

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) differ from State to State:

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the wages given in various States including Bihar under MGNREGA are lower than the minimum wages given in the State; and

(d) if so, the action Government is planning to take in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI PRADEEP JAIN): (a) and (b) Under Section 6 (1) of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), the unskilled wage rates are notified by the Central Government State-wise. The wage rates so notified were indexed to the Consumer Price Index for Agricultural Labour (CPI-AL) with effect from 01.01.2011. The wage rates have further been revised with effect from 01.04.2012 and 01.04.2013. Since the base price lines in CPI-AL for different States are different and the wages under MGNREGA are on the basis of price movements in CPI-AL, the notified wage rates differ from State to State.

(c) and (d) The wage rates for unskilled labour under non-government schemes are notified by State Governments under the Minimum Wages Act, and different rates are notified for different types of unskilled work given in Part II of the Schedule of that Act. It is not possible to compare State-wise wages paid under the two enactments. However, the Hon'ble High Court of Karnataka in its Order dated 23.09.2011 had ruled that MGNREGA wage rates cannot be less than the minimum wage rate for unskilled agricultural labourers fixed under the Minimum Wages Act and directed the Central Government to make payment of arrears. In a Special Leave Petition (Civil) No. 379-390 of 2012 filed by Government of India against the aforesaid judgement of Hon'ble Karnataka High Court, the Hon'ble Supreme Court has granted interim stay to the orders of the Karnataka High Court. The matter is, thus *sub-judice*.

Panel to review Mid Day Meal Scheme

*236. DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether, in the light of recent incidents of food poisoning, Government

is planning to set up a new panel to review the implementation of Mid Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) for monitoring the quality of food and ensuring the hygiene standards; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Human Resource Development setup Empowered Committee under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble HRM with eminent expert from various disciplines with following Terms of Reference. The Committee will meet at least once in a quarter.

- (i) Access, safety, hygiene and quality aspects in the implementation of the MDMS.
- (ii) Mechanisms in place for ensuring convergence with Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Food and Public Distribution, Drinking Water and Sanitation, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj etc.
- (iii) Governance mechanisms in place and their effectiveness in the implementation of MDMS.
- (iv) Review mechanisms in place to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of the scheme.
- (v) Mechanisms in place for community participation in the Scheme and its effective monitoring.

The Committee will meet at least once in a quarter.

Demands of staff of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas

†*237. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 2878 given in the Rajya Sabha on 22nd March, 2013 and state:

(a) the details of demands put forward by teaching and non-teaching staff of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.