

be mounted to bring suitable individuals belonging to SCs and STs available in the Country to important posts including that of Secretary to the Government of India, in reasonable numbers.

(b) and (c) Appointment of officers belonging to SCs/STs at the level of Secretary/equivalent in Government of India essentially depends upon the number of officers belonging to that category who had joined the service over 32 years ago, their willingness for being posted in Delhi and their being spared for Central deputation. Eligible and available officers belonging to the SCs/STs are considered alongwith others for appointment to posts of Secretary/ equivalent posts in Government of India and those found suitable and are available, are appointed to such posts. As on 1.1.1996 and 1.1.2001, 108 and 149 officers held posts of Secretary/equivalent in the Government of India respectively. As there is no reservation in the appointment at the level of Secretary to the Government of India, for officers of any caste/community, information on the number of SC/ST officers holding the posts of Secretary/equivalent is not required to be maintained.

Procedure to determine *inter-se* seniority of Section Officers

1330. SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the procedure being followed for drawing *inter-se* seniority/ eligibility list of officers appointed/promoted as Section Officers, for promotion as Under Secretary;

(b) whether at present, direct recruit Section Officers have been interplated with promotees who have put in comparatively much longer service;

(c) if so, what are generally the years of promotion as Section Officer with whom direct recruit Section Officers appointed during 1993-96 have been interpolated giving the position year-wise; and

(d) whether Government are applying their O.M. 35014/2/80-Estt (D) dated the 7th February, 1986 here, if so, to what extent and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL AND TRAINING OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE):

(a) The eligibility list for a particular year on a crucial date is drawn on the basis of Common Seniority List (CSL) of Section Officers dated 03.12.1997 which was prepared in pursuance of Supreme Court's orders. The Select List for promotion to Grade-I of CSS (Under Secretary) is drawn in accordance with the Central Secretariat Service (Promotion to Selection Grade & Grade-I) Regulations, 1964.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Interpolation of direct recruit Section Officers appointed during 1993-96 with promotee Section Officers is as under:

| Direct Recruit Section Officer (Year of Exam.) | Promotee Section Officer (Select list year) |
|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| 1993 | 1982 |
| 1994 | 1983 |
| 1995 | 1984 & 1985 |
| 1996 | 1986 & 1987 |

(d) The CSS officers are governed by separate statutory rules called CSS Rules, 1962 as amended from time to time.

Reduction in staff strength

1331. SHRI B. J. PANDA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to reduce the existing staff strength during next five years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the downsizing of the staff strength may lead to unemployment problems in the country; and

(d) if so, in what way Government propose to overcome this problem?