

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:7

ANSWERED ON:05.08.2013

CHILD LABOUR

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

(a)whether the menace of child labour still exists in many parts of the country including factories of Micro, Small and Medium enterprises inspite of stringent child labour laws;

(b)if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c)whether the Government has any proposal to amend the child labour laws by fixing the accountability of labour officers to ensure that every child goes to school; and

(d)the measures taken by the Government for the complete eradication of the menace of child labour in the country?

**Answer**

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

(a) & (b): Child Labour is an outcome of various socio-economic problems such as poverty, economic backwardness and illiteracy. As per 2001 census, the total number of working children between the age group 5-14 years in the country was 1.26 crore out of which there were approximately 12 lakh children found working in the hazardous occupations/processes covered under Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 which include factories of micro, small and medium enterprises. The details on children working in hazardous occupations/processes as per Census 2001 is Annexed. However, in the Survey conducted by NSSO, in 2004-05 the number 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): A proposal for amendments in the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 to make it more effective, is under consideration with the Government. The Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2012 has been placed in the Parliament and is presently under examination with Parliamentary Standing Committee. The Amendment Bill inter-alia covers

(i) complete prohibition on employment of children below 14 years and linking the age of the prohibition with the age under Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, (ii) prohibition of working of Adolescents (14 to 18 years) in Mines, Explosives and hazardous occupations set forth in the Factories Act, 1948, (iii) more strict punishment to the offenders and making the offences under the Act cognizable. Central Government is the appropriate authority for enforcement of the Act in respect of Central Government establishments, railways, ports, mines or oil fields and in all other cases, State Government is the appropriate authority for implementation under the Act. The Labour Officers of State Labour Departments are accountable for enforcement of Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986.

(d) Elimination of child labour is an area of great concern and Government of India is committed to address the issue. Considering the magnitude and nature of problem, Government is following a multi-pronged strategy to tackle the problem of child labour. It comprises of statutory and legislative measures, rescue & rehabilitation, universal primary education alongwith social protection, poverty alleviation and employment generation. The objective is to create an environment where families are not compelled to send their children to work. 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 or with fine. For rehabilitation of child labour, the Government is implementing the National Child Labour Project Scheme since 1988. The scheme seeks educational rehabilitation of children working in hazardous occupations and processes. 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. The Ministry is also running the awareness generation programme against the evil of child labour.