

(c) the details of total financial benefit to the pension holders?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) and (b) The Government has notified a minimum pension of ₹1,000/- per month under Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995 *vide* G.S.R. No.593(E) dated 19.08.2014 for the year 2014-15 with effect from 01.09.2014. It has benefited all members, widow/widower, disabled, nominee and parent pensioners drawing pension less than ₹1000/- under the Scheme. The policy has also benefited children and orphan pensioners whose minimum pension would be ₹250/- per month and ₹750/- per month respectively. 32 lakh pensioners (Approximately) under Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995 have been benefited under the policy.

(c) Pensioners under Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995 getting less than ₹1000/- per month are getting top-up amount over and above the pension they are getting to make it to ₹1,000/- per month. Besides, children and orphan pensioners are getting a minimum pension of ₹250/- and ₹750/- per month respectively. The total financial benefit to the pension holders in implementing the minimum pension under Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995 is estimated to be ₹709 crores for the period 01.09.2014 to 31.03.2015.

Refund to pension holders through easy method

1193. SHRI BASAWARAJ PATIL: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state the steps taken by Government to return ₹27000 crores deposited with it, to pension holders through easy method?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): As per the Annual Accounts of Employees' Provident Fund Organisation for the year 2013-14, an amount of ₹27,448.54 crore is lying in Inoperative Accounts as on 31st March, 2014. As per Para 72(6) of the Employees' Provident Funds Scheme 1952, certain accounts are classified as 'Inoperative Accounts' in which contribution have not been received for 36 months continuously.

The members have withdrawn an amount of ₹4316.70 crores from the Inoperative Accounts during the financial year 2013-14.

The following steps have been taken to facilitate payments of amount lying in Inoperative Accounts to the rightful claimants:

- (i) EPFO has launched allotment of permanent numbers to its members called Universal Account Number (UAN). It will facilitate identifying the members without intermediation of the employers. The amount may be claimed by current member in an easy manner in that case.

- (ii) Awareness campaigns have been undertaken through the electronic as well as print media from time to time to educate the members.
- (iii) The employers' and employees' unions have also been requested to advise the members to file such claims for settlement.
- (iv) Online Transfer Claim Portal (OTCP) has been introduced to facilitate online submission of transfer claim in order to make the transfer process transparent and simple. The adoption of Universal Account Number (UAN) would do away the need for transfer of claims as it will link the previous account of the members.
- (v) The settlement of claims have been simplified and following steps are taken to ensure payments to the rightful claimants:
 - (1) Attestation of claim forms by the authorized signatory has been made mandatory where the establishment is in operation.
 - (2) To identify the members in those cases where employer is not available, the attestation by the bank authorities is insisted upon along with at least one of the documents as required under KYC (Know Your Customer) of the bank.

Bonded labour

1194. SHRI A.U. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the precautionary measures being put in place to ensure that there is no forced labour in industries and the monitoring and evaluation report of these measures; and
- (b) the consolidated results of the surveys that have been carried out as mandated by the Supreme Court Judgment of October, 2012 to identify bonded labour, the number of districts and States which have conducted the survey, the percentage of estimated bonded labourers across India, the number of people rescued out of bondage and all other relevant details revealed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) Under Article 23 of the Constitution, beggar and other similar forms of forced labour are prohibited and any contravention of this provision is an offence punishable in accordance with law.

The bonded labour system has also been abolished under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976. Under the Act, the States/Union Territories are mandated to implement the provisions of the Act. The District and Sub-Divisional Magistrates