

nut so much to encourage production of better grade coal but to induce mine-owners to supply the better quality coal produced by them to the steel plants in preference to other consumers. The higher prices for coal with a low ash content was intended to compensate the mines for the extra trouble of 'hand-picking' the coal despatched to the steel plants. The revised prices announced by the Ministry are, however, to apply to all consumers. As a result, coal producers have no special incentive to supply the better quality coal to the steel plants which need them most.

The other respect in which the Ministry's formula differs from the one suggested by the industry is that it creates a price differential between different grades of coal by raising the price of coal with ash content below 19 per cent and lowering that of coal with higher ash content. This was not intended in the scheme suggested by the industry which had only wanted that the price of low-ash coal should be raised. The industry claims, and with some justification, that the Ministry's formula will progressively reduce the average realisations of coking coal producers since the proportion of high-ash coal in total production will increase as the better grade seams are being exhausted or are becoming increasingly difficult to mine.

The industry has repeatedly pointed out that the present pricing formula for all grades of coal contains a built-in factor which reduces the industry's average sales realisation as the distribution of production between different grades of coal which the Coal Prices Enquiry Committee had taken as the basis of its recommendations has now changed, with lower grade coals constituting a much larger proportion of total output. It is clear from the industry's stand that "no pricing formula, whether for coking coal or for all grades of coal, will be acceptable to it unless the prices fixed take into account the likely trends in composition of output.

Tourist Week in Calcutta

A Correspondent writes :

THAT 42 per cent of the tourists who visit India also visit Calcutta is a measure of the import-

ance of Calcutta as a tourist centre. This is rather surprising considering that West Bengal has no historical places worth mentioning. Most of the tourists pass through Calcutta on their way to Darjeeling which is a 'must' for many of them to get a glimpse of the Everest and a view of the snows on Kanchenjunga, because here the grandeur of the mighty Himalayas is seen at its best. Santiniketan is also a draw, though perhaps not a close second.

The Government of West Bengal is trying to develop the sea beach at Digha in the Midnapur district as a further tourist attraction and recently requested the Union Government to grant foreign exchange to the IAC for the purchase of a helicopter for running a regular flight to this sea-side resort. For the promotion of tourism in the State* the West Bengal Government has allotted Rs 22 lakh (of which Central share is Rs 5 lakhs) for the construction of rest houses and tourist lodges in nine different centres, such as Santiniketan, Darjeeling, Durgapur and Digha, Rs 1.50 lakhs would be spent for publicity and Rs 1.50 lakhs for the purchase of luxury buses which have already been earning a revenue for the Government. The tourist lodge proposed for Kalimpong, however is yet to be included in the Third Plan.

To attract more tourists, the Tourist Departments of the State and the Union Governments in collaboration with a number of hotels in Calcutta observed a 'tourist week' last month. There were tourist nights in some of the hotels; Firpos had a ball and there was a 'Holland Night', a saree fashion parade and two Tagore dance-dramas. Tours were arranged by luxury buses around Calcutta and the places of interest in the DVC area. The flight over Kanchenjunga at a charge of Rs 120 per head arranged by the IAC proved so popular that a second flight had to be run.

There is an acute shortage of accommodation everywhere. For the lower income groups and youths, there is no provision except in Darjeeling where youth hostels are run not by the YHA but by the Forestry Department of the West Bengal Government. The Government neither has any plan to build any hostels nor is it willing to help and co-ope-

rate with the Youth Hostels Association to build them.

The tourist programme is only for the foreign tourists who are lavish with their money, even so, the plan is a halfhearted one. There is no plan to increase the accommodation in Calcutta hotels. A more active role of the State Government is expected in this field. The acquisition of luxury cars is not enough. The tourists in Calcutta are troubled as much by the shortage of transport as by the hordes of beggars.

The programme arranged by the IAC during the tourist week is likely to prove a permanent attraction. India can offer regular flights over Kanchenjunga, in the 'same way as Thailand offers elephant hunts, or Hongkong is planning to have a floating restaurant. The customs and visa rules, however, are a different matter. They are outside the scope of the State Government. The attitude of both the State and Union Governments suggests, however, that as an important source of foreign exchange earning, tourism is yet to receive its due importance.

From Mono-to Multi-filament Nylon

IT is a success story all right—the pioneer in many fields breaking through the "secrets, tight secrets and highly-complicated processes" of "nylon manufacture moving up from monofilament to multifilaments. Shri B D Garware was the first in this country to go into the production of nylon in 1958 and he is also the first to set up and run a modern, upto-date and fully automatic multifilament nylon plant. This plant set up in Pimpri, near Poona, went into production this week. This is the first plant of the kind to be set up in any country east of Suez, Wring of course, Japan.

The monofilament plant, set up in 1958, we are told, has already made the country self-sufficient in regard to nylon bristles required by brush-makers—whether these are tooth brushes or hair brushes or brushes for industrial uses. What happens to natural bristles, now that substitutes have come on the market on such a large scale, one wonders. Economic development and progress to affluence are not always