

BONUS TO PERSONS REMITTING FOREIGN EXCHANGE TO INDIA

*743. SHRI ABID ALI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government have arrived at a decision with regard to the suggestion that bonus should be sanctioned for wage earners and others remitting foreign exchange to India from their own earnings; and

(b) If so, what is the decision there on particularly with regard to the employees of various embassies and other establishments maintained by the Government of India in foreign countries ?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI-MATI INDIRA GANDHI) : (a) and (b) Government consider that the adoption of such a scheme giving bonus on remittances to India will not be of advantage in the Indian context.

BIRLA CONCERNS

*744. SHRI KRISHAN KANT : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Birla concerns out of the total mentioned in the Dutt Committee Report, which have been assessed as closely held corporations under Section 23A of the Income Tax Act;

(b) whether all the concerns belonging to their group are taxed as public corporations;

(c) whether Government have carried out any scrutiny regarding those concerns before assessing them; and

(d) if so, what is the nature of the scrutiny carried out ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI P. C. SETHI) : (a) to (d) Presumably the Hon'ble Member is referring to Section 104 of the Income Tax Act, 1961. Information for the assessment years 1966-67, 1967-68 and 1968-69 is being collected.

The House will appreciate that this will necessarily take some time, as information has to be obtained in respect of 276 concerns.

DEMAND FOR RISE IN COAL PRICES

*745. SHRI M. V. BHADRAM : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND MINES AND METALS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the private sector colliery owners have demanded a further rise in coal prices;

(b) if so, on what grounds they have demanded the price increase; and

(c) What is Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND MINES AND METALS (SHRI JAGANNATH RAO) : (a) to (c) Consequent on de-control of coal prices with effect from 24-7-67, it is now for the buyers and sellers to mutually settle the prices. Government have no role to play either in the upward or downward revision of prices. Increases in coal prices were, however, agreed to recently between the Coal Industry on the one side and the Railways on the other.

IRRIGATION AND ELECTRICITY POTENTIAL OF THE HIMALAYAN REGION

*746. SHRI BABUBHAI M. CHINAI : Will the Minister of IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Committee of Central and State Ministers has recently been constituted by the Central Government to study the irrigation and electricity potential of the Himalayan region; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (DR. K. L. RAO) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

Since independence, a number of steps have been taken for the development of the Himalayan region stretching from Jammu & Kashmir to NEFA. However, the provision of certain basic amenities like drinking water, irrigation and electricity for the people in these areas, requires to be accelerated. At the Conference of State Ministers of Irrigation