

development. Thread and looms should also be provided to them. We have made schemes for the State Governments.

[*English*]

Child Labour

*830. SHRI N. DENNIS: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether ILO and UNICEF have organised any drive against child labour in India;

(b) whether any conference was held by these bodies in India recently;

(c) if so, the details of the deliberations; and

(d) the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (P.A. SANGMA):

(a) to (d). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

ILO is financing an 'International Programme on Elimination of Child Labour' (IPEC) in which India is one of the participating countries. The objective of elimination of child labour also has the support of UNICEF and financial assistance for an advocacy programmes for the purpose has been provided under their Master Plan of Operation for India.

With the co-operation of the International Labour Organisation and UNICEF a number of conference have been held from time to time. These conferences have deliberated on the various issues relating to child labour such as enforcement of existing laws, awareness generation through media efforts, occupational health and safety etc. A workshop on hazards to safety and health of working children was held under the IPEC within the framework of the Thirteenth World

Congress on Occupational Safety and Health (fourth to eighth April, 1993).

The recommendations and conclusions of these conferences and workshops are being used by Government in policy formulation as well as programme implementation.

SHRI N. DENNIS: In the answer it is stated that the financial assistance is extended by the international organisations like the ILO and UNICEF, for the elimination of child labour in our country. May I know the quantum of assistance being extended to us and whether any common programme is sorted out for the utilisation of the amount?

SHRI P.A. SANGAMA: Sir, at the moment we have launched one programme assisted by ILO, which we call as International Programme on Elimination of Child Labour. This was launched on the 20th of January, 1993. Under this programme we are getting assistance to the extent of Rs. 6.97 crores from ILO. We have constituted a National Steering Committee and this Committee as invited applications from the non-Governmental organisations because this programme has to be implemented through the voluntary agencies. They have submitted their applications to the State Governments. We have got about 100 applicants from different voluntary organisations and they are being screened by the National Steering Committee. And, it will be finalised soon.

SHRI N. DENNIS: Sir, child labour is one of the unpleasant practices in our country. India has the highest number of child labourers, about one-third of the total number of child labourers in the world, though there are several legislations and Constitutional provisions against the child labour they are not practised and they are flouted. So, under the prevailing socio-economic condition it is not practicable to eliminate child labour immediately. Parents cannot prevent them and even the Government cannot eliminate the child labour immediately.

May I know from the hon. Minister whether some legal protection of safeguard would be given to the child labourers so that they would get the benefits as the adult labourers are getting? Apart from this, whether a time bound programme would be taken up for elimination of child labour from our country?

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: Sir, it is true that the implementation of Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act is not very effective and much needs to be done in that area. Under the ILO project one of the areas identified is to concentrate on the implementation of the legislations available for the elimination and regulation of child labour. That is one area where we are going to concentrate.

As far as time bound programme for elimination of child labour is concerned, it is very difficult to say about it. What we have tried to do is, in the last Central Advisory Council meeting we have decided to identify States where the number of child labour is below 50,000. In that respect we have identified 9 States and 3 Union Territories. We have asked these 9 States and 3 Union Territories to make an attempt to eliminate child labour within a period of two years and then we will declare those States as the child labour free States. As far as other States are concerned, we have asked them to identify one or two districts and concentrate their efforts towards elimination of child labour. The problem of child labour is so big and the number being about 17 million as of today, it is not possible for us to eliminate child labour at a time. So, it has to be done gradually. That is how, we have programmed action like that.

[Translation]

SHRI SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, all of us express our concern over the Child Labour and we do make programmes and policies in this regard but our real problem is that we lack the concrete steps which are needed to solve the problems of child labour and a policy is not there

to implement such steps in an effective manner. Just now we have been told that we have got funds from UNICEF for International Programme on Elimination of Child Labour and this programme has to be implemented through voluntary agencies and organisations. Recently, on 4th April a world congress was held under the auspices of I.L.O. which arrived at some concrete conclusions. Through you, I want to know about the main issues of this congress and what steps are being taken to implement them?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: It is given in writing. You see 'C' details of deliberations.

[Translation]

SHRI SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: I have read the written reply, as such I would like to know, through you, that Government has said that these recommendations will help in formulating a policy which will implement that programme, but this is not the first Congress, there has been such Congress earlier too, so I specially want to submit specifically that this Congress..(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: If you read the written reply, it is exactly on the supplementaries that you are asking.

[Translation]

SHRI SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: I want to submit that whatever you have said is clear to me.

MR. SPEAKER: You may read it and then you will get your answer.

[English]

SHRIMATI GEETAMUKHERJEE: May I ask the Minister, through you, whether under this programme - identifications of the areas - the first areas are the areas which are hazardous for the child labourers. If so, in that

area what is being, particularly, thought about?

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: Sir, I stated that the amount of money available from the ILO is Rs. 6.97 crore. Now, we are going to have 50 projects and all the 50 projects will be implemented by NGOs. In these 50 projects, the allocation is like this. For the enforcement of existing law, there will be one project which will be entrusted to one NGO and our provision is Rs. 58.90 lakh. Children working in factories and also as home workers, particularly in the beedi industries, we are going to have 28 projects and the money earmarked for this is Rs. 4.07 crore. This is the area for which you have asked the details.

As far as children working in agricultural sector are concerned we are going to have four projects at a cost of Rs. 1.32 crore. In the service sector, particularly in the restaurants, shops and establishments in the metropolitan cities, a lot of children are working. We have earmarked 14 projects for that area at a cost of Rs. 87.67 lakh. And another one where the children are working is in informal sector. We will have three projects at a cost of Rs. 12 lakh. This is the position.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the practice of Child Labour has been continuing since long in this country and the figures given by the hon. Minister indicate that 17 million child workers have been found engaged in many works in a survey conducted in this regard. Mr. Speaker Sir, Poverty and illiteracy are the main reason of Child Labour. Unless the education upto middle level is made compulsory, the elimination of child labour is not possible. The funds allocated for various projects which the Government is going to launch in different sectors like the Service sector Beedi Manufacturing sector, hazardous industries sector, is too meagre to divert the child workers engaged in these sectors at present. Its another aspect is that handicraft is traditional occupation in our country. If a

child does not learn the skill from early childhood, he cannot become skilled in a particular handicraft. In these circumstances, unless we make some special arrangements by making investment we cannot separate them from their traditional jobs. For this, unless we make education compulsory and give a guarantee employment, it will not be meaningful. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government is considering any scheme to make education compulsory up to middle level and providing employment so that child labour may be eliminated totally?

[English]

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: The amount I have stated is only regarding one particularly project of ILO. We have actually four projects broadly. The one in which I have stated International Programme on Elimination of Child Labour is the only figure I have given; that is one programme assisted by the ILO; there is a second programme which is going to be assisted by the ILO where we will be getting about Rs. 4 crore child labour action and support programme. This programme is yet to start; it has not been launched.

We have got three programmes which are of UNICEF Master Plan of Operation. So, this is the third one. The fourth one is National Child Labour Project. We have got 10 projects which we are implementing in the child labour concentrated area like Shiva Kashi, Diamond Polishing in Surat, Lock industry in Aligarh and the carpet industry in Bidar. Ten areas we have identified. In turn, our concentration is on education programme. So, the money which I have spent out is only for one of the four projects. But if you take the total amount of money being spent, it is quite high. I can assure the House that money will not be a problem but the mechanism is a problem, because Government alone cannot do it.

We have to involve NGOs very actively in this programme; and that is the reason why, for the first time, we are convening a National Conference on Child Labour on the

17th of next month there we will formulate our action programme as now to involve a large number of voluntary organisations who are already doing good work in the field of child labour.

SHRI BIJOY KRISHNA HANDIQU: May I know the Hon'ble Minister whether the carpet importers from Europe decided to boycott the Indian carpet the ground that child labour is engaged in the industry the work of which is hazardous to their health; if so, what is Government's reaction?

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: As of today, no country has officially banned the import of Indian carpet. But there are human activists' movements in Europe particularly in the United States of America where they are pressuring their respective governments to impose a ban on the import of Indian carpet made by children.

There is Private Members' Bill before the Senate in the United States. But Government as such has not taken any official position.

SHRI AJAY MUKHOPADYAY: Has any survey been conducted throughout the country in regard to the position of the child labour; if so, that is the total number of child labour in the country; and what are the safety measures adopted for the working children?

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: A survey has been conducted. The child labour figures are available in the census itself. 1971 census shows that we have 10 million child labour in our country. The 1981 census shows we had 13 million and the thirty-second round of the National Central Survey conducted in our country by the Planning Commission shows the latest figure as 17 million

[*Translation*]

SHRI VIRINDRA SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, my Parliamentary constituency is the biggest centre of carpet industry in the country. The issue of Child labour in carpet indus-

try is always discussed at international level. To force someone to work is against humanity. I am also totally against child labour. The hon. Minister has said in this reply that the fund received from UNICEF is utilised for liberation of child workers through voluntary organisations and it is utilized to rehabilitate them so that they may lead a normal life. The propaganda of liberating child workers at Bhadohi in my constituency is made in foreign countries and through periodicals. Voluntary organisation functions by the name of Bal Bhandhua Mukti Morcha. This organisation got the child workers liberated from carpet industry at Bhadohi and also made arrangements for them utilising that fund, so that they may lead normal life. Are the liberated Child workers still leading a normal life and who are these people? Secondly, the crime of child labour is committed in our country. This is a problem of our country but how it is published in foreign countries. How our people make propaganda of it in foreign countries? Which is the agency to interfere in our internal affairs?

[*English*]

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: Sir it is true that there is a large number of children working in the carpet weaving industry in Bhadohi area of Uttar Pradesh. I had in fact, two occasions to visit that area earlier and I am very much aware of that area. We have a National Child Labour Project being executed in that particular area.

Procurement of Cotton

*832. **SHRIMATI CHANDRA PRABHARS:** Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Karnataka has requested the Cotton Corporation of India to increase the off take of cotton from the state;

(b) whether the Karnataka Government has also sought permission for the supply of cotton to other States; and