarding day to day retail price in the Eastern Region is available. The supply of coal from Bengal-Bihar coalfields by rail to the Eastern States in the first 5 months of 1973 was 8.87 million tonnes against 8.26 million tonnes supplied in the corresponding period of 1972.

(c) Close coordination as maintained with the concerned State Governments to ensure equitable distribution of supplies. To improve situation in regard to coal supplies, special efforts are being made to augment movement of coal by rail and road. Constant efforts are being made by the Ministry of Railways, in consultation with this Ministry, to increase rail loading. The Government have recently constituted a high level committee to look into the problems of coal transport and to ensure regular supplies to the various consumers. The State Governments and the Union Territories have also been advised to take action under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 to check the rise in price of coal.

Increase in Production of Scooters in Fifth Plan

2681 SHRI M RAM GOPAL REDDY: SHRI VIRBHADRA SINGH:

Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government plan big increase in the production of scooters during the Fifth Plan; and

(b) if so, the target of production in the Fifth Plan and when a decision in this respect will be taken?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRY (SHRI SIDDHESHWAR PRASAD):

(a) Yes Sir.

(b) Efforts are being made to reach a production level of 4,00,000 scooters a year by the end of the Fifth Five Year Plan.