

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The North Eastern Council is proposed to be reconstituted with the inclusion of Sikkim and the appointment of the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission as its Chairperson. The requisite bill will shortly be move before the Parliament.

(c) and (d) The North Eastern Council has met thrice during the last three years. The important recommendations made during these meetings include, *inter-alia*, restructuring of North Eastern Council to include Sikkim; adoption of special economic and industrial policy for the North Eastern region; introduction of helicopter services in the North Eastern region; according priority to construction of roads and bridges; provision of funds for maintenance of roads constructed with funds from the North Eastern Council; and provision of resources for development of airports in the North Eastern region.

Pharmaceutical Pricing Policy

2094. SHRI G. GANGA REDDY: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are going to introduce pharmaceutical pricing policy;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the pricing policy for the manufacture of herbal drugs in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (DR. A.K. PATEL) : (a) and (b) 'Modifications in Drug Policy, 1986', were announced in September, 1994 and based on that Pharmaceutical Pricing Policy is already in existence.

(c) Existing pricing policy covers drugs used only for Allopathic medicines.

Minimum Wages for Agricultural Labour

2095. SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK:
SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state.

(a) the number of mine/agricultural labourer in Maharashtra, category-wise, State-wise;

(b) the minimum wages fixed for these labourers in each State;

(c) the date of last revision in wages; and

(d) the factors taken into consideration for determining the minimum wages?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) to (c) Under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 both Central and State Governments are appropriate Government for fixation/revision of minimum rate of wages for scheduled employments under their respective jurisdiction. The Central Government is the appropriate Government in respect of the employment in various mines. Statement-I giving State-wise number of workers employed in various mines as on 1993 including coal mines and the existing minimum rate of wages as revised on 1.4.1998 for various categories of employment in mines is enclosed as Statement-II.

However, the State Governments are mainly the appropriate Government for fixation/revision of minimum rate of wages in respect of Agricultural workers. Statement -II indicating available information on minimum rate of wages for unskilled, number of workers and the date of last revision in different States/Union Territories is enclosed as statement-II.

(d) There are no uniform criteria for fixation of minimum rate of wages. The State Government take into account various factors such as socio-economic condition and market forces etc. while determining minimum rate of wages. However, the five norms recommended by the Indian Labour Conference in 1952 are generally adopted for fixation of minimum rate of wages. These norms provide for a wage rate sufficient to meet the consumption requirement of a family of 3 units on food, clothing, shelters, fuel, lighting and other miscellaneous items of consumption. There is a provision of Variable Dearness Allowance as part of minimum wages which is revised every six months as per the variation of Consumer Price Index Number.

Statement I

No. of mine workers and the minimum rates of wages as fixed under Minimum Wages Act.

(a) Number of Mine Workers in different States/UT's

States/UT's	No. of Workers (in thousand)
1	2
Andhra Pradesh	85
Arunachal Pradesh	1
Assam	19
Bihar	228
Gujarat	23
Haryana	5
Himachal Pradesh	1
Jammu & Kashmir	1
Karnataka	22

1	2
Kerala	2
Madhya Pradesh	128
Maharashtra	38
Meghalaya	⊙
Manipur	⊙
Nagaland	-
Orissa	55
Punjab	-
Rajasthan	29
Tamil Nadu	19
Uttar Pradesh	7
West Bengal	111
<i>Union Territory</i>	
Delhi	2
Goa	4
Tripura	⊙

(b)** Existing total minimum rates of wages for the employment in Mines (as on 1.4.98)

Category	Rates of Wages	
	Above Ground	Below Ground
1. Unskilled	Rs. 28.00	Rs. 34.00
2. Semi-skilled/ Unskilled Supervisory	Rs. 34.00	Rs. 41.00
3. Skilled	Rs. 41.00	Rs. 50.00
4. Clerical	Rs. 41.00	
5. Highly Skilled	Rs. 50.00	Rs. 60.00

Note: * Source DGMS

** The Minimum rates of wages also include a component of Variable Dearness Allowance which was last revised on 1.4.1998.

⊙ Less than 500 Workers.

Statement II

Daily Rates of Minimum Wages for Agricultural Workers Fixed by Different States/UTs. under The Minimum Wages Act, 1948.

(As on 1.4.98)

Sl. No.	State/UTs	No. of Workers (in thousand)	Minimum Wages for unskilled agricultural workers
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	11625	Rs. 30.00 to Rs. 36.50 p.d. (According to Zones) (12.2.96)
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	20	Rs. 21.00 to Rs 23.00 p.d. (According to Areas) (1.11.90)
3.	Assam	845	Rs. 1134.00 P.M.* or Rs. 984.00 p.m. plus food, shelter and clothing (1.8.89)
4.	Bihar	9513	Rs. 27.30 p.d. (21.12.95)
5.	Goa	35	Rs. 46.00 p.d. (8.5.95)
6.	Gujarat	3231	Rs. 34.00 p.d. (1.4.96)
7.	Haryana	897	Rs. 60.12 p.d.* with meals or Rs. 64.12 p.d. without meals (1.1.98)
8.	Himachal Pradesh	59	Rs 45.75 p.d. (1.3.96)
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	-	Rs. 30.00 p.d. (13.3.95)
10.	Karnataka	5000	Rs. 26.00 p.d. (28.3.94)
11.	Kerala	2120	Rs. 30.00 p.d. for light work Rs. 40.20 p.d. for hard work (31.3.92)
12.	Madhya Pradesh	5863	Rs. 3850 p.d.* (1.4.96)
13.	Maharashtra	8317	Rs. 20.00 to Rs. 29.00 p.d. (According to Zones) (26.6.94)
14.	Manipur	47	Rs. 47.65 p.d.* for Hill Areas Rs. 44.65 p.d. for other than the Hill Areas (8.7.95)

1	2	3	4
15. Meghalaya	89	Rs. 35.00 p.d. (16.3.94)	
16. Mizoram	10	Rs. 45.00 p.d. (10.7.97)	
17. Nagaland	7	Rs 25.00 p.d. (6.7.92)	
18. Orissa	2967	Rs. 30.00 p.d. (15.8.96)	
19. Punjab	1453	Rs. 54.07 p.d.* with meals Rs. 60.62 p.d. without meals (1.7.95)	
20. Rajasthan	1392	Rs. 44.00 p.d. (19.11.1997)	
21. Sikkim	13	The Minimum Wages Act, 1948 yet to be extended.	
22. Tamil Nadu	7899	Rs. 29.00 p.d. (10.3.97)	
23. Tripura	188	Rs. 32.00 p.d. (4.12.96)	
24. Uttar Pradesh	7833	Rs. 47.00 p.d. to Rs. 49.00 p.d. 31.10.96	
25. West Bengal	5055	Rs 45.22 p.d. * for Adults Rs 34.06 p.d. for Child, (13.8.82)	
26. Andaman & Nicobar Islands	5	Rs. 37.00 p.d. (Andaman) Rs. 40.00 p.d. (Nicobar) (15.8.94)	
27. Chandigarh	2	Rs. 52.09 p.d. *with meals or Rs 60.15 p.d. without meal (4.11.95)	
28. Dadra & Nagar Haveli	6	Rs. 40.00 p.d. (18.5.95)	
29. Delhi	25	Rs. 74.50 p.d.* (1.2.94)	
30. Daman & Diu	1	Rs 35.00 p.d. (8.5.95)	
31. Lakshadweep	-	Rs. 30.00 p.d.	
32. Pondicherry	7		
(i) Pondicherry Region		Rs. 20.00 to Rs. 22.00 p.d. (24.7.95)	
(ii) Mahe Region		Rs. 30.00 p.d. for light work Rs. 40.20 p.d. for hard work (26.7.95)	

1	2	3	4
	(iii) Yanam Region	Rs. 19.25 p.d. to Rs. 26.25 p.d. (24.7.95)	
	(iv) Karaikal	Rs. 20.00 p.d. to Rs. 22.00 p.d. (24.7.95)	
33. Central Sphere		Rs. 64.04 p.d.* to Rs 71.04 p.d. (12.7.94)	

Note: (1) The Minimum Wages also include the variable dearness allowance, wherever provided.

(2) Figure in bracket under column (4) indicate the date of last revision of basic wage.

(3) *Indicate the provision of variable dearness allowance with the minimum rates of wage.

[Translation]

Testing arrangement for purity of Mineral Water

2096. SHRI ANAND RATNA MAURYA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the fact that now a days 'Mineral Water' or 'Pure Water' is available in bottles or canes of different brands and people buy these on heavy rates in the absence of any test facility;

(b) whether the Government propose to make arrangements for the test of mineral water or so called pure water so that people could know about their purity;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI) : (a) to (d) Both mineral water & sealed packaged drinking water are available in the market. Standards for mineral water have already been laid down under the provision of Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954; Rules made thereunder. The Food Health Authorities of States/UTs, administering the provision of the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954, keep a vigil on the quality of mineral water, by drawing random samples of mineral water from the market and testing the same in the food laboratories functioning in the States/Local bodies.

At present water as well as sealed packaged drinking water is not covered under the provisions of the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954.

Allocation of Funds to Vega Community of Madhya Pradesh

2097. SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULESTE: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government provided funds to the Scheduled Tribe Vega Community of Mandla district in