

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:655
ANSWERED ON:26.11.2012
DECREASE IN CHILD LABOUR
Venugopal Shri P.

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

- (a) whether the number of child labour in the country is witnessing a sudden decrease as per the figures arrived at by the Government recently;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether some Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and some UN agencies estimated the number of child labour in the country to be as high as four to six crore;
- (d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (e) the steps taken for the complete eradication of child labour in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH)

(a) & (b): The Government is following a robust multi-pronged strategy to tackle the problem of child labour. It comprises of statutory and legislative measures, rescue and rehabilitation, universal primary education alongwith social protection, poverty alleviation and employment generation schemes. The objective is to create an environment where families are not compelled to send their children to work. As per 2001 census, the total number of working children between the age group 5-14 years in the country was 1.26 crore. However, in the Survey conducted by NSSO, in 2004-05 the numbers of working children were estimated at 90.75 lakh. As per NSSO survey 2009-10, the working children are estimated at 49.84 lakh which shows a declining trend.

(c) & (d): As per the information received from UNICEF, they have estimated total child population (0-18 years) in India in 2010 as 447 million of which 11.8 per cent of children in age group 5-14 years are engaged in labour. However, as per NSSO survey 2009-10, the working children in the age group of 5-14 years are estimated at 4.98 million.

(e): Under the Child Labour Policy, Government of India follows a multi-pronged approach with the following three major elements:

Legal Action Plan

Focus on general development programmes for the benefit of the families of child labour; and

Project-based action in areas of high concentration of child labour.

The Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986, prohibits the employment of children below the age of 14 years in 18 Occupations and 65 Processes. The Act regulates the working conditions of children where they are not prohibited from working. Any person who employs a child in any occupation or process where employment of children is prohibited under the Child Labour Act, is liable for punishment with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than 3 months but which may extended to one year or with fine ranging from Rs.10,000/- to Rs.20,000/-. In pursuance of the National Child Labour Policy, the National Child Labour Project Scheme was started in 1988. The scheme seeks to adopt a sequential approach with focus on the rehabilitation of children working in hazardous occupations and processes in the first instance. The scheme is being implemented in 266 districts. Under the Project, children rescued/withdrawn from work are enrolled in the special schools, where they are provided with bridge education, vocational training, nutrition, stipend, health care, etc. before being mainstreamed into formal education system. Further, the Ministry launches awareness generation campaigns against the evils of child labour and enforcement of child labour laws through electronic and print media at the centre as well as at the district level. the National Child Labour Project Scheme was started in 1988. The scheme seeks to adopt a sequential approach with focus on the rehabilitation of children working in hazardous occupations and processes in the first instance. The scheme is being implemented in 266 districts. Under the Project, children rescued/withdrawn from work are enrolled in the special schools, where they are provided with bridge education, vocational training, nutrition, stipend, health care, etc. before being mainstreamed into formal education system. Further, the Ministry launches awareness generation campaigns against the evils of child labour and enforcement of child labour laws through electronic and print media at the centre as well as at the district level.