

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3775

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CHILD LABOUR

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

- (a) whether the United States has blacklisted 21 Made-in-India products in which child or forced child labour is used;
- (b) if so, the facts and the details in this regard including its impact on manufactures of these products and the response of the Government thereto; and
- (c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to address the issue and also to reduce/eradicate child labour in the country including in the textile sector?

Answer

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

(a) to (c): The United States has enacted an Act called "Trafficking Victims Protection Re-authorization Act of 2005" (TVPRA) under which they publish every year a list of goods produced using child labour or forced labour. On September 26, 2012 United States Department of Labour has released third update to the TVPRA list wherein 21 Indian products are listed in which child or forced labour was alleged to have been used. While explicitly there are no trade related references in the report, listing of products in these reports does have a negative impact on India's brand image.

Out of the 21 goods listed in the TVPRA list 15 goods like bidis (Hand-rolled cigarettes), brassware, bricks, carpets, embellished textiles, fireworks, garments, gems, glass bangles, leather goods, locks, matches, soccer balls, stones and incense (agarbatti) are already covered under Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 under which employment of children is prohibited. In case of cottonseed (Hybrid), and rice which are also mentioned in the list, though they are not coming under prohibited list yet if they are produced by using processes involving tractors, threshing and harvesting machines, chaff cutting and handling of pesticides and insecticides, then employment of child labour below 14 years is prohibited in all such processes. In the same way silk fabric and silk thread which are mentioned in the TVPRA list are not coming under the prohibited list but employment of children below 14 years in sericulture processing is prohibited under Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act. Two other items mentioned in the TVPRA list, footwear and thread/yarn are not covered under Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986. For the items which are not prohibited under the Act, it regulates the working conditions of the children in employment. Ministry of Labour and Employment has forwarded a Note on the steps taken for elimination of child labour to Indian Embassy at Washington to take up the issue with the US authorities regarding TVPRA list.

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 which include a number of processes/occupations in textile sector. 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 be extended to one year or with fine ranging from Rs.10,000/- to Rs. 20,000/-. Government is also implementing the National Child Labour Project Scheme since 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 of 20 States in the country. 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.

Ministry of Textiles has launched a plan scheme called Common Compliance Code (DISHA – Driving Industry for Sustainable Human Advancement) with a budgetary allocation of Rs.10 crore for 2012-13 for enhancing compliance standards in Textiles Industry. Government has also encouraged the Apparel Export Promotion Council and the Clothing Manufacturers Association of India to adopt 'Advisories' for all their members for elimination of Child Labour in the Industry. Government has also advised AEPC to adopt a

resolution that financing under the Market Access Initiative to member exporters for international Textiles Trade shows shall only be permissible if they participate in the DISHA program.