

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; Hreservation of meats except by canning; Processing and

canning of meat; Manufacture of dairy products; Manufacture of milk powder, ice-cream, powder and condensed milk except baby milk foods; Manufacture of baby milk foods; Manufacture of butter, cream, ghee, cheese and Khoya etc.; Manufacture of pasteurised milk whether or not in bottles/polythene packs etc. (plain or flavoured); Manufacture of other dairy products n.e.c.; Canning and preservation of fruits and vegetables; Sun-drying of fruits and vegetables; Artificial dehydration of fruits and vegetables; Radiation preservation of fruits and vegetables; Manufacture of fruit/vegetable juices and their concentrates, squashes and powders; Manufacture of sauces, jams, jellies, and marmalades etc.; Canning of fruits and vegetables; Fruit and vegetable preservation n.e.c.; Processing Canning and preserving of fish, Crustacea and similar foods; Grain milling; Flour milling by power machine; Other grain milling and processing activities n.e.c.; Production of common salt; Manufacture of cocoa products and sugar confectionery (including sweetmeats); Manufacture of cocoa products, starch and its derivatives, food products n.e.c.; soya texture proteins, soya protein isolates, soya protein concentrates, other specified products of soya bean, winterised and deodorised refined soyabean oil.

Proposal to close down number of PSUs

*570. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Public Sector Units proposed to be closed down or liquidated soon;

(b) whether the affected Public Sector Undertakings have had immovable assets which are likely to be affected by action of mafias;

(c) whether Government have not taken action to evaluate the proper value of those assets and have been going ahead for disposal of the units without any scientific evaluation of the immovable assets; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) The BIFR is to take decision in regard to the PSUs registered with it. It has recommended 'winding up' of 9 PSUs, namely, Bharat Process Mechanical Engineers Ltd.; British India Corporation Ltd., Cawnpore Textiles Ltd., Elgin Mills Company Ltd., IISCO Ujjain Pipe & Foundry Co. Ltd., Mandya National Paper Mills., National Bicycle Corporation of India Ltd., Tannery & Footwear Corporation of India Ltd. and Weighbird (India) Ltd. Official Liquidator has been appointed in IISCO Ujjain Pipe & Foundry Co. Ltd. In regard to the other 8, the matter is before various authorities like AAIFR and the concerned High Court.

(b) No such case has so far come to notice of the Government. Liquidation of a PSU is to be done by the concerned High Court under the provisions of the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, 1985.

(c) The Government disposing off any asset of CPSUs recommended for 'winding up' by BIFR does not arise.

(d) Does not arise.

India Brand Equity Fund

*571. DR. D. MASTHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is India Brand Equity Fund;

(b) which Indian companies have been provided with this fund, so far; and

(c) whether Government are considering of increasing this fund?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) The India Brand Equity Fund (IBEF) is a Fund set up by the Government to project the strengths of Indian products and services in overseas markets through a brand promotion strategy.

(b) So far, no loans have been provided to any company. However an offer of a loan has been made to one company.

(c) The corpus of the Fund is intended to be expanded largely through contributions from Indian trade and industry.