

examinations. Therefore, subjects in which the number of competing candidates is relatively small should be avoided unless there are strong reasons to the contrary. It is apparent that there can be no clear cut criteria for determining optional subjects for the Civil Services Examination. We have tried to include for the Main Examination all of the more "common" subjects, excluding those which are specifically professional or technical. We have also kept in view the general needs of the Services.

It is in the nature of things that a list of this nature has to be a compromise between several conflicting claims and considerations....."

It would appear that the Kothari Committee did not consider "Chemical Engineering" as one of the more "common" subjects and did not, therefore, include it in the list of optional subjects. In 1978 the Government had accepted the recommendations of the Kothari Committee regarding the list of optional subjects. There was no subsequent review regarding the subject of "Chemical Engineering."

1. There is no proposal under the consideration of the Government to include "Chemical Engineering" in the list of optional subjects for the Civil Services Examination.

2. Engineering Services Examination is conducted by the Union Public Service Commission for recruitment to Group 'A' and Group 'B' Engineering posts in various Ministries/Departments of the Government in four disciplines only viz., Civil, Mechanical, Electrical and Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering. Accordingly four discipline-oriented schemes of the Examination have been devised and there are no optional subjects. Since Chemical Engineering is a separate discipline by itself, it cannot be included in the present scheme of Engineering Services Examination.

Excavation for Location of Uranium in Himachal Pradesh

2430. PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR :

SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Department of Atomic Energy is carrying on excavations in Hamirpur and some other districts of Himachal Pradesh for the location of uranium;

(b) if so, the names of the exact places where the excavations are being carried out alongwith the precise dates w.e.f. which they have been started; and

(c) the outcome of the investigations so far and the likely period for which they are planned to be carried out ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, SPACE AND ELECTRONICS (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL) : (a) Yes, Sir.

Started on

| | | | |
|---------|------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|
| (b) (i) | Astotha, Hamirpur Districts. | 16-8-1977 | Operations closed on 24-9-1984 |
| (ii) | Khya, Hamirpua Districts. | 25-12-1984 | Work in progress |

(c) Mining at Astotha has provided valuable information on subsurface behaviour of uranium mineralisation in the Siwalik rocks. Work at Khya has just started and is likely to continue for 3 to 4 years more.

Depletion of Forest Area

2431. PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether his attention has been

drawn to the news report published in the Economic Times of 18th March, 1985 stating that the area under Forests has shrunk considerably since independence;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if so, whether Government intend to take immediate steps so as to halt this process and ensure adequate increase in this area under green cover during the Seventh Five Year Plan; and

(d) if so, the nature of the steps contemplated for this purpose with the co-operation of the States concerned ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI VIR SEN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The data gathered by the National Remote Sensing Agency indicate a loss of about 18.74% of forest area in the whole country between 1972-75 and 1980-82. The NRSA estimates are being analysed and refined to determine the degree of the error in their estimates. These steps include ground verification on a sample analysis.

(c) and (d). The following steps have been taken to conserve and develop the forests of the country :—

- (i) The Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 has been enacted to check indiscriminate diversion of forest lands to non-forest purposes.
- (ii) Guidelines have been issued to the States and Union Territories for preparation of working (management) plans for the working of forests and to strengthen the enforcement machinery at the field level.
- (iii) The National Forest Policy is being reviewed to provide the needed thrust in favour of forest conservation and to create a massive people's movement for this purpose.
- (iv) An in-depth study is being undertaken with a view to work out the modalities for relieving pressure

on forests, specially by encouraging the use of substitute materials.

(v) As a measure to relieve the pressure on our forest-resources, it has been proposed in the 1985-86 budget to totally exempt from duty imported pulp and wood chips and make this concession available to all user industries. Customs duty on wood in certain specified forms is also proposed to be reduced from the existing level of 100 per cent to 10 percent *ad valorem*.

(vi) A massive afforestation programme is being taken up, specially with the objective of bringing about 5 million hectares of land every year under fuelwood and fodder plantations.

Modification of Service Rules to Avoid Delay

2432. PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are considering any proposal for fixing the responsibility for the inordinate delay in taking/implementing decisions at various levels of the official channels so as to streamline the administration;

(b) if so, the nature of the proposals under consideration in this regard and whether the delay would be constructed as a lapse;

(c) whether any modifications in service rules or amendments in the Constitution are also being contemplated; and

(d) if so, the nature and scope thereof along with the likely period required for this purpose ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND CULTURE (SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO) :

(a) to (d). According to the provisions of the various conduct Rules that apply to government servants, they shall maintain devotion to duty at all times. Inordinate delay in taking/implementing decision is