

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND IRRIGATION AND COAL (SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI): (a) There are power of shortage in some parts of the country.

(b) and (c). The main reasons for shortage of power are failure of monsoons in some parts of the country resulting in lower hydro availability, increased demand for agriculture due to drought, lower than anticipated generation from thermal stations due to delay in stabilisation of newly commissioned units, inadequacy of coal in some of the power stations in Northern and Western Regions and high forced outage rate of thermal units in the Eastern Region.

Instructions have been given to Central generating stations for maximising generation from existing installations and directions have been given to State Electricity Boards for maximising generation from their existing installations. A comprehensive programme for expediting commissioning of new generating capacity is under implementation. In addition, a substantial increase in the generating capacity during 1978-83 is proposed, the commissioning of which will considerably improve the power supply position. A capacity of 3000 MW has already been commissioned during 1978-79. Steps have been taken to ensure availability of coal and its transport to power stations in adequate quantities required to sustain the anticipated thermal generation.

Supply of Coal

48. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of ENERGY, AND IRRIGATION AND COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that although production of Coal in the October-December quarter of the current financial year, has improved, its supply to major sectors of the economy did not improve;

(b) if so, the reasons thereof;

(c) whether it will be possible to reach the target for the year 1979-80;

(d) if not, the reasons therefore; and

(e) the specific steps taken to improve the supply position?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND IRRIGATION AND COAL (SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI):

(a) and (b). Yes, Sir. Coal production in the October-December quarter of the current financial year has improved over production in the previous quarter. The monthly average coal supply to the major sections of the economy like power, steel and Railways has also improved marginally in the months of October-December compared to April-September 1979.

(c) There is likely to be a shortfall in the achievement of the target.

(d) The coal production particularly in the Bengal-Bihar coalfields was adversely affected by the severe power shortage prevailing in that area. The unsettled law and order situation, and the shortage of inputs like explosives and diesel etc. are responsible for the serious drop in production in these areas.

(e) Steps have been taken to improve generation from DVA which is the primary supplier to Bengal-Bihar coalfields. The introduction of captive generation plants is also being planned in the coalfields. Action has been taken to import explosives to cover the shortfall in indigenous availability. The need for improving the law and order situation has been taken up with the State Governments concerned and a Cell has been constituted by the Ministry of Home Affairs to review and coordinate measures necessary to deal with law and order situation. Consequent on the introduction of these measures there has been some improvement in the rate of production in recent weeks.