

permitted to plant such fruit trees as would fit in with the overall scheme of afforestation, such as aonla, Imli, mango, mahua etc. as well as shrubs, legumes and grasses which would meet local needs, help soil and water conservation, and enrich the degraded soils/land. Even indigenous medicinal plants may be grown according to the requirements and preference of beneficiaries.

(xii) Cutting of trees should not be permitted before they are ripe for harvesting. The forest department also should not cut the trees on the forest land being protected by the village communities except in the manner prescribed in the Working Scheme. In case of emergency needs, the village communities should be taken into confidence.

(xiii) The benefit of people's participation should go to the village communities and not to commercial or other interests which may try to derive benefit in their names. The selection of beneficiaries should therefore, be done from only those families which are willing to participate through their personal efforts.

(xiv) The Forest Department should closely supervise the works. If the beneficiaries and/or the Voluntary Agency/NGO fail or neglect to protect the area from grazing, encroachment or do not perform the operations prescribed in the Working Scheme in a satisfactory manner, the usufructory benefits should be withdrawn without paying compensation to anyone for any work that might have been done prior to it. Suitable provisions in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for this purpose should be incorporated.

Qualifying Service for Seeking Voluntary Retirement

1536. SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that several State Governments have issued Notifications amending the rules to enable Government servants to seek

voluntary retirement after putting in 15 years of service as against the present qualifying service of 20 years;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Central Government thereto; and

(c) whether Government propose to make amendments in the similar manner?

THE PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH): (a) to (c) State Governments have their own rules and regulations to govern the service conditions of their own employees. The details of voluntary retirement schemes of the various State Governments are not available. However, a proposal to reduce the period of qualifying service for seeking voluntary retirement by the Central Government employees is separately under consideration..

Surplus Capacity in Ordnance Factories

1537. SHRI SOM PAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many of ordnance factories in the country are having surplus capacity;

(b) if so, what is the details break-up per unit, per item of such surplus capacity; and

(c) what steps are being taken to utilise this spare capacity?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (DR. RAJA RAMANNA): (a) Capacity utilisation in the Ordnance factories in terms of available standard man-hours, was 100.09 per cent in 1989-90. However, as far as utilisation of machine-wise installed capacity is concerned, capacity in certain areas is surplus to the production requirements.

(b) The utilisation of machine capacity undergoes fluctuations based on requirement of the Services. It is not in the

public interest to disclose the detailed break-up of such spare capacities.

(c) Steps taken in this behalf include—

(i) Diversification into areas of manufacture of items required by non-Defence users, such as Railways, Central and State Police and Security Forces, Public Sector Undertakings, etc. and

(ii) Export of Ordnance Factory products to foreign countries.

Jobs to Widows/Dependants of IPKF Personnel killed in Sri Lanka

1538. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what was the total number of IPKF personnel killed in Sri Lanka;

(b) what is the total number of Widows and dependants of the IPKF who have been offered jobs and alternative sources of employment; and

(c) whether any time bound programme has been made for them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (DR. RAJA RAMANNA): (a) 1157 (including 34 personnel reported missing and presumed killed).

(b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(c) Up to two dependants of Defence Service personnel killed/disabled in action, including war widows, are entitled to Priority II (a) (disabled over 50 per cent disability and unfit for employment, but disability attributable to military service) for the purposes of employment against Group 'C' and 'D' posts under the Central Government. In respect of IPKF casualties, as a special dispensation, Government have issued guidelines, as follows, to various Government Departments and Public Sector Undertakings:—

(i) priority for employment to be given to disable personnel for employment under Government, over other normal cases of ex-Servicemen under against vacancies reserved for them;

(ii) priority and compassionate appointment to dependants of IPKF personnel killed in Sri Lanka operations with suitable relevation to the extent possible, especially regarding criteria for consideration of terminal benefits received, while assessing need for such appointment.

Abolition of special status of Public Schools

1539. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently formulated any scheme to abolish the special status of the Public Schools in the country;

(b) whether Government also propose to ensure higher standard of education to all the school-going children in the country without any consideration of caste, creed or status;

(c) whether Government would allow admission to school-going children in the nearest school in the locality irrespective of the fact whether it is a Public School or Municipal School; and

(d) if so, what are the details in this regard and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHIMAN-BHAI MEHTA): (a) to (d) The Public schools have not been accorded any special status by the Government. Therefore, the question of abolishing the special status does not arise.

The National Policy on Education, 1986 recommended the establishment of a national system of education implying that up to a given level, all students irrespective of caste, creed, location or