

(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

Employment Policy to ensure that the growth process is inclusive and equitable. The policy has been drafted with a view to mainstreaming employment into policy making for socio-economic development of the country. It will provide a proper framework towards achieving the goal of remunerative and decent employment for all women and men in the labour force. So far enforcement of labour laws in Central Sphere is concerned, there exists a well-defined and effective machinery. Similar arrangements are also available in the States. The Government has enacted Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008. The Government of India has also set up National Social Security Fund (NSSF) with a corpus of Rs.1000 crore. National Social Security Board (NSSB) has also been constituted which is advising the Government from time to time on Social Security Schemes. Action is being taken to amend the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970 wherein it is, *inter-alia*, proposed that in case where the contract labour perform the same or similar kind of work as the workmen directly appointed by the principal employer, the wage rates, holidays, social security provisions of contract labour shall be the same as are available to the directly appointed workmen on the roll of principal employer. Further, a Bill is being brought before the Parliament to amend the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 to provide a National Floor Level Minimum Wage.

Police reforms in Assam

*236. SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is a proposal for police reforms in Assam;
- (b) whether the steps taken under police reforms have reduced the crime rate; and
- (c) the details and the current status thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) There is no specific proposal on Police Reforms in Assam pending in the Ministry of Home Affairs.

(b) and (c) Police reforms and reduction in crime rate cannot be linked in entirety as crime is linked to economic, ethnic, religious, cultural and other social factors. Police reforms have been conceived to reduce such deficiencies in the policing system, which may be affecting functional and operational abilities. The