

(a) whether Government has any proposal to set up a National Welfare Fund for the unorganized workers particularly to benefit the SC/ST/OBC;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of funds allocation to each State in this regard for the remaining period of the Eleventh Five Year Plan; and

(d) the views of the experts and industries in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI HARISH RAWAT): (a) In the Budget Speech for the year 2010-11, the Finance Minister has proposed to set up National Social Security Fund for unorganized sector workers with initial allocation of Rs. 1,000 crore. This fund will support schemes for weavers, toddy tappers, rickshaw pullers, bidi workers etc. There is, however, no proposal to set up a National Welfare Fund for unorganized workers.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Protection of interests of workers

3628. SHRI N. K. SINGH: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister has recently asked his Ministry to set up a group of experts from the Finance and Industry Ministries for examining worker's problems caused by global meltdown and make appropriate recommendations;

(b) if so, the details of action plan envisaged by his Ministry in this regard;

(c) whether Government proposes to protect the interest of workers in private sector and also to ensure that they get better monthly salary etc.; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI HARISH RAWAT): (a) and (b) As per the information received from the Planning Commission, consequent upon the decision taken in the meeting of Committee of Secretaries held on 28/4/2009, to review the Economic Stimulus Package, a Task Force was setup in the Planning Commission to examine the issues relating to reported job losses, especially in the employment-oriented sectors and make recommendations for measures that could be put in place for consideration on the Government. The Report of the Task Force is awaited.

(c) and (d) The Government has announced stimulus packages in the form of development assistance, tax concession etc. to counter economic slowdown and promote growth which would be beneficial to the entire economy including the working class.

Minimum wages for women and children

3629. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in many States of the country the minimum wages is different for women and children;

(b) if so, whether child labour banned in Hazardous Industries and Equal Remuneration Act is prevailing in our country;

(c) whether the Government is fixing different wages for males and females; and

(d) whether Central Government will issue guidelines for giving equal wages for male and female workers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI HARISH RAWAT): (a) The minimum rates of wages fixed by the appropriate Government in respect of scheduled employments under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 are equally applicable to men and women. However, under the provisions of the Act, the appropriate Government can fix different minimum rates of wages for adults, adolescents, children and apprentices.

(b) to (d) Employment of child labour is prohibited in 16 occupations and 65 processes which are hazardous in nature and have been included in the schedule to the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986. The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 is in force in the country which provides for the payment of equal remuneration to men and women workers for the same work or work of a similar nature. Hence issuing separate guidelines is not necessary.

Creation of new ITIs and polytechnics

3630. SHRI ANIL H. LAD: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) faced with resource crunch for creating new educational centres such as NTs, IIMs and NIFTs at enormous cost, whether Government has put skill development on focus through creation of more ITIs and polytechnics;