

(b) the action being taken to prevent the violation of P.F. laws?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) As on 31.3.1996 the total amount of EPF dues recoverable from public sector and private sector was Rs.13,550.23 lakh and Rs.28,589.63 lakh respectively.

(b) Legal action as provided under sections 7A, 8, 14 & 14B of the EPF & MP Act, 1952 and, where necessary, also under section 406/409 of the IPC, is taken for recovery of dues outstanding against the defaulting establishments.

Employment growth in the context of process of economic reforms

2491. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the employment content of growth has increased in the process of economic reforms;

(b) if so, how; and

(c) the role of private sector in the generation of employment?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b) Detailed study on the effect of Economic Reforms on employment or unemployment has not been made. However, results of the surveys carried out by the National Sample Survey Organisation (N.S.S.O.) reveal that the unemployment rate which was of the order of 3.77% during 1987-88 has come down to 2.56% during 1993-94.

(c) Employment in the organised private sector, which was of the order of 78.46 lakh as on 31st March, 1992 has gone up to around 84.68 lakh as on 31st March, 1996.

मितव्ययता संबंधी उपायों का पालन

2492. श्री गोपाल सिंह जी० सोलंकी: क्या वाणिज्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

क्या वाणिज्य मंत्रालय ने मितव्ययता उपायों का पालन करने का निर्णय किया है;

(ख) यदि हां. तो तत्संबंधी व्यौरा क्या है;

(ग) इन मितव्ययता संबंधी उपायों का किस्त हद तक पालन किया जाना प्रस्तावित है; और

(घ) इसके परिणामस्वरूप वर्ष 1996-97 के दौरान कितनी धनराशि की बचत की जाएगी/बचत किए जाने की संभावना है?

वाणिज्य मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री बोल्ला बुलली रमैया): (क) वित्त मंत्रालय द्वारा समय-समय पर जारी किए जाने वाले आर्थिक उपाय वाणिज्य मंत्रालय में अपनाए/लागू किए जाते हैं।

(ख) प्लान स्कीमों की मंत्रालय में समीक्षा की गई और प्रम्प्रीडा, चाय बोर्ड, काफी बोर्ड तथा एपीडा में जो स्कीमों प्रचालन के योग्य नहीं पाई गई, उन्हें बंद कर दिया गया है।

(ग) प्लान स्कीमों की समीक्षा की हद तक आर्थिक उपायों को लागू किया जा रहा है।

(घ) इस समीक्षा से 1996-97 के दौरान 593.40 लाख रु० तक की बचत होने का अनुमान है।

Proposal to Hike the central issue price of foodgrains under the PDS

2493. DR. JAGANNATH MISHRA: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to hike the central issue price for foodgrains distribution under the Public Distribution System;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to safeguard the interests of the weaker sections of society?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) to (c) Government has not approved any proposal for revision of the Central Issue Prices of foodgrains distributed under the P.D.S.

Removing the ceiling in the payment of bonus and enhancing the ceiling in the payment of gratuity Act

2494. SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be

pleased to state when Government are going to remove the ceiling in the Payment of Bonus Act and enhance the ceilings in the Payment of Gratuity Act to make it at par with the gratuity for the Central Government employees?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): No time frame has been fixed for any amendment of Payment of Bonus Act, 1965 and Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972.

Lockout in the Patriot Newspaper Office

2495. SHRIMATI CHANDRA KALA PANDEY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether a lockout was declared by the Management of the Patriot Newspaper in June, 1996 and the workers have not been getting salaries since May, 1996;

(b) whether Government have taken any action to have the lockout lifted; and if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have taken any steps to ensure payment of salaries to the workers, who have been subjected to untold suffering and hardships; and

(d) if no action has yet been taken the steps Government now intend to take to have the lockout lifted and salaries disbursed?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (d) The Management of United India Periodicals (P) Ltd., New Delhi, the publishers of Patriot Newspaper, declared a Lock-out in the establishment w.e.f. 14.6.96. Subsequently the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi issued prohibitory order on 5.8.96 under section 10(3) of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 prohibiting continuance of the Lockout declared by the Patriot Newspaper Management. The operation of the Prohibitory orders were stayed by the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi vide their order dated 12.9.96. Discussions were held by the Government with both the parties.

Dues of Sugarcane Farmers in Uttar Pradesh

2496. PROF. NAUNIHAL SINGH: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's order to Uttar Pradesh Government to clear at least 50% of the Rs.900 crore dues to sugarcane farmers within one month is unlikely to produce relief to the hard-hit sugarcane farmers;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that with most of the sugar mills in the State in the red, it would be very difficult for them to clear the dues within the stipulated time coupled with the State Government facing a financial crunch; and

(d) if so, the manner in which this predicament is being coped with?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) and (b) On the basis of the information furnished by the Government of Uttar Pradesh, against the outstanding arrears of Rs.900.34 crores as on 15.6.1996, a payment of Rs. 456.11 crores has been made till 31.7.1996 whereas the target set for the period was to ensure payment of Rs.450.00 crores. The Government of Uttar Pradesh has also informed that the arrears of cane price relating to the sugar season 1995-96 on 24.9.1996 were only Rs. 307.11 crores.

(c) and (d) Question does not arise.

Export of inferior quality Indian goods by traders

2497. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the severe criticism by the Ugandan business Community that visited the country recently for the export of inferior quality of Indian goods, terming many of the Indian traders as "cheats";