

over the country in a definite time-frame of three years.

Pooyankutty Hydro-Electric Project

*456. PROF. SAVITHRI LAKSHMANAN : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Kerala has requested to the Union Government to release 300 hectares of forest land for the Pooyankutty Hydro-Electric Project; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Union Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) : (a) and (b) A proposal for diversion of 3001.8 hectares of forest land for Pooyankutty Hydro-Electric Project was received from the State Government of Kerala in July, 1987. After careful consideration of all aspects the State Government was informed about inability to give approval for the diversion.

Job Opportunities to Handicapped Persons

*457. SHRI Bh. VIJAYA KUMAR RAJU : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) the steps taken by the Government to provide job opportunities to the physically handicapped persons:

(b) whether the Government propose to exempt them from the examination conducted by the Staff Selection Commission and to give them jobs directly;

(c) whether the employment exchanges can provide them jobs according to their educational qualifications; and

(d) whether the Government propose to raise reservation of three per cent for providing them more employment ?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI) : (a) (i) The Government of India have reserved 3% of vacancies against identified posts in Group 'C' and Group 'D' for the physically handicapped persons. The categories of handicapped persons benefited by this scheme are the Blind, the Deaf and the Orthopaedically handicapped, each category getting 1% reservation in Central Government services.

(ii) 23 Special Employment Exchanges, 55 Special Cells in normal Employment Exchanges and 17 Vocational Rehabilitation Centres for physically handicapped persons have been set up to assist handicapped persons in securing gainful employment.

(iii) Special recruitment drives for filling up the backlog of reserved posts in respect of Group 'C' and 'D' posts for blind and deaf have been conducted by Staff Selection Commission.

(iv) Voluntary Organisations are being assisted through grants for education, training and rehabilitation of the handicapped.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The Employment Exchanges sponsor registered candidates for employment who fulfil the qualifications and other requirements of posts notified to them by employers such as

Ministries/Departments/Public Sector Undertakings, etc.

(d) No, Sir.

Non-Supply of Coal to Industries

*458. SHRI RAJENDRA KUMAR SHARMA : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether due to non-supply of coal to industries, lakhs of workers are facing either lay off or retrenchment; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI P.A. SANGMA) : (a) and (b) Under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, an employer of an industrial establishment who seeks to retrench workmen must serve notice on the appropriate Government. Further, an employer in respect of a factory, mine or plantation employing more than 100 workmen must obtain permission from the appropriate Government for retrenching workmen or laying them off. No such notice or application seeking permission to retrench or lay-off workmen on account of shortage of coal has been received in so far as the Central sphere under the Industrial Disputes Act is concerned. State Governments have not also brought to our notice any such instance of lay-off or retrenchment. The Government of Tamil Nadu have reported a case of lock-out in a factory in Tamil Nadu due inter-alia to shortage of Coal. The Department of coal has issued instruction to the Coal India Ltd. to augment supply of coal to industries which may be facing difficulty in this regard

Mass Rapid Transit System in Delhi

*459. SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE :

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA :

Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the year in which the proposal for having a Mass Rapid Transit System in Delhi was first considered by the Government;

(b) the institutions/expert committees/departments which considered the matter and recommended the feasibility of the system;

(c) the dates when the recommendations were so submitted and the details of the proposals with their estimates;

(d) whether the Rail India Technical & Economic Services have also submitted a report in this regard;

(e) if so, what are their main recommendations; and

(f) the details of the cost escalation of such Mass Rapid Transit System since the first estimates were made ?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SHEILA KAUL) : (a) to (f) Since 1971 several studies have been conducted to assess the projected traffic in Delhi and the requirements for Mass Transportation. The first Techno-Economic Feasibility Study in this regard was entrusted to M/s. Rail India Technical and Economic Services Ltd. in April, 1989. The Report was submitted by TIES in July, 1990.