

of the participating States might take meeting with their officials including from those Municipalities on implementation, operation and maintenance of assets created under these schemes. It was also decided that Central funding would be released after satisfactory operation and maintenance of completed works. A team of senior officers selected by Secretary, Environment & Forests was also sent to Bihar for boosting the implementation and monitoring of projects under Ganga Action Plan. The Union Minister of Environment & Forests and Secretary, Deptt. of Environment & Forests had written to the Chief Minister and Chief Secretary of Bihar respectively for forming High Level Political Committees at the State level and Town Level Citizens Committees for ensuring successful implementation of the Ganga Action Plan. The Standing Committee of Rivers Conservation Authority in its meeting held 09-09-98 directed the Chairman, Central Pollution Board to take necessary action under the Environment Protection Act, 1986 against the defaulting local bodies/Departments in Bihar.

#### *Health*

4. The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has been paying special attention to monitor the progress of Centrally Sponsored Schemes in the State, like Tuberculosis, Blindness Control Programme and Leprosy Eradication Programme. Efforts are also under way to improve performance of the existing manpower through training programmes aimed at skill upgradation as well as programme orientation.

[*English*]

#### **Rise in Poverty**

1113. SHRI MADHAV RAO PATIL:  
SHRI D.S. AHIRE:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether concern has been expressed over rising trend of poverty in India; and

(b) if so, the factors responsible for increasing poverty in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF

STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) It is not true that poverty has been increasing in India. The Planning Commission estimates poverty at National and State level from quinquennial consumer expenditure data obtained from the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO). Using the two latest estimates of poverty for the years 1987-88 and 1993-94, it is found that the incidence of poverty at national level has gone down from 38.86 per cent in 1987-88 to 35.97 per cent in 1993-94. For a somewhat longer period, the incidence of poverty is observed to reduce from 44.48 per cent in 1983 to 35.97 per cent in 1993-94. There is a continuous effort through the planning and development strategy to reduce the number and percentage of poor in the total population in the country.

#### **Production of Groundnut**

1114. SHRI MAHESH KANODIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the annual production of groundnut in the country during each of the last three years, State-wise; and

(b) the action taken or proposed to be taken by Union Government to increase the production of groundnut particularly in the Gujarat State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) State-wise total production of groundnut during the last 3 years is given in the statement attached.

(b) A Centrally Sponsored Oilseeds Production Programme (OPP) is in implementation in 23 States including Gujarat covering 381 selected districts for increasing the production of oilseeds including groundnut in the country. Under the programme various incentives by way of subsidies are being provided on critical inputs like production and distribution of seed, minikits, rhizobium culture, gypsum/pyrite, improved farm implements, plant protection equipments, sprinkler sets etc. In addition, frontline and general demonstrations are organised on farmer's field to transfer the production technology.