

schools set up under the projects. This issue was also deliberated upon by the Hon'ble Supreme Court. The Court has given several directions, in their judgement dated 10.12.96, including payment of compensation by the employers, employing children in hazardous occupations. The Government has already taken a number of steps to implement these directions.

Hospitals of Indian Red Cross Society

64. SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the hospitals set up by the Indian Red Cross Society to treat victims of 1984 Bhopal Gas disaster at Bhopal are on the verge of closure;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the details of Central assistance provided to the State Government and to the Indian Red Cross Society for victims of Bhopal Gas disaster during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) and (b) According to information received from Indian Red Cross Society, the hospitals set up by IRCS to treat the victims of 1984 of the Bhopal Gas Disaster have not closed down but the number of patients visiting these Medical Centres have now come down.

(c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

[Translation]

Indians in Saudi Arabia

65. SHRI MOHAMMAD ALI ASHRAF FATMI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been large scale harassment of Indians in Saudi Arabia;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether some Indians are missing from January 1997 in Saudi Arabia; and

(d) if so, the steps taken to trace them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI KAMALA SINHA): (a) to (d) There have been no reports of large scale harassment of Indians in Saudi Arabia. By and large, Indians in Saudi Arabia are satisfied with their living and working conditions. In relation to the approximately 1.5 million Indian workers in Saudi Arabia, the number of complaints is very small. The complaints of harassment received from time to time mostly relate to non-payment of wages, long and arduous hours of work without adequate compensation, denial of leave to come to India, withholding of travel documents by the sponsors, non-fulfilment of contractual obligations, ill-treatment, etc

Out of the 1.5 million Indian workers in Saudi Arabia, the majority of them work in the interior parts of the country. Whenever our Embassy in Riyadh or the Consulate General in Jeddah receives any report about a missing Indian, they promptly take up the matter with the sponsor, local Indians who are known to the missing person as well as with the Saudi Foreign Ministry to trace the individual.

Since January 1997, a prominent case brought to government's attention was of Shri B.D. Baliga, who was employed as Materials Manager in Eastern Petro Chemicals, Jubail, Saudi Arabia, reported missing from 5.2.1997. On enquiries the Embassy learnt that he had been detained at the airport for unauthorisedly possessing some documents belonging to his employer. Through the efforts of the Embassy, Shri B.D. Baliga was released and subsequently returned to India.

[English]

Labour Laws

66. SHRI AYYANNA PATRUDU:

KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIYA:

SHRI SANDIPAN THORAT:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken fresh initiatives for a critical review of existing labour laws in the wake of emerging globalisation process and the need for internationalising labour laws;

(b) if so, the present status thereof and the action taken in this regard;

(c) the details of time bound action plan for the current year; and

(d) whether the role of State Governments therein?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) to (d) Review of labour laws is a continuous process and enacting of new laws and amendments to existing laws are made taking into account emerging factors. Views of State Governments are generally invited while amending the existing laws or enacting a new law.

Draft of Ninth Plan

67. SHRI NITISH KUMAR:

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH:

SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO:

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state

(a) whether the draft of the Ninth Plan has been finally approved;

(b) if so, whether the views of all the State

Governments including the experts, have been ascertained; and

(c) the main projects on which emphasis has been laid down in the Ninth Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRIMATI RATNMALA D. SAVANOOR): (a) to (c) No, Sir. The exercise for the preparation of the Ninth Plan is presently underway in Planning Commission. The Approach Paper to the Ninth Plan approved by the National Development Council in its meeting held on 16.01.1997, prepared after extensive consultations with experts, Parliamentarians, State Governments and Voluntary Organisations etc, indicated the objectives and main thrusts on which emphasis is to be laid down in the Ninth Plan.

P.M.'e Action Plan on Child Labour

66. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made towards elimination of child labour engaged in hazardous jobs, industry and mines under the Action Plan announced by the then Prime Minister on August 15, 1995, so far, yearwise, indicating also the achievement made for education, training and rehabilitation of the child labour, emancipated under the Plan, and

(b) the effective steps being taken to achieve the objectives of total ban of child labour from such hazardous employment as contemplated under Article 24, of the Constitution?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) and (b) A major programme was announced by Government on 15th August, 1994 to rehabilitate child labour working in hazardous occupations. Under the project, an estimated 2 million children working in hazardous occupations were proposed to be withdrawn from work and rehabilitated by putting them in schools with provisions for non-formal education, vocational training supplementary nutrition, etc. So far 76 Child Labour Projects have been sanctioned for the rehabilitation of around 1.5 lakh children working in hazardous occupations. As per the available information, around 1.05 lakh children are already enrolled in the special schools set up under the projects.

While the Government was still considering extension of the programme to other districts, the Hon'ble Supreme Court in their judgement 10.12.96 issued several directions regarding the manner in which the children working in hazardous occupations are to be withdrawn and rehabilitated as also the manner in which the working conditions of children working in non hazardous occupations are to be improved and regulated. A number of steps have been taken for the implementation of the judgement of Supreme Court.

Climate Satellite

69. SHRI L. RAMANA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Space Research Organisation has submitted a proposal for launching climate satellite; and

(b) if so, the action taken thereon by the Government to save lives during natural calamities by advance prediction of cyclones?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN): (a) No, Sir. However, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has constituted an Expert Group for defining a satellite for climate studies-CLIMATSAT Programme Definition Group—for working out the technical feasibility of designing and launching such a satellite. The Committee is presently working out the payload mix, orbit, satellite configuration, etc., for the proposed satellite in close collaboration with various Indian user Organisations such as, Indian Meteorological Department, National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting and Indian Institute of Science.

(b) Presently, the analysis of sequential cloud cover images provided by the Indian geostationary INSAT satellites, has been facilitating advanced warning on the onset of cyclones. The Disaster Warning System using additionally the communication capability of INSAT has been used to take advanced actions in relation to evacuation of people from coastal regions.

Model Villages

70. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) has prepared a special scheme for the development of model villages in the country.

(b) if so, the details and salient features thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (DR. U. VENKATESWARLU): (a) Yes, Sir. HUDCO has proposed to develop one or two model villages (Adarsh Gram) and model bastis (Adarsh Bastis) in all States/UTs in the country.

(b) The Model Village/Model Basti Project will have a convergence approach and integrated development with provision of good housing with appropriate sustainable technologies based on local resources, use of non-conventional and renewable sources of energy and creation of social infrastructure and community facilities. The Model