

country and the steps so far taken by Government to remove this shortage?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI BRAJAMOHAN MOHANTY): The overall availability of most of the essential commodities appears to be fairly satisfactory except some localised shortages of temporary nature mainly due to transport bottleneck. Free sale sugar and cement are reported to be in short supply.

The main thrust of the Government policy to improve the availability of essential commodities is to increase production, particularly of commodities in short supply. The public distribution system is being expanded and made a permanent feature of the economy. The number of fair price shops in the country is reported to have gone up from 2.35 lakhs in January, 1980 to 2.66 lakhs in October, 1980. Foodgrains for meeting the requirements of public distribution system through fair price shops to the extent they cannot be met from the State Government's stock are supplied to the State Government's from the Central Pool. Prices at which cereals are supplied to the State Governments from the Central Pool are subsidised. During the oil year 1979-80, 3.55 lakhs tonnes of imported edible oils were lifted by the States for distribution through the public distribution system against 93,000 tonnes during the preceding oil year. Arrangements for import of edible oils for the current oil year have been made to ensure adequate supplies through the public distribution system. Credit policy continues to be restrictive. The export of essential commodities is being regulated/banned. Some essential commodities in short supply are being imported. The provisions of the Essential Commodities Act and the orders issued under it as well as the Prevention of Blackmarketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980, are being enforced vigorously by the States.

Basis for increase in dearness allowance to Central Government Employees

752. SHRI CHITTA MAHATA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the basis on which the recent increase in the dearness allowance to the Central Government employees was announced; and

(b) whether it is in the same ratio to consumer price index?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SAWAI SINGH SISODIA): (a) and (b). The last instalment of additional dearness allowance was sanctioned to the Central Government employees from 1st July 1980, when the 12-monthly average of the Consumer Price Index crossed 368 points at the end of June, 1980, registering an increase of 8 points over the index average of 360 at which the earlier dearness allowance had been sanctioned to the Central Government employees. The instalment which is according to the standard formula in force provides for 100 per cent neutralisation of the increase in the cost of living in the case of the employees getting pay up to Rs. 400/- p.m. and 75 per cent neutralisation in the case of the employees getting pay above that level and upto Rs. 100/p.m. Thereafter the extent of the neutralisation tapers off corresponding to the increase in the pay level.

Steep fall of steel production in integrated steel plants

753. SHRI K. M. MADHUKAR:
SHRI B. V. DESAI:

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the steel production in the integrated steel plants during the first half of the year 1980-81 has steeply fallen against the target;

(b) if so, the plant-wise details of production and target; and

(c) the reasons for fall in production?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b). The table below indicates the target and production of saleable steel at the integrated steel plants during the first half of 1980-81 which shows that the production was 78.4 per cent of the corresponding target.

Plants	April- September, 1980		
	Target ('000 T)	Actual ('000 T)	Fulfilment to target (%)
B.S.P.	875	825	94.3
D.S.P.	417	238	57.1
R.S.P.	496	358	72.2
B.S.L.	687	319	46.4
IISCO	243	239	98.4
TISCO	731	706	96.6
Total:	*3424	2685	78.4

*Excluding transfer of HR Coils from BSL to RSP.

(c) The main reasons for the short-fall in production have been severe constraints in the supply of coking coal and power.

Proposal for reduction in import list

754. SHRI K. M. MADHUKAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal under consideration to make a drastic reduction in the imports list;

(b) if so, the items on which imports are going to be curbed and to what extent; and

(c) the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

Import of coking coal

755. SHRI K. M. MADHUKAR: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to allow imports of coking coal on a permanent basis; and

(b) if so, the details and reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b). No such decision has been taken by the Government so far.

Setting up of aluminium complex in Orissa with French Collaboration

756 SHRI LAKSHMAN MALLICK:
SHRI K. PRADHANI:

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Union Government have recently sanctioned the proposal of a huge aluminium complex to be set up in Orissa with French Collaboration; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard including those regarding its location and the likely period of its completion?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. Government have sanctioned the establishment of an alumina-cum-aluminium complex in Orissa comprising:

(i) a bauxite mine at Panchpat-mali with a production capacity of