

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2903
ANSWERED ON:10.02.2014
CHILDREN FROM POOR FAMILIES
Singh Shri Jagada Nand

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

- (a) whether it has come to the notice of the Government that children from poor families are being forced to work to support their families;
- (b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto along with the existing law in this regard;
- (c) the details of schemes being implemented by the Government to bring such children into the mainstream;
- (d) whether the Government has any particular scheme for the welfare of the families of such children; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

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

(a) to (e): Elimination of child labour is a great concern of Govt. of India. Due to poverty, irregular income streams for the family, ignorance, lack of access to social security, education, health facilities, etc. children are being forced to work to support their families. Government is following a robust multi-pronged strategy to tackle the problem, it comprises of statutory and legislative measures, rescue and rehabilitation, universal primary education, social protection along with poverty alleviation and employment generation schemes. The objective is to create an environment where families are not compelled to send their children to work.

Under legislative action plan, 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, Government is implementing the National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme since 1988 in the area of high concentration of the child labour with a view to withdraw children working in hazardous occupations and processes, and mainstream them into formal education system. Under this scheme regular survey is conducted by Project Societies at district level to identify children working in hazardous occupations and processes. Children rescued/withdrawn in the age group of 9-14 years are enrolled in the NCLP Special Training Centres, where they are provided with bridge education, vocational training, mid day meal, stipend, health care, etc. before being mainstreamed into formal education system. At present the Scheme is approved for 270 Districts in 20 States of the country covering about 3 lakh children through approximately 6300 Special Training Centres. So far more than 10 lakh children have been mainstreamed through the Scheme since inception.

Further, Government is taking various pro-active measures for economic rehabilitation of the families of child labour so that they are not compelled by the economic circumstance to send their children to work with convergence between welfare schemes of different Ministries. Ministry of Women and Child Development supplements the efforts of this Ministry in providing food and shelter to the children withdrawn from work through their schemes of Shelter Homes, etc. The Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) is another centrally sponsored scheme aimed at building a protective environment for children in difficult circumstances, as well as other vulnerable children, through Government-Civil Society Partnership.

Ministry of Human Resource Development provides Mid-day meal to the NCLP school children, teachers training, supply of books, etc. under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and mainstreaming of NCLP children into the formal education system. With the enactment of the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, the efforts to eliminate child labour will receive a big boost as under the Act every child in the age group of 6-14 years is to be provided free and compulsory education.

There are many other schemes for welfare of poor families like the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM), National Food Security Act 2013, Rashtriya Swasthaya Bima Yojana (RSBY), National Old Age Pension Scheme, National Widow Pension Scheme and National Disability Pension Scheme etc.