

development and drilling for evaluation of the deposits in Sarguja District are in progress. Preliminary work has also been taken up in Bastar.

Retirement of N.C.C. Officers at 45 years of age

235. DR. VASANT KUMAR PANDIT: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the N.C.C. Organisation has decided to compulsorily retire all the NCC officers (part-time) completing 45 years of age as on 26th August, 1979;

(b) what are the projects of the N.C.C. Organisation regarding the need of part-time officers, for the coming five years;

(c) what is the current numerical strength of the part-time NCC Officers, the number of people who retired by 27th August, 1979; the expansion of new units of NCC in the country and the closure of several units at present for want of NCC Officers; and

(d) the overall policy of Government on the issue of NCC Organisation, its standing and future programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI C. P. N. SINGH): (a) The rule of retirement at 45 years of age applies to men officers holding part-time N.C.C. Commission. Extension of service, upto 50 years of age, is admissible to them provided they are physically fit and it is necessary or expedient to grant such extensions in the public interest. The age of retirement in case of part-time lady officers is 52 years extendable to 55 years.

(b) and (c). The existing authorised strength of part-time N.C.C.

officers is 11,513, including 10,146 Male Officers and 1,367 Lady Officers.

During the period from 27th August, 1977 to 27th August, 1979, 928 officers were discharged, including those who retired on completion of 15 years of service as per the rules then in force.

24 Units have been raised during 1978-79 and 1979-80. It is proposed to raise 26 new units during 1980-81. The required vacancies will be filled by fresh recruitment and by grant of extension of service. No N.C.C. Unit was disbanded during 1979 merely for want of N.C.C. part-time officers.

(d) The N.C.C. is one of the premier youth organisations of the country and it is our endeavour to promote it within existing financial constraints.

Separate Ministry to look after welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

236 SHRI LAKSHMAN MALLICK:

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to set up a separate Ministry to look after the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes; and

(b) if so, by when it is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA):

(a) There is no such proposal under consideration.

(b) Does not arise.