

2009 additional sectors of leather and handloom-powerloom were also covered. Total estimated employment in the sectors covered has increased by 0.6% during January-March, 2009 period. Non-export units have shown higher rate (0.92%) of increase in employment as compared to export units (0.28%). As compared to October-December, 2008 quarter wherein about half a million workers lost their jobs, the employment in selected sectors has increased by a quarter million during the January-March, 2009 period. During April, 2008-March, 2009 period, employment in the sectors covered has increased by 0.15 per cent, resulting in an addition of 0.28 million jobs.

Assessment of working of employment exchanges

2822. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has assessed the working of employment exchanges against the present day complex nature of the job market;
- (b) if so, with what results thereto;
- (c) whether Government is considering any proposal to reorient, modernize or abolish the system; and
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI HARISH RAWAT): (a) and (b) Employment Exchanges are functioning under administrative and financial control of the respective State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. The Working Group on National Employment Service, consisting of representatives of Central and State Governments reviews functioning of the Employment Exchanges in the country periodically and suggests corrective measures. State Governments have taken many initiatives such as training of registered job-seekers, organising career melas, job-melas, campus recruitment programmes, etc to increase placement in the private sector keeping in view the changed employment market scenario. These efforts are showing good results.

(c) The Employment Exchanges are being modernized through computerization by the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations keeping in view the resources available with them. Though some of the Employment Exchanges are computerized, many of them still work manually resulting in handicap in dissemination of information to employers and job-seekers. Modernisation and upgradation of Employment Exchanges has now been identified as one of the Mission Mode Projects under the National-e-Governance Plan by Government of India with an objective to progressively support all the State Governments to make effective use of IT in various activities for providing better services to all the stakeholders.

- (d) Does not arise.

Cost of providing universal coverage

2823. SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a recent ILO study of 12 developing low income countries including India wherein it is stated that it would cost India just 3.9 per cent more

of its GDP to provide universal coverage for pension, basic healthcare, child benefit and unemployment assistance; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI HARISH RAWAT): (a) The Social Security Department of International Labour Organization (ILO) has brought out a paper titled 'Can low income countries afford basic social security.'

(b) The paper projects upto 3.9 per cent domestically financed expenditure of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for India to provide basic social protection of its citizens.

Government of India is committed to provide social security cover to its workers both in the organized and unorganized sectors. So far as the organized sector is concerned a number of legislations have been enacted to provide social security benefits like medical facilities, employment injury/maternity benefits, insurance, pension and gratuity etc. to workers. Under the Rajiv Gandhi Shramik Kalyan Yojana, a worker insured under the Employees State Insurance Act, 1948 is entitled to claim unemployment allowance on account of closure of factory/establishment, retrenchment or permanent invalidity. The period of unemployment allowance has been increased from 6 months to one year to combat the adverse impact of the financial crisis. In respect of the unorganized sector workers Government is providing health care, housing and education to the children of Beedi, One and Non-coal mine workers through the Labour Welfare Funds. Smart card based cashless health cover of Rs. 30,000/- per annum is being provided to BPL families under the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana. To provide death and disability cover to rural landless households between the age group of 18 to 59 years, the Government launched the "Aam Admi Bima Yojana." Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme provides for old age pension to all citizens above the age of 65 years and living below the poverty line. Government of India had enacted the Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008. The Act provides for constitution of Social Security Boards at the Central and State levels which shall recommend formulation of social security schemes relating to medical care, maternity/old age benefits, insurance, housing, educational schemes for children etc. for unorganised sector workers.

Combating the forced labour

2824. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the recently released report of the International Labour Organization has warned of the increasing number of unethical and criminal practices forcing people into forced labour which include bonded and trafficked persons:

(b) whether many countries in the world have legislation that treats forced labour as a criminal offence; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken by Government to combat the evil practice of the forced labour?