

Government with regard to the following matters;

- (a) Maintenance or increase of supplies essential to the life of the community;
- (b) Securing the equitable distribution and availability of any article or thing at fair prices;

(c) regulation or prohibition of production, manufacture, supply and distribution, use and consumption of articles or things and trade and commerce therein or for prevention of any corrupt practice or abuse of authority in respect of any such matters; and

(d) any other matter specified in sub-Rule (3) of Rule 114 of the Defence and Internal Security of India Rules, 1371.

In addition the Council will have the following functions:

- (i) to inform itself fully about consumers' problems and matters affecting the interests of the consumers;
- (ii) to collect and disseminate information relating to consumer matters;
- (iii) to conduct research and investigation into matters affecting the welfare of consumers;
- (iv) to assist the State Governments and Union Territories in development of the consumer movement in their areas;
- (v) to grant recognition and provide assistance including financial assistance to organisations and associations formed for the Welfare of the consumers;
- (vi) to examine consumer grievances and to initiate remedial action through agencies concerned including those

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charged with, the enforcement of legislation for the protection and welfare of the consumers;

- (vii) to suggest measures to be taken up by the concerned agencies for ensuring the welfare of the consumer and equitable distribution of items of mass consumption at fair prices;
- (viii) to promote equitable distribution of items of mass consumption at fair prices and to take up with the concerned agencies measures, for streamlining the distribution and/or reduction of prices of specified commodities of mass consumption;

(ix) to take up with the concerned agencies suspension of any price increase or any trade practices adversely affecting the welfare of consumers, in respect of manufacture, trade or commerce relating to industries specified in the first schedule of the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act, 1951; and

- (x) to become a member affiliate of any international body concerned with consumer matters.

AIR station at Aurangabad

552. SHRI GOVINDRAO RAMCHANDRA MAHISEKAR: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for delay in starting the All India Radio Station at Aurangabad; and

(b) by when the station is likely to start functioning?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI DHARAM BIR SINHA): (a) and (b): The radio station at Aurangabad is ready

and is expected to be commissioned shortly.

Policy regarding promotion of Assistants in leave vacancies of Section Officers

553. SHRI SYED AHMAD HASHMI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that for purposes of filling up short-term leave vacancies or for ad hoc appointments in the grade of Section Officers directly recruited Assistants with five years of service are being treated at par with senior Assistants with more than 22 year's service;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether any clear cut policy has been laid down and directions have been issued to the Ministries and Departments so that the claims of senior Assistants who have put in more than 22 years of continuous service are not disregarded in the matter of leave vacancy and *ad hoc* appointments in the grade of Section Officers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS (SHRI OM MEHTA): (a) to (e) Under Rules 13 (2) If the Central Secretariat Service Rule, 1962 even short-terms or *ad hoc* appointments to the grade of Section Officers can be made from amongst Assistants with not less than eight years of service, but a provision in the rules entitle all senior Assistants with less than eight years of service to be considered for such appointment if a junior Assistant with eight years of service is considered for such promotion. No distinction between the direct recruits and the promoted Assistants is made in such cases. Fifty per cent of short-term or *ad hoc* appointments in the grade of Section Officer is made from the grade of Assistant on the basis of seniority sub-

ject to the rejection of the unfit and subject also to the eligibility conditions indicated above.

The remaining fifty per cent of the vacancies is earmarked to be filled exclusively by promotion of such Assistants as have put in 22 years or more of service in the grade of Assistants. Such promotions are made on the basis of length of service subject to the rejection of the unfit. The question of any Assistant howsoever senior, with less than 22 years of service being considered for promotion in the earmarked category of vacancies, does not arise. Thus, an Assistant with 22 years or more of service in the grade of Assistants is eligible for promotion to the grade of Section Officers both on the basis of his seniority in the general category as well as I on the basis of length of service in the earmarked category of vacancies.

Quantity of raised coal on the date of nationalisation of coal mines

554. SHRI JAMNALAL BERWA: will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state;

(a) how much quantity of raised coal was available on the date when the coal mines were nationalised; and

(b) whether this coal is proposed to be disposed of by the undertaking taking-over coal mines?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (PROF. SIDDHESHWAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) All coal belonging to the owners of the mines, whether in stock or in transit and all coal under production in the mines were taken over as they were assets included in the definition of "mine" in the Coking Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1972 and the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973. On nationalisation of the mines such coals belonged to the Government or Company who were entitled to dispose of them.