

(ii) Dearness allowance should be given as per existing scheme of Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry;

(iii) 3½ per cent house rent allowance on wages as under West Bengal House Rent Allowance Act, 1974;

(iv) Leave allowance of Rs. 300.00 per annum should be paid to each non-optee employee when such employee will be 60 years.

(v) Superannuation age should be 60 years.

(c) Coal India Limited has been advised to discuss the points raised in the representation with the Union and settle the matter early.

Representation from Nangal-Bhakra Workers' Union regarding grant of Bonus

56. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of ENERGY AND IRRIGATION AND COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any representation from Nangal-Bhakra Workers' Union regarding grant of bonus to the workers of Irrigation wing; and

(b) if so, reaction of Government thereto?

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

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The dispute is being referred by the Ministry of Labour to the Industrial Tribunal for adjudication.

Production of Steel

57. SHRI R. P. YADAV: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are in the know of the fact that the production of steel has gone down in the last few years;

(b) if so, the reasons thereof; and

(c) the steps contemplated to boost up the production?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE & CIVIL SUPPLIES AND STEEL & MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir. The production of steel from the integrated steel plants in 1977-78 and 1978-79 and in the current year has been lower than that in 1976-77.

(b) The production of steel during this period has been affected adversely on account of two major factors, viz., shortage and frequent restrictions/fluctuations in power supply and inadequate supplies of coking coal to the steel plants, both in terms of quantity and quality.

The production in 1978-79 was also affected on account of unprecedented rains and floods in West Bengal in September, 1978, resulting in flooding of coalfields as well as Durgapur Steel Plant and affecting rail movement and the after-effects thereof.

(c) Close and constant liaison is being maintained with the Ministry of Energy, DVC, State Electricity Boards, coal supplying agencies and the Railways so as to secure maximum supplies of power and good coking coal. Regular monitoring of the position regarding power and coal is being done at various levels through inter-ministrial/inter-departmental committees so as to ensure that necessary steps to improve the position are taken in the most effective and coordinated manner. Department of Coal and Coal India Limited are making efforts to improve the