(d)   if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (KUMARI SELJA): (a) and (b) "The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Bill, 2012" has already been introduced by the Government in Lok Sabha on 3.9.2012. The Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment, to whom the Bill was referred for examination, has presented its report in the Lok Sabha and tabled it in the Rajya Sabha on 4.3.2013. The report is under examination of the Government.

(c) and (d) Presently, a multi-pronged strategy is being followed for elimination of manual scavenging. This, *inter-alia,* consists of:

(i)   Administration of the Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, 1993;

(ii)   Conversion of dry latrines into water seal toilets; and

(iii) Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers and their dependents, into alternative occupations.

Possession of illegal arms and ammunition

*234. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a)   whether Government is aware that a large number of people in Delhi and other parts of the country are in possession of illegal arms and ammunition;

(b)   if so, whether the Delhi Police has recently arrested some persons who were having illegal arms and ammunition;

(c)   if so, the details thereof; and

(d)   the steps Government proposes to take to make the law more stringent so that a person in possession of illegal arms and ammunition is put behind the bars?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (c) No Sir, there is no definite report to support the proposition that a large number of people in Delhi and other parts of the country are in possession of illegal arms and ammunition. However, Delhi Police have arrested 3431 persons with illegal arms and ammunition in the last three years.

(d)   The existing provisions in the Arms Act are adequate to deal with such offences.

All India strike by trade unions

*235. SHRI K.N. BALAGOPAL: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a)   whether Government was aware about the two day all India strike by different trade unions and associations on February, 20 and 21, 2013;

(b)   if so, the details of the steps taken by Government to address their issues and avoid the strike; and

(c)   whether Government is planning any measures to address the concerns raised by the trade unions?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government was aware of the two days all India Strike by different trade unions on February, 20 and 21, 2013. A meeting was convened by Union Minister of Labour and Employment with the representatives of Central Trade Unions (CTUs) on 13th February, 2013 to discuss the charter of demands. The demands of CTUs were discussed at length. It was clarified to the Union representatives that their demands would be looked into by the Government and they were requested to withdraw strike. The Hon'ble Prime Minister also made an appeal to CTUs to withdraw their country-wide General Strike. Subsequently, a group of Senior Ministers of the Cabinet held a meeting with the representatives of the major CTUs on 18th February, 2013. The GoM assured the representatives of CTUs that Government is serious on the demands related to working class and taking all possible measures to redress them. They also appealed to the representatives of CTUs to reconsider their stand for going on strike.

(c)   Government has taken various measures to address the concerns raised by the trade unions. Particular attention is drawn to the huge amount of food subsidy incurred by the Government to ensure availability of food grains to the poor at very concessional rate through the Public Distribution System. The Government's efforts to pass the Food Security Bill in the Parliament will further increase the availability of subsidized food grains to the larger segments of the population. Ministry of Labour and Employment has prepared a National