

Policy to provide employment to sportsmen

3221. CH. JAGDEEP DHANKHAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning to have a policy so as to encourage sports by providing employment to sportsmen at all levels; and

(b) the steps being taken by Government to provide employment to sportsmen?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT (PROF. M.G.K. MENON):

(a) and (b). Government already has a scheme to encourage sports by providing employment to meritorious sports persons in various Departments/Offices of the Govt. of India, to any group C/D post upto 5% of vacancies to be filled by direct recruitment through the UPSC/SSC, in relaxation of the recruitment procedure if they are eligible and suitable for the posts in all respects. Meritorious sports persons are also allowed age relaxation upto 5 years (10 years for those belonging to SC/ST) for appointment to all groups of Civil Posts/Services under the Govt. of India, filled otherwise than through competitive examinations conducted by the UPSC, if they satisfy all other eligibility conditions.

Reduction in office hours

3222. SHRI H.C. SRIKANTIAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any representation from the Central Government employees for reduction in the working hours by half-an-hours per day; and

(b) if so, the action taken thereon?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It has not been found possible to reduce the existing working hours.

Rubber Plantation in reserve forest area of Orissa

3223. SHRI GOVINDA CHANDRA MUNDA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal submitted by Orissa Government for rubber plantation in Reserve Forest Government for rubber plantation in Reserve Forest Areas of Orissa has been rejected or is pending for quite a long time;

(b) whether Government contemplate to reconsider the proposal and take a new policy decision on rubber plantation in Orissa; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI):

(a) The proposals submitted by Government of Orissa for raising rubber plantation on forest land have been rejected.

(b) and (c). Cultivation of rubber constitutes a non-forest purpose within the provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act 1980. Under the New National Forest Policy, 1988 one of the basic objective is to meet the requirement of the rural and tribal population with regard to fuelwood, fodder, minor forest produce and small timber. The proposals for raising rubber plantation on forest land can