

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH): (a) The existing 50-bedded Employees' State Insurance Hospital at Margao, Goa is being upgraded to 100-bedded Hospital by the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC).

(b) Not applicable in view of reply to part (a) above.

(c) Secondary medical care services are to be provided through the hospital.

(d) The expected date of completion of this project is 30th June, 2013.

(e) The hospital is being upgraded at a cost of Rs. 84 crore sanctioned for this project.

(f) Not applicable in view of reply to part (a) above.

Amendment of Minimum Wages Act

1344. SHRI D. RAJA:

SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is considering a proposal to amend the Minimum Wages Act to link minimum wages of factory workers to the retail inflation rate and enhance penalties for erring companies; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH): (a) and (b) As per the existing provisions of Minimum Wages Act, minimum wages are revised quinquennially in the Central Sphere. In order to protect the minimum wages against inflation, the Central Government introduced the idea of Variable Dearness Allowance (VDA) since 1989. The appropriate Governments are required to increase the minimum rates of wages from time to time by adding VDA, twice a year or annually, taking into account the rise in the Consumer Price Indices for the Industrial Workers. In the Central sphere, the minimum rates of wages are revised effective from 1st April and 1st October every year.

As the Draft Cabinet Note for the amendment of the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 for enhancing penal provisions along with other proposals is under finalization, the subject matter of the question is confidential at present.