

Considering the magnitude of the problem of child labour a sequential, progressive and integrated approach is being adopted for rehabilitation of working children.

Apart from rehabilitative measures, the various provisions of Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 are also being enforced.

#### National Debate on Article 356

\*35. SHRI MADAN PATIL :

SHRI SURESH WARPUDKAR :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have initiated any national debate/discussion on Article 356 of Constitution using the forum of Inter State Council; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L. K. ADVANI) : (a) and (b) The recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission pertaining to article 356 of the Constitution of India have been discussed in the meetings of the Standing Committee of the Inter-State Council held on 15.1.1997, 10.5.1997, 17.6.1997 and 8.7.1997. The matter was also discussed in the third meeting of the Inter-State Council held on 17.7.1997 but it remained inconclusive. The Standing Committee of the Inter-State Council is now scheduled to meet on 19.12.1998. The agenda includes discussion on the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission relating to Emergency Provisions.

#### Village Defence Committees

\*36. DR. JAYANTA RONGPI : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to form Village Defence Committees (VDC) to fight insurgency in the affected States;

(b) if so, the details of the scheme;

(c) whether VDC scheme shall also be implemented in the North-Eastern region;

(d) if so, the time by which the VDC Scheme is likely to be started in the said regions; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K.

ADVANI) : (a) and (b) As per available information Village Defence Committees (VDC) are functioning in the State of Jammu & Kashmir, with a view to counter the activities of militants in their respective villages. Presently each VDC consists of 1 Special Police Officer (SPO) plus 10 to 15 volunteers. The members of the Village Defence Committees are provided with arms and equipments by the State Government as per the need. SPOs in Jammu & Kashmir are being paid a monthly honorarium of Rs. 1500/- and are provided training in the use of arms.

It has been suggested to the State Government to consider strengthening the VDC scheme as per need and to integrate the VDCs into the existing counter insurgency grid.

(c) to (e) There is no such proposal at present.

#### Levy Price on Rice/Wheat

\*37. SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV :

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE :

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have recently revised the levy price of rice and wheat;

(b) if so, the extent thereof indicating the original and revised prices;

(c) the reasons for such increase; and

(d) the impact of such increase on the retail prices of these foodgrains?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SARDAR SURJIT SINGH BARNALA) : (a) Government notify the prices of levy rice payable to rice millers/dealers for each Kharif Marketing Season. As there is no levy on wheat, no levy prices for wheat are fixed/notified.

(b) A statement giving State-wise prices of levy rice for the current Kharif Marketing Season 1998-99 and the previous season of 1997-98 is attached.

(c) The prices of levy rice are fixed every season after considering all relevant factors like increase in the Minimum Support Price of paddy, statutory charges and milling charges, etc. etc.

(d) The prices of levy rice are payable to rice millers/dealers for supplying levy rice exclusively for