

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The Committee comprises of 21 members, including the Chairman. Out of this, 12 are non-official members. More than half the members are women. Nomination to the Committee has been made from amongst the representatives of the Central Government, State Governments/ UT Administration, Members of Parliament, Employers' Organisation, Employees' Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations engaged in the study and welfare activities of women labour. The last meeting of the Committee was held on 7th April, 1995. It was decided in the 34th session of the Indian Labour Conference held on 18-19 Dec. 97 that the Committee should be reconstituted. Accordingly the Committee is under reconstitution.

Central Legislation for Agricultural Workers

*568. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the States which are opposing the Central Legislation for agricultural workers;

(b) whether Government will announce any package of assistance for agricultural workers; and

(c) whether Government will provide financial assistance for agricultural workers who are jobless because of the sharp fall of prices of the cash crops like rubber, pepper and cotton?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): (a) Certain States like Punjab, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh have expressed reservations about the desirability of having a Central Legislation, Whereas, some others like Meghalaya, Sikkim, Nagaland, Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Goa have said that the proposed law would not be relevant for them.

(b) There is no such proposal.

(c) Financial assistance for rural jobless including agricultural workers is already available under various schemes like Jawahar Rojgar Yojana, Employment Assurance

Schemes, Integrated Rural Development Programme, Training of Rural Youth for self employment, Crop Insurance Scheme and supply of improved tool kits to rural artisans, etc. However, there is no proposal for financial assistance on account of fall of prices of the cash crops.

Agricultural Export Policy

*569. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of long term agricultural export policy; and

(b) the list of high priority sectors which qualify for automatic approval by the Foreign Investment Board for Foreign Equity upto 51 per cent?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) The policy of the government regarding exports of agricultural products is governed principally by the concerns of India's food security maximising farm incomes and earning foreign exchange. Export regime in respect of agricultural products has been liberalised. Very few items are now either prohibited for exports or their exports are restricted or are subject to quantitative ceilings. Major items for which the exports are banned include wheat and wheat products and sugar except under preferential quota to the EU/USA.

(b) The list of high priority sectors in the area of agricultural production, plantations and manufacture of food products, which qualify for automatic approval by the Foreign Investment Board for Foreign Equity upto 51% is given below:

Agricultural Production: Agricultural production not elsewhere classified (n.e.c.); Certified high yielding hybrid seeds and synthetic seeds.

Plantations: Plantation n.e.c.; Certified high yielding plantations developed through plant tissue culture.

Manufacture of Food Products: Preparation and preservation of meat; Preservation of meats except by canning; Processing and