

Opening of Depots for Essential Commodities in Villages

255. SHRI D. K. PANDA: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether as a part of 20-point economic programme, the Government have opened depots for flour, sugar, cloth and pulses in villages;

(b) if so, how many such depots for the villages have been opened in each State during this one year;

(c) what is the average price list; and

(d) whether Government have received any complaints regarding prices in those depots?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI A. C. GEORGE): (a) to (d). Ration shops/fair price shops are opened by State Governments for the supply of controlled commodities according to the requirements of areas, including the rural areas. The commodities distributed through these fair price outlets are rice, wheat and wheat products, levy sugar and in certain areas, pulses. The number of fair price shops/ration shops has gone up from 2.23 lakhs in June, 1975 to 2.38 lakhs in June, 1976. Approximately 80 per cent of these are functioning in the rural areas. The number of retail outlets for controlled cloth has risen from 29,324 last year to approximately 47,000 at present of which over 37,000 are functioning in rural areas. Statements indicating Statewise details are laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT11012/761. All these commodities are sold at controlled rates. Complaints regarding prices charged in these depots are attended to by the respective State Governments.

Modern Method of Mining in Indian Collieries

256. SHRI D. K. PANDA:
SHRIMATI PARVATHI
KRISHNAN:

Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether modern method of mining called scraper mining has been introduced in Indian collieries;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) how far it has affected the employment of the people who were doing this work previously; and

(d) Government's decision regarding such employees of the collieries?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (PROF. SIDDHESHWAR PRASAD): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. This method has been introduced in a limited number of mines of Coal India Limited and TISCO on an experimental basis.

(c) The introduction of this method has resulted in increased coal production and optimal utilization of workmen in the mines.

(d) Does not arise.

Closed Industrial Establishments

257. SHRI R. N. BARMAN: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of closed industrial establishments at present;

(b) the total industrial production loss being suffered by these units per year and persons unemployed; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government to reopen them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI B. P. MAURYA): (a) and (c). A statement indicating the units closed