

weavers, rikshaw pullers, etc. Improvement in quality of employment and conditions of work of unorganised workers has been and continues to be a matter of prime concern for the Government.

As regards fresh policy initiatives the Central Government have enacted the building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment & Conditions of Service) Act, 1996 to protect the interest of workers engaged in construction industry which constitutes the second largest single activity, after agriculture employing unorganised workers. Agenda for the year 1997-98 includes continued efforts to gear up and augment the existing measures and a new measure of bringing in comprehensive legislation for agricultural workers numbering about 200 million.

Statement

S.No.	State/U.T.	No. of Total Workers
1.	Andhra Pradesh	29,963,648
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	399,782
3.	Assam	8,088,935
4.	Bihar	27,777,071
5.	Goa	412,736
6.	Gujarat	16,620,519
7.	Haryana	5,103,470
8.	Himachal Pradesh	2,214,379
9.	Karnataka	18,886,798
10.	Kerala	9,146,118
11.	Madhya Pradesh	23,340,485
12.	Maharashtra	33,910,366
13.	Manipur	774,904
14.	Meghalaya	757,322
15.	Mizoram	337,345
16.	Nagaland	516,237
17.	Orissa	11,882,762
18.	Punjab	6,261,989
19.	Rajasthan	17,104,372
20.	Sikkim	168,721
21.	Tamil Nadu	24,194,343
22.	Tripura	858,517
23.	Uttar Pradesh	44,799,280
24.	West Bengal	21,914,774
25.	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	98,901
26.	Chandigarh	224,294
27.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	73,739
28.	Daman & Diu	38,224
29.	Delhi	2,980,461
30.	Lakshadweep	13,664
31.	Pondicherry	267,214
	Total	314,131,370

Source : Census, 1991

Gold Reserve

5039. SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

- the position of Gold Reserve in the country as on December, 1996;
- the annual consumption of gold in the country;
- the quantity and value of the gold imported during 1996; and
- the steps taken to increase the gold reserve of the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR : (a) Gold Reserve of the Reserve Bank of India as at the end December 1996 stood at 397.5 tonnes, equivalent to Rs. 14274 crores.

(b) There is no official estimates of the consumption of gold in the country. The World Gold Council has estimated the annual gold consumption in India at 477 tonnes in 1995.

(c) The quantity of gold imported during 1996 was 297.79 tonnes, valued at Rs. 15458.28 crores at the annual average price prevailed at the Mumbai Market.

(d) The liberalised Gold Import Scheme allows import of gold by Non-Resident Indians and permits imports by MMTC and SBI for delivery of such gold in India to the returning Non-Resident Indians and against Special Import Licences. This Scheme aims at improving the availability of gold imported through licit channels and on payment of custom duty in foreign exchange.

M.R.T.S. Project

5040. SHRI HARIN PATHAK : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

- whether the financial institutions have refused to finance MRTS project in Delhi;
- if so, the steps proposed to be taken to meet this expenditure; and
- by when the project is proposed to be completed ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. U. VENKATESWARLU) : (a) Because of long term nature of loan and low returns, the financial institutions in India did not show interest in the project.

(b) The total cost of the project is estimated at Rs. 4860 crores at April, 1996 prices. The financing plan of the project is as under :

- equity contribution of Government of India and Government of NCT of Delhi @ 15% each of total cost of the project.
- OECD (Japan) Loan – approx. 56% of total cost of the project

- (iii) Revenues from property development, subordinate debt towards land cost and dedicated taxes and levies – approx. 14%.

(c) The project is slated to be completed by 2005 A.D.

[Translation]

Hydro Power Project at Nainpur

5041. SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULESTE : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether a proposal from the Government of Madhya Pradesh to set up a 750 KW Hydro Power Project at Nainpur, Mandla District in Madhya Pradesh was sanctioned by the Central Electricity Authority in 1984;

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not the reasons for delay; and

(c) the time by which the work on this project is likely to be commenced ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) : (a) Madhya Pradesh Electricity Board (MPEB) submitted a project report of 2x300 KW capacity Thanwar Mini Hydel Project, at an estimated cost of Rs. 105.63 lakhs which was proposed on Thanwar Irrigation Project located in Nainpur Tehsil of Mandla District to the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) in December 1982, for approval. This was eventually sanctioned by MPEB in 1984.

(b) & (c) The project report was reviewed by MPEB after comments were received by CEA and Central Water Commission (CWC) and accordingly the installed capacity was revised to 2x250 KW at an estimated cost of Rs. 82.9 lakhs based on review of water availability studies. Since this cost was less than Rs. 100 lakhs, the MPEB was empowered to approve the project report. Administrative approval was accorded to the project in July 1984. The State Irrigation Department also gave their clearance in January 1986. The tenders for turn-key execution was invited in 1988 which was eventually rejected because of receipt of high rates. Due to financial constraints prevailing with the Board, no new projects were undertaken. The project was posed for privatisation in 1994 but due to lack of interest of allottee firm. The allotment was cancelled in September 1995. The irrigation and dam canal works have been completed in 1996 and the project proposed to be posed again for privatisation.

[English]

Cultivation of Opium

5042. SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE :
SHRI N.N. KRISHNA DAS :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the total area under opium cultivation in the country, State-wise;

(b) whether there is any increase in hectareage during the last ten years;

(c) whether there is any pressure from the International Narcotics Control Board to increase the area under opium cultivation; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) The total area under opium cultivation during the crop year 1996-97 was 29,797.900 hectares. The state-wise break-up is as under :

(i) Madhya Pradesh	16573.500 hectares
(ii) Rajasthan	12512.700 hectares
(iii) Uttar Pradesh	711.700 hectares

(b) There has been no increase in the hectareage during the years 1986-87 to 1993-94. However, in view of the opium stock position having depleted to a record low the area under poppy cultivation had to be increased in the year 1994-95 onward as below in order to meet the export commitments and the domestic requirement of opium.

Year	Area licensed
1993-94	13489.00
1994-95	25215.00
1995-96	26437.00
1996-97	29798.00

(c) No, Sir. The area under poppy cultivation during any crop year is fixed taking into account the global demand for opium. The International Narcotics Control Board, as the concerned U.N. Agency monitors the global demand and supply of opiates and has always emphasized, India's important role as the sole producer & supplier of licit opium.

(d) In view of (c) above, question does not arise.

Import of R.O.B.

5043. DR. BALIRAM : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 4430 on December 20, 1996 and state :

(a) whether the requisite information has since been received;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons for delay in this regard and the time by which the information is likely to be laid on the table of the House ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) to (c) The requisite informations are being collected from field formations and is likely to be laid on the table of the House before the end of the current Session of Parliament.