

Indo-China. They welcomed the signing of the peace agreement on Vietnam at Paris and hoped that it would lead to a durable peace not only in Vietnam but also in the neighbouring countries of Laos and Cambodia.

Prince Souvanna Phouma emphasized the importance of the role of the ICSC in the wake of a ceasefire in Laos and expressed the hope that India would play her role in restoring lasting peace to Laos and safeguarding her independence, sovereignty and neutrality. Our Prime Minister assured him of India's earnest desire to help in this task.

The two Prime Ministers also discussed bilateral matters.

(c) Does not arise.

CRITICISM ON THE PERFORMANCE BHARAT COKING COAL LTD.

1437 SHRI SURAJ PRASAD:
SHRI BALACHANDRA ME-
NON:

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

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the serious criticism made by the Mine Owners' Associations regarding the performance of the Bharat Coking Coal Ltd. if so, what is the reaction of Government;

(b) whether it is a fact that the production of coking coal is declining while the cost of production thereof is going up; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES
SHRI SUBODH CHANDRA
(ANSDA) (a) There has been some criticism by the Mine Owners' Association regarding the performance of Bharat Coking Coal Ltd. However, the performance of the company can be said to be on the whole satisfactory.

(b) While the production of coking coal is more or less being maintained

the despatches to washeries and steel plants have improved. While accurate information of the cost of production before take-over by the Government is not available, the cost of production has since been generally steady.

(c) Does not arise.

INDIA SUPPLY SERVICE

1438. DR. BHAI MAHAVIR Will the Minister of SUPPLY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have declared India Supply Service (I.S.S.) as a technical service;

(b) if so, the details of the technical qualifications prescribed by Government for I.S.S. personnel who are appointed as Dy. Director, Director and D.D.G. in the Offices of the DGS & D and ISM, London and Washington, and

(c) if not, the precise reasons for the appointment of I.S.S. personnel to such posts ignoring the legitimate claims of the employees belonging to other services who are working in the same Department or elsewhere in Government of India?

THE MINISTER OF SUPPLY
(SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN) (a) and (b) The Indian Supply Service is a technical service in the sense that except for a very small promotion quota only persons with technical qualifications are recruited to this service. Direct recruitment is made only to the lowest grade of the service viz., Grade III, through the Combined Competitive Examinations conducted by the UPSC for recruitment to the Engineering Services (Class I). The technical qualifications prescribed for candidates for eligibility to take this examination is a degree in various branches of engineering. The posts of Deputy Director, Director and Deputy Director General which are Grade II, Grade I and Super-time scale posts of this service, are filled 100 per cent by promotion from the lower grades.

(c) Does not arise.