

such as rail links, roads, air services, power and water. The Government of India has already announced new initiatives for the development of infrastructure in North East. Ministry of Industry through the Growth Centres and Integrated Infrastructure Development Schemes is facilitating the creation of industry related infrastructure. Entrepreneurship development programme and Self-employment through PMRY are also aimed at entrepreneurship diffusion in North Eastern States.

**Comprehensive Bill for PF Scheme to Agricultural Labour**

1582. SHRI P. SOUNDARA RAJAN:  
SHRI R. MARGABANDU:  
SHRI O.S. MANIAN:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to bring a comprehensive Bill for providing Provident Fund Scheme to the agricultural labour;

(b) if so, whether Government will consult all the trade unions including State level unions before drafting the Bill; and

(c) in what manner Government propose to extend this Provident Fund facility to the unorganised agricultural labour in the rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (c) The agricultural farms, fruit gardens, poultry farms, plantations etc employing 20 or more persons already attract provisions of the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952. The workers employed in such farms are thus eligible for various benefits provided under the Provident Funds and other schemes framed under the Act. There is no proposal to bring any new Bill for providing Provident Fund for agricultural workers.

**Abnormal increase in Agriculture Workers in Maharashtra**

1583. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of agricultural workers in the State of Maharashtra as on date;

(b) whether it is a fact that there has been abnormal increase in the number of such labourers in the state during the last five years;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps Government propose to take for the Welfare of such labourers and provide alternative source of employment to them in the State with details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (c) Number of agricultural workers in Maharashtra as per 1981 and 1991 census is given below:

Year	No. of agricul- tural labourers	No. of Cul- tivators
1981	6,470,855	8,535,910
1991	8,313,223	10,172,108

(d) The Government have taken several steps for the welfare and improvement of conditions of agricultural workers in the country. A large number of existing Labour laws like the Minimum Wages Act, the Equal Remuneration Act, the Child labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act and the Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act etc. are applicable to the agricultural workers. The provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act are also applicable to a section of farm labour. Besides, a proposal for introducing a comprehensive Central legislation for agricultural workers to provide for regulation of their employment and working conditions and to provide for their welfare is under Government's consideration. Apart from

these steps, the problem of under employment in the rural areas including of agricultural workers is being tackled through a multi dimensional course of action viz. improvement of infrastructural facilities, diversification fo non-farm activities, skill improvement programme, financial assistance to promote self-employment and optimising the use of land resources. In the State of Maharashtra during the year 1996-97, 251.20 lakh mandays were generated under Jawahar Rojgar Yojna (JRY) (upto January, 1997): 149.53 lakh mandays were generated under Employment Assurance Scheme (AS) (upto December, 1996) and 10927 youths were trained under Training of Rural youth for Self Employment (TYRYSEM) (upto January, 1997).

**Trade Union Nominee for Tripartite Committees and Representation in ILO**

1584. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are having any criteria in selecting trade union nominees for tripartite committees and representation in ILO;

(b) whether Government have received any complaint from any Central trade union in this regard; and

(c) whether Government would call a meeting of Central trade unions over the matter and finalise a policy through collective discussion?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (c) The Indian labour Conference in its 17th Session held on 27-29 July, 1959, adopted the following criterial for the purpose.

"Organisations claiming representation on the Indian Labour Conference should have all-India Character with a minimum membership of one lakh spread over a number of States and a sizeable membership at least in the

majority of industries. The allocation of seats to each organisation should be based on the relative strength of each organisation determined in accordance with the latest available data regarding its membership.''

This matter was again considered by the National Labour Conference in its meeting held on 17-18 September, 1982 and the criteria was revised as given below:—

(i) In the matter of allocation of seats between the employers' organisations and workers' organisations, the principle as laid down in the India Lab our Conference, 1959, would continue to be followed. There would be parity between the representatives of workers and employers.

(ii) Only Trade Union Organisations which have a membership of more than five lakhs spread over 4 States and 4 Industries, would have representation in the Indian Labour Conference.

(iii) Organisations which are not affiliated to any of the Central Trade Union Organisations would not be invited.

Subsequently, the question of giving representation to trade union organisations having more than one lakh but less than 5 lakhs membership was considered. Decisions for inclusion of representatives of some additional organisations were taken from time to time. While representations from some trade union organisations were received before the International Labour Conference, 1996, the Indian Labour Conference in its latest meeting held in October, 1996 did not discuss or recommend any change in the criteria earlier suggested by them for this purpose. There appears no objection in the ILC considering tJiis agaix; in their next meeting, if they so e'e-