

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT  
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:208

ANSWERED ON:08.08.2005

CHILDREN IN MINES SECTOR

Adhalrao Patil Shri Shivaji;Singh Shri Ganesh

**Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether several lakh children are still working in the mines throughout the country and a large number of them starting from the age of five, working in most hazardous conditions and leading a horrible existence as reported in the Hindu dated May 16, 2005;
- (b) if so, whether there is a demand to conduct an enquiry in all the mines in the country and to come up with a comprehensive report on child labour;
- (c) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (d) whether the school dropout rate is much high in mining region of the country; and
- (e) if so, the remedial steps taken by the Government in this regard?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT ( SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHAR RAO )

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

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 208 FOR 08.08.2005 REGARDING CHILDREN IN MINES SECTOR.

(a) to (e): The number of working children is collected through the decadal census conducted by the Census authorities. The number of working children as per the census conducted in 2001 is 1.26 crore in the entire country. These figures include children working in all occupations including in the mines. It is not true that several lakh children are working in mines in Karnataka as reported in the Hindu dated May 16, 2005. The use of child labour working in mines is prohibited under the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986. Working in mines has been identified as a hazardous occupation and any employer employing children below the age of 14 in mines is liable to penal action which includes imprisonment. Instructions to enforce strictly the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act in the entire country for all hazardous occupations including working in mines for children has been conveyed to all the State Governments including the Government of Karnataka. The Government is very serious in effective enforcement of the Act and in the implementation of the National Child Labour Projects in the country. Mining is a very widespread activity in the country and it takes place both in the organized sector and in the unorganized sector. There is no evidence to indicate that the school drop out rates amongst children working in mines is higher than the general drop out rates in the other areas in the country.