

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2877
ANSWERED ON:14.03.2011
DISPARITY IN WAGES
Singh Rajkumari Ratna

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

- (a) whether there is huge disparity in wages and other facilities available to an urban women and a rural women labourers;
- (b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) the steps taken by the Government for removing the disparity; and
- (d) the success achieved by the Government as a result thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE)

(a) to (d): Information is as per statement annexed.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2877 FOR ANSWER ON 14.03.2011 REGARDING 'DISPARITY IN WAGES'.

(a): Yes, Madam. As per National Sample Survey Organisation Report 2004-05, there is a difference of wages and salaries between rural and urban women employees. In rural areas, women are predominantly working in agriculture and related activities which are not very highly paid whereas in urban areas, women are working in different sectors including services and other organized sectors where the wages are higher. Therefore this disparity in wages between rural and urban women could be attributed to difference in the nature of activities carried out by women in these areas.

(b) to (d): The Government is implementing the Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 which provides for payment of equal remuneration to men and women for the same work or work of a similar nature without any discrimination. This Act is implemented by the respective State Governments for the areas under their jurisdiction. For the areas under the Central Government, the Act is being implemented by the office of the Chief Labour Commissioner (Central). The State Governments are addressed from time to time to ensure strict compliance of the provisions of the Act.

For removing the disparity in wages and other facilities available to an urban women and a rural women labourers the Ministry of Labour is implementing Grant in Aid Scheme, Under this Scheme funds to the extent of 75% of the project cost are released directly to the NGOs for conducting women's labour camp for organizing women workers and educating them about their rights and duties, Legal aid to working women, raising general consciousness of the society about the problem of women labour e.t.c.

The Ministry of Labour is also implementing Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY), which was launched on 1st October, 2007 to provide smart card based cashless health insurance cover of Rs.30000/- per year on family floated basis to BPL families (a unit of five) in the unorganized sector at a nominal cost of Rs 30 per family per year. The scheme became operational from 01.04.2008. As on date, 27 States/Union Territories have initiated the process to implement scheme. As on date 23.18 million families are being benefitted by this scheme.

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS) and the export sector also do offer windows of opportunity for institutionalizing gender equitable wages. Equal wages is embodied in the Act. With the promise of 100 days of work, there is a good chance that equal wages will become an acceptable practice in agriculture due to the pan-national spread of the scheme and the similarity of NREGS work to agricultural work.