

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4397
ANSWERED ON:22.04.2013
FARM LABOURERS
Pradhan Shri Amarnath;Ray Shri Rudramadhab

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware of poor farm workers being forced to work as slaves in brick kilns during lean agricultural months in various parts of the country;
- (b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (c) the welfare measures taken/likely to be taken by the Government for the starving agriculture workers during such lean period?

Answer

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

(a) to (c) The Constitution of India under Article 23(1) prohibits begar and other similar forms of forced labour. As per the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976, no person can compel any person to render any bonded labour or other form of forced labour.

The Government has enacted the Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008 to provide social security to the unorganized workers which include agriculture workers.

The Government has enacted Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 which aims at enhancing the livelihood security of people in rural areas by guaranteeing at least hundred days of wage-employment in a financial year to a rural household, whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. This aims at preventing distress migration. According to the Act, employment shall be provided within a radius of five kilometres of the village where the applicant resides at the time of applying. In case the employment is provided outside such radius, it must be provided within the Block and the labourers shall be paid 10% extra wages.