

(d) if so, steps Government propose to take to prevent this ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR, EMPLOYMENT AND REHABILITATION (SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD) : (a) and (b). A proposal to amend Regulation 28 (1) of the Coal Mines Regulations 1957 is under consideration. Persons employed as managers, officials, shot firers or winding engineers in the coal mines have to perform duties which are very arduous in nature and the safety of all persons employed in the mines is dependent upon the satisfactory performance of duties by them. Under the proposal that is now being considered by the Government such personnel will not be permitted to remain in employment after attaining the age of 60 years.

(c) No such result is apprehended.

(d) Does not arise.

National Minimum Wage

*314. SHRI YOGENDRA SHARMA: Will the Minister of LABOUR and REHABILITATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Union Labour Secretary had expressed recently his view that the fixation of a national minimum wage to replace the regional minimum would be difficult in practice ; and

(b) if so, whether Government agree with this view ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR, EMPLOYMENT AND REHABILITATION (SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD) : (a) At a recent Seminar on Minimum Wages Legislation, held under the auspices of the Indian Institute of Labour Studies, the Union Labour Secretary expressed the view that the fixation of a national minimum wage may present many practical difficulties arising out of regional and industry-wise differences. He added that the National Commission on Labour is studying this question and Government would await its recommendations on the subject.

(b) Does not arise.

Automation in Post Offices

*315. SHRI HARDAYAL DEVGUNJ : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that automation is being introduced in Post Offices ;

(b) if so, the number of Post Offices where automation is proposed to be introduced ;

(c) by what time automation will be introduced in all the Post Offices ; and

(d) the number of persons to be declared surplus as a result of this scheme and steps proposed to be taken to rehabilitate them ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING, AND COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SATYA NARAYAN SINHA) : (a) There is no proposal to introduce automation in Post Offices in this country. Field trials are, however, in progress regarding the adoption of various gadgets and machines to speed up counter operations and expedite handling of mails, like franking machines, vending machines, cancelling machines, bundling machines, conveyors etc.

(b) As experience is gained, machines found suitable for Indian conditions and which can be produced in India will be introduced in various places.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) It is not expected that any employee will be affected as a result of the adoption of such machines and gadgets. The question of rehabilitation of surplus staff would not, therefore, arise.

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*316. SHRIMATI ILA PAL-CHAUDHURI :
SHRI YAJNA DUTT
SHARMA :
SHRI NARENDRA SINGH
MAHIDA :
SHRI R. K. SINHA :
SHRI YASHWANT SINGH
KUSHWAH ;

Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Study Team appointed