

20 or more persons are coverable. The establishments which are not coverable statutorily could be covered on voluntary basis if a majority of the employees and employer are willing.

For the purpose of coverage under ESIC and Employees Provident Fund, there is no criterion whether the establishment falls under organized or unorganised sector. Hence, no such separate details of the number of unorganised sector workers covered under the Employees' Provident Funds Scheme, 1952 or Employees State Insurance Scheme are available. The total number of workers in 6,60,546 establishments have 6,15,88,670 members' accounts under Employees' Provident Fund Organization.

Finalisation of Indian Labour Conference

2445. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN:
SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI:

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

- (a) whether the next Indian Labour Conference has been finalized; and
- (b) if so, the details worked out so far?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE): (a) and (b) The 44th Session of the Indian Labour Conference is scheduled to be held on 14th and 15th February, 2012. It has been decided that the following issues will be discussed during the Conference:-

- (1) Minimum Wages
- (2) Social Security
- (3) Employability and Employment

Child labourers in the country

2446. SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of child labourers in the country as per the latest Census;
- (b) whether it is a fact that Child labourers are getting meagre amount per day in comparison to adult labourers;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the steps taken by Government to rescue them and rehabilitate them?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE): (a) As per 2001 Census, there were 1.26 crore working children in the country in the age group of 5-14, out of which approximately 12 lakh children were working in hazardous occupations. The latest Census figures have not been received.

(b) and (c) The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act prohibits employment of children below the age of 14 years in 18 Occupations and 65 Processes and regulates their working conditions in those occupations/processes where they are not prohibited from working. Any person who employs a child in any occupation or process where employment of children is prohibited under the Act, is liable for punishment with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than 3 months but which may extend to one year or with fine ranging from Rs. 10,000/- to Rs. 20,000/- or with both. Regarding the issue of wages, wages of all employees are governed by the Minimum Wages Act, 1948.

(d) Government is implementing National Child Labour Project (NCLP) for rehabilitation of children rescued/withdrawn from hazardous work. Under the Project, children rescued/withdrawn from work are enrolled in special schools where they are provided with bridge education, vocational training, nutrition, stipend, health care, etc. before being mainstreamed into formal education system.

Introducing new textile mills

2447. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has any proposal to introduce new textile mills in the country to increase the production of textile products;
- (b) if so, the State-wise details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken by Government for development of textile industry and also to provide employment to the jobless weavers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) While there is no proposal for the Government to introduce new mills *per se*, as per the revival scheme for National Textile Corporation (NTC) approved by the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR), viable mills of NTC are to be revived through sale of surplus assets of the company. Accordingly, 24 viable mills are approved for revival by NTC, of which 4 are to be revived through relocation. Government provides a conducive environment for setting up of new Textile Mills in the country.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) The Government has taken several steps for the development of textiles industry in the country which include *inter-alia* the Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) to facilitate modernisation/technology upgradation; the Scheme for Integrated Textile Parks (SITP) to provide world class infrastructure; the Integrated Skill Development Scheme to provide employable skills; the Technology Mission on Technical Textiles (TMTT) to promote the growth of technical textiles etc. For Powerloom and Handloom weavers, several schemes have been designed to ensure that the basic needs of the weavers are fulfilled and employment is