

I think, there is no proposal yet to have a T.V. Programme Centre in Goa. But then a number of T.V. Programme Centres are being planned. Finally, our approach is to make as much local programme facilities as possible.

SHRI SUDHIR GIRI : I want to know whether the Government's Films Division has undertaken a project to produce some documentary film on the Congress role in the Indian freedom movement in 1984 and whether Government intends showing this through Doordarshan in 1984.

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT : Now that you have permitted this question, therefore I am answering it. In any case we are committed to it. It is true. It is not that the Government have decided to project the Congress ; it has decided to project the Freedom Struggle of this country starting right from 1857 onwards and the Government proposes to make a number of documentaries depicting the Freedom Struggle of this country....

(Interruptions)

SOME HON. MEMBERS *rose*.

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT : Let me complete the answer....(Interruptions)

SHRI SUNIL MAITRA : That means that you are going to narrate the story of the Congress in the Freedom Struggle.

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT : Now let me make it absolutely clear that we propose to project the Freedom Struggle, various aspects of it, various personalities, various matters, various leaders and the contributions by various groups and various sections of the people irrespective of any Party considerations and it is true that the Congress....(Interruptions)

Please wait. Let me give the answer. Therefore, the Government has definitely taken a decision to project the Freedom Struggle not only through documentaries, through AIR programmes, through exhibitions and through various things. ...

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Next question—Shri Wasnik.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY : This is very important, Sir, ... Since you have permitted...

MR. SPEAKER : I have not permitted.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY : Let me ask just one question.

MR. SPEAKER : I am sorry. I have gone to the next question. If you want, you can table a separate question.

16-Point Action Plan for Implementation of Minimum Wages in the Field of Agriculture

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*122. **SHRI BALKRISHNA WASNIK :**
SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM :

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

(a) whether his Ministry has recently drawn up a 16-point action plan for the implementation of minimum wages in the field of agriculture ;

(b) if so, full details thereof ;

(c) whether separate committees will be constituted to ensure that the plan for minimum wages is implemented ; and

(d) if so, by when and to what extent Government would be able to solve the problem of minimum wages for labour ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI DHARMAVIR) : (a) and (b). A National Symposium on Administration of Minimum Wages in Agriculture was held at New Delhi from 7th to 9th February, 1984. A statement indicating the conclusions reached at this Symposium is laid on the Table of the House.

(c) There is no such proposal at present.

(d) The revision and enforcement of minimum wages in agriculture, barring a

few farms in the central sector, is the responsibility of the respective State Governments. The revision, and enforcement of minimum wages is a continuing activity as wages have to be revised from time to time to give relief to the workers in this sector. Therefore, no time limit can be fixed for this purpose.

Statement

Conclusions Reached at the National Symposium on Administration of Minimum Wages in Agriculture Held at New Delhi on 7-9 February, 1984.

1. Administration of Minimum Wages in agriculture is not a regulatory but a development process and forms part of the larger and integrated effort for rural development.
2. Employment generating activities in rural areas outside agriculture and particularly in off-seasons are necessary adjuncts to this effort.
3. An important factor in improving the levels of minimum wages in agriculture is the growth of the agriculture sector itself.
4. Special attention should be given to low wage and agriculturally depressed areas in creating additional employment opportunities and improving the performance of the agriculture sector.
5. Those States in which revision of minimum rates of wages has become due are requested to take expeditious action to notify the revised rates.
6. While fixing/revising minimum wages, the basic minimum needs of the worker and his family for subsistence should be kept in view so as to enable him to cross the poverty line; the prevailing levels of wages may also have to be kept in view so that the gap between the minimum wages fixed and the prevailing rates of wages is not unduly wide.

Payment of atleast part of the wages

in kind particularly in the shape of foodgrains must be encouraged; care must, however, be taken to ensure that workers get the wages in kind in the prescribed quantities and of the right quality. Such payments in kind should invariably be at the option of the worker.

7. There should be no explicit or implicit discrimination in the rates of wages for men and women workers.
8. Keeping in view the nature of occupations and also taking note of the fact that the basic needs of rural workers are the same, there is no need for separate rates of wages to be fixed under the Minimum Wages Act for agriculture and other allied scheduled employments; a single set of rates would suffice.

In fixing minimum rates of wages special attention and consideration must be given to the needs of special areas like tribal areas, hilly areas, unirrigated areas and the like.

9. The rates of wages prescribed and paid in employment generation schemes as well as in other public works should conform to the minimum wages notified in agriculture and other scheduled employments;
10. Any attempt to relate wage payments to productivity in employment generating schemes as well as in other public works must not result in wages falling below time rated minimum wages; for this purpose, if necessary, national time rated wages should be fixed where otherwise payment is of piece rate basis.
11. Reliance exclusively on the official machinery for the implementation of the minimum wages is not adequate.
12. Keeping in view the total inadequacy

of the official machinery for the purpose of implementation and the failure of the related departments to actively involve themselves in this work, there is need for strengthening the inspection machinery. It is desirable that a separate cadre is established for this purpose. Possibility of incorporating these proposals as plan schemes at least in the Seventh Plan may be considered.

Adequate funds must also be provided for promoting education of and publicity amongst the agricultural workers regarding the minimum rates of wages and other provisions and for developing skills of participation and for promoting awareness among the workers and for helping them to organise themselves. Publicity could be given through beat of drums, posters, Cinema slides, radio, television, etc. local folk media should also be used.

13. To ensure implementation, separate watchdog committees consisting of representatives of the beneficiaries as well as others must be set up at the village, block and higher levels for periodical monitoring of the implementation of minimum rates of wages and other provisions of the Act. The help of these committees as well as of voluntary organisations and social action groups must be mobilised in the efforts to organise agricultural labour and other rural poor.

14. Ultimately it is the inherent strength of the workers through their organisations that can ensure not merely proper implementation of minimum wages but also wresting wage increases over the minimum level from time to time.

Protest by workers in support of demand for payment of notified wages should not be seen as problems relating to maintenance of law and order.

15. Legislation on agricultural workers as has been done in Kerala may be enacted in all the States.

16. Penalties for offences under the Minimum Wages Act should be made stringent particularly for second and subsequent offences. The provisions in the law for claim petitions and for prosecution must be simplified. Burden of proof must be on the employer to prove that minimum wages have been paid fully in time. In the absence of such proof, there must be a presumption of guilt against the employer.

17. Studies must be undertaken of various aspects connected with the implementation of Minimum Wages Act.

18. There must be a periodical evaluation concurrent with the adjustment for revision of wages to ascertain why minimum wages are not being paid and where it is being paid what effect it has had on the rural economy, what counter-vailing forces are working in the economy and how they can be counter-acted.

19. There must also be attempts to improve the statistical information base and also steps taken for prompt and full reporting of data which can be collected and analysed for meaningful policy formulation.

20. Correct and complete information must be collected on the modes of payment of wages in kind.

21. Urgent steps should be initiated for taking up the next Rural Labour Enquiry, as the last survey related to 1974-75; such surveys should, preferably, be repeated every five years. Studies must be initiated to obtain, on a continuing basis, data regarding wage distribution, as averages at the district and State levels will not show the percentage of workers who receive wages below and above the notified levels and the extent of such deviations.

22. As fixation of minimum wages will be related to the basic needs of the workers, these needs will have to be identified and quantified and arrange-

ments made for collection of prices in respect of the relevant items. Pending detailed investigation, a suggestion was made that the basket adopted for constructing the Agricultural Workers Index and an average of two workers in a family of five may be adopted. As consumption expenditure of the lower deciles of the population shows that 50% of their expenditure is on cereals, the minimum wage can be fixed at twice the price of the appropriate quantity of cereals required to get the necessary calorific value.

23. Creation of social awareness among the rural people about their rights and obligations is an important element in the administration of minimum wages. There could be different approaches to this objective, namely, rural camps, workers education, publicity through mass media, etc. These are not mutually exclusive and could be developed concurrently. It is, however, important that these programmes may not be effective unless proper methods and techniques are adopted. Adequate attention should be given to the development of the appropriate methods and techniques through theoretical exercises and experimental projects and the functionaries employed in these activities should be properly trained therein.

SHRI BALKRISHNA WASNIK : The problem of minimum wages in agriculture is a very serious problem and we have been seeing that the agricultural labour do not get their wages properly and whenever the agricultural labour in various parts of the country ask for their wages, it so happens that in the kind of feudal system that we have in our country, the people who ask for the wages are many times shot down brutally in the name that they are Naxalites. This happens in many parts of the country, particularly, in Bihar, Andhra, Madhya Pradesh and so on. I would like the Minister to consider this problem very seriously and since we have initiated many kinds of land reforms and our Plans are all for the benefit of the poorer classes which mainly belong to

the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, I would like the Minister to tell us as to what particular steps they are taking in the light of the recommendations that have been made in the Symposium.

श्री धर्मवीर : यह सिम्पोजियम 7 से 9 फरवरी तक दिल्ली में हुआ था। इसकी जो रिकमेंडेशनज़ हैं, उनमें से अधिकांश को हम लागू कर रहे हैं। इसके लिए कोई विशेष व्यवस्था करने की आवश्यकता नहीं है। बिहार और आन्ध्र प्रदेश से इस प्रकार के समाचार आए हैं कि जहां पर कृषि क्षेत्र में काम करने वाले श्रमिकों को मिनिमम वेजेज़ नहीं मिलते। उसके लिए भारत सरकार, श्रममंत्री महोदय और विभाग की तरफ से विभागीय अधिकारियों का ध्यान इस तरफ बराबर आकर्षित किया जाता है। साथ-साथ एक उच्च स्तर के अधिकारी को भी बिहार में विशेष तौर पर हमने इन सब बातों का अध्ययन करने के लिए भेजा है। उसकी रिकमेंडेशन आई है। उसके आधार पर राज्य सरकार को लिखा गया है जैसाकि मैंने निवेदन किया था न्यूनतम मजदूरी की धारा को लागू करने का जो व्यावहारिक कार्य है वह राज्य सरकारों का है, इसलिए राज्य सरकारों को हम बराबर समय-समय पर अवगत कराते रहते हैं।

SHRI BALKRISHNA WASNIK : Sir, it will not be proper to entirely throw this responsibility on the shoulders of the State Governments. We know the Central Government have also much to do about this. In view of the Recommendation No. 12 of the Symposium, without keeping in view the total inadequacy of the official machinery for the purpose of implementation and the failure of the related departments to actively involve themselves in this work, there is need for strengthening the inspection of the machinery. I would like the Government to tell us particularly in regard to this recommendation, about the implementation, what concrete steps are they going to take and whether the steps taken will be within the time limit of the Seventh Plan ?

श्री धर्मवीर : अध्यक्ष महोदय, जहां तक कि 12 नम्बर की रिकमेंडेशन का सवाल है, जैसा मैंने

पहले निवेदन किया था, इन सारे निर्णयों के बारे में विभाग की तरफ से कार्यवाही हो रही है और उसको हम इम्प्लीमेंट कर रहे हैं। जहाँ तक एडीकेट मशीनरी का ताल्लुक है, मैंने निवेदन किया था कि राज्य सरकारों के माध्यम से ही हम न्यूनतम मजदूरी की धारा को लागू कर पाते हैं और राज्य सरकारें अपने यहाँ अपने ताल्लुकों में एस० डी० एम० और तहसीलदार तथा और नीचे के तमाम रेवेन्यू अधिकारियों द्वारा इसे लागू करती है हालांकि बिहार और गुजरात में हमने इसके इम्प्लीमेंटेशन के लिए एक नया डायरेक्टोरेट बनाया है और केन्द्र सरकार की तरफ से चूँकि मजदूर इस क्षेत्र में असंगठित हैं उनको संगठित करने के लिए उनको मिनिमम वेजेज ऐक्ट की धाराओं से अवगत कराने के लिए और उनके अधिकारों के प्रति उन्हें सजग कराने के लिए, देश में सामाजिक वातावरण बनाने के लिए 1 हजार ब्लाकों का चयन किया गया है जिसमें सैम्पल सर्वे के आधार पर एक आर्गेनाइजर की नियुक्ति की गई है जिसके माध्यम से श्रमिकों को इस बात से अवगत कराएँगे। जैसा मैंने कहा यह राज्य सरकारों का काम है लेकिन गुजरात और बिहार में सेपरेट डायरेक्टोरेट बनाया है जिसके माध्यम से मिनिमम वेजेज को लागू करने का काम कर रहे हैं। केन्द्र स्तर पर इसके लिए ऐडवाइजरी कमेटी है और राज्य सरकारों की भी सलाहकार समितियाँ हैं जिनके माध्यम से यह कार्य कर रहे हैं।

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Ghufan Azam.
Not here. Shri Ranga.

PROF. N.G. RANGA : Mr. Speaker, I am glad that Government has at long last decided to get the minimum wages fixed not once in three years but once in a year. But, in view of the fact that a majority of the tribal people and a large part of the agricultural workers do not read the newspapers firstly and, secondly, they do not know these things and the local Governments are not interested in publicising what minimum wages are being fixed, would the Government seek the good offices of the Broadcasting Ministry as also the Press, from time

to time once at least during every agricultural season to see that the wages that are fixed by the Government of India or the State Governments on the advice of the Government of India are publicised not once but once in every week during the season for the benefit of the workers so that they would know what is due to them ?

श्री धर्मवीर : मान्यवर, रंगाजी हमारे वरिष्ठ नेता हैं, उन्हें इस बात की जानकारी अवश्य होगी कि इन क्षेत्रों में जहाँ तक मिनिमम वेजेज के इम्प्लीमेंटेशन की जानकारी का सवाल है, यह सही है कि हम राज्य सरकारों पर आश्रित रहते हैं। (व्यवधान) जैसा कि मैंने पहले ही बताया है यह आर्गेनाइजेशन वहीँ पर बनाए जा रहे हैं जहाँ ट्राइवल्स और हरिजनों की संख्या अधिक है। चूँकि ये लोग असंगठित हैं और इनकी अपनी कोई यूनियन न होने की वजह से इनको अपने अधिकारों के प्रति जागरूक करने की आवश्यकता होती है। इसके लिए हमने यूनियन वालों तथा अन्य लोगों से भी निवेदन किया है कि वे इनको इससे अवगत करायें कि मिनिमम वेजेज क्या हैं। समय-समय पर उनका सहयोग हमको मिलता रहता है। मिनिमम वेजेज के बारे में विभाग की तरफ से, मंत्रालय की तरफ से भी इसके बारे में साक्षात्कार होते रहते हैं और हम आशा करते हैं कि हमें इस सम्बन्ध में सहयोग मिलेगा तथा सहयोग लेकर, मिनिमम वेजेज का प्रोपेगण्डा दूरवर्ती क्षेत्रों में भी हो सके इसके लिए हम प्रयास करेंगे।

SHRI NIREN GHOSH : Sir, this question has cardinal importance for our country. There are almost 5-6 crores of agricultural labourers with their families and whenever they have demanded even an increase of their minimum wages—not what has been prescribed by the Act—there are innumerable reports from Bihar, Karnataka and almost every State in the country that the land-holders have jumped on them with guns, wiped out their villages and even mass murders have taken place. It is not simply a question of publicising. So, I want to ask the Centre, what steps are they going to take in order to see that their demands are met and the merciless murders are stopped. I would like to suggest that the gun licences

of these people should be cancelled.

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL) : Sir, whenever such reports of atrocities having been inflicted on the workers are brought to our notice, we immediately write to the concerned State Government. In certain cases I have personally written to the Chief Ministers requesting them to look into the matter and take necessary and prompt action. So far as implementation of the minimum wages in the agriculture sector is concerned Government of India is very keen about it and that is why we organised a symposium from 7th to 9th February in order to see that proper implementation of the minimum wages is ensured.

Sir, we have so many forums where we can discuss these problems. We discussed this matter at the Labour Ministers conference. Then we have got an inter-departmental committee headed by the Labour Secretary. The meeting of this committee is held every month. Then we have also got Minimum Wages Advisory Board. There are similar boards at the State level. We have also got a monitoring cell in the Ministry to monitor the proper implementation of this Act and wherever we find there is non-implementation we bring it to the notice of the advisory boards immediately. In addition to that we are sending our senior officers to all the States periodically. They are visiting in cognito, they are having random surveys. So far as the Government of India is concerned, whatever necessary steps are necessary are being taken by us. We are taking all proper steps in all seriousness in order to see that the minimum wages for agricultural labour are implemented in letter and in spirit.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Sir, I am very glad that this Symposium was held and I find from the main recommendations of the Symposium that the principles which are laid down here are very good and excellent if they could only be brought into practice. Now, Sir, I want to know one thing. There are many Central laws the day to day administration of which is actually in the hands of the State Governments. But in spite of that there is a

Central law. So I want to know whether it is a factor not that all the organisations working in this country working among agricultural labourers, irrespective of their politics—there are some owing allegiance to the ruling party also—have all unanimously demanded for many years that there should be one Central comprehensive legislation for these agricultural labourers. Either the day to day implementation may be done by the States ; but if there is a Central law, then, it strengthens the hands of the State Governments it imposes the level of implementation. Here they have said in one recommendation that an Act similar to that which is there in Kerala should be brought in all the other States also. But why not at the Centre ? Everybody is demanding an All India legislation which should be comprehensive. And they have also recommended that for implementation, don't depend on the administrative machinery. There should be implementation Committees and the Central Acts will in fact strengthen their hands by incorporating some of these recommendations. At least a statutory form could be given to these committees that would enable them to work. But instead of doing that they are saying that they are sending directives and circulars to State Governments. I want to know why a Central All India comprehensive law relating to the agriculturists—not only minimum wages but other benefits of agricultural labourers—is not being brought.

SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL : It is true that some organisations have demanded Central legislation for agricultural workers. This was recommended by the Ministry and a draft legislation was also prepared. This subject was put up before the Labour Ministers' Conference. In the Labour Ministers' Conference unfortunately there was no unanimity. There were divergent opinions. Some Ministers and some States were in favour of Central legislation ; some States were not in favour. Therefore ultimately the Government of India thought that it is better to leave it to the State Governments. The States may have either their own legislation or they can have the Kerala model. It is because the agricultural conditions are not uniform throughout the country. Even in the same State it differs from one part of the State

and the other part. Therefore it was thought that it is not proper and advisable to have Central legislation. Instead, we have written to all States to have legislation like that which Kerala is having. I am told that certain States are interested in legislation, for instance, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Karnataka. They have told us that they are interested in having their own legislation and they are going ahead. So, we have brought this to the notice of the State Governments and it is for them to consider this.

श्री हीरालाल आर० परमार : अध्यक्ष महोदय, माननीय मंत्री जी ने बताया कि मिनिमम वेजेज गरीब लेबरों के लिए हैं। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूँ कि हमारी सरकार ने जो मिनिमम वेजेज का कानून बनाया है, वह कानून जनता के लिए है या सरकार के लिए ? जो आई० आर० डी० पी० कार्यक्रम के अन्दर पांच रुपया दिया जाता है, उसको दिलाने की सरकार क्या कोशिश करेगी ?

श्री धर्मवीर : अध्यक्ष जी, मैं माननीय सदस्य की जानकारी के लिए बता देना चाहता हूँ कि भारत सरकार ने निर्देश दिए हैं कि चाहे कहीं भी कोई भी काम हो, सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र में भी उनको मिनिमम वेज दिया जाएगा। ऐसा नहीं है कि मिनिमम-वेज न दिये जायें, राज्य सरकारों को इसके लिए बराबर लिखा गया है। आई० आर० डी० पी० और एन० आर० ई० पी० के सारे कार्यक्रमों में मिनिमम-वेज दी जाती है।

श्री रामविलास पासवान : कैसे दी जाती है ? बिहार में चौकीदार का वेतन 90 रुपये महीना है।

श्री धर्मवीर : वह पार्ट-टाइम वर्कर है।

श्री रामविलास पासवान : यू० पी० में 13 रुपये है और वे सब-के-सब हरिजन हैं।

Requirement and Production of Newsprint

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*124. DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI :
SHRI ASHFAQ HUSAIN :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION

AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Newspaper industry is facing shortage of newsprint ;

(b) if so, the steps being taken to meet the shortage ; and

(c) the total requirement of newsprint in the country and total production of the newsprint factories ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The requirement of newsprint for the year 1983-84 was assessed at 3.50 lakh MTs. Of this, 1.90 lakh tonnes was to be met by indigenous mills and 1.60 lakh tonnes was to be met by imports. After a mid-year review, it was decided to import an additional quantity of 20,000 tonnes of newsprint to meet the shortfall in the indigenous production.

The production of three indigenous newsprint mills from April, 1983 to January, 1984 is as under :--

Nepal	42,836 MTs
Kerala	41,445 MTs
Mysore	52,219 MTs
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Total	1,36,500 MTs

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : Sir, in the last Consultative Committee meeting the hon. Minister had assured the Members which was also published in *The Statesman* and *The Hindustan Times*, that there would be no shortage in the supply of newsprint. But always there is a complaint from the