

the Index. However, the rate of increase in consumer price index in a year is not an indicator of the overall costliness of a Centre.

(b) The Central Government employees are compensated for the rise in cost of living through the scheme of dearness allowance based on the movement of the Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers (Base 1960=100).

Fourth Pay Commission report on promotion policy

1191. SHRI HAFIZ MOHD. SIDDIQ : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Fourth Pay Commission has recommended laying down of a fair and well-defined promotion policy in all grades for its employees and to make the same known to all concerned including the procedure for selection for promotion, etc.;

(b) whether a senior management pool is also to be created wherefrom non-technical posts in the Central Government above the rank of Joint Secretary are to be filled;

(c) if so, whether Government propose to spell out the details of the above; and

(d) lay the procedures on the table of the House including the date from which these are to be effective ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI BIREN SINGH ENGTI) : (a) The Fourth Pay Commission has made observations, though not recommendations, to this effect in Chapter 23 of their report.

The policy and procedure relating to promotions and functioning of Departmental Promotion Committees are contained in the detailed instructions issued by the Government, and these are generally known to all concerned.

(b) As part of the on-going administrative reforms, it is being considered whether common and rigorous standards of selection for senior posts may be adopted both at the Centre and in the State Cadres of the IAS as well as in the cadres of the Central Services. In this context, the feasibility of establishing an Integrated Management Pool is also being explored.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Degradation of forest

1192. SHRI RANJIT SINGH GAEKWAD : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether continuous expansion of urban areas and development of industrial zones has caused severe degradation of the forest areas;

(b) if so, whether due to depletion of forest cover, the country is at present threatened with environmental imbalance; and

(c) if steps taken for further afforestation of the country, amount spent and progress made so far ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI) : (a) continuous expansion of urban areas and development of industrial zones has caused degradation of forest areas.

(b) Depletion of forest cover in the country is one of the causes of environmental imbalance.

(c) The National Wastelands Development Board was constituted in 1985 with the object of bringing 5 million hectares of land every year under fuelwood and fodder plantations. 4.6 million hectares were afforested during the Sixth Five Year Plan period at an estimated cost of Rs. 926 crores. Afforestation has been done over 1.5 million hectares and 1.68 million hectares during 1985-8 and 1986-87 respectively.