

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) The number of main workers in the age group of 5-14 years in the country is 43.53 lakh as per 2011 Census.

(b) and (c) Child Labour is an outcome of various socio-economic problems such as poverty, economic backwardness and illiteracy etc. Government is implementing the National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme for rehabilitation of child labour since 1988. The major objective of the Scheme is to withdraw children from work and mainstream them into formal education system. Under the Scheme, children below 14 years of age employed or working in any occupation or process are identified through survey and are withdrawn/rescued from work. Children rescued/withdrawn from work in the age group of 9-14 years are enrolled in the NCLP Special Training Centres, where they are provided with bridge education, vocational training, mid day meal, stipend, health care, etc. before being mainstreamed into formal education system. Children in the age group of 5-8 years are directly linked to the formal education system through a close coordination with the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA).

Suicides by labourers due to demonetisation

726. SHRI RIPUN BORA: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of labourers in the country have committed suicide due to demonetization rules of Government during the last three months;

(b) if so, the details of report of such cases registered during the last three months thereof; and

(c) the action taken by Government to protect the human lives thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (c) No such information is available.

Setting up of Senior Citizens' Welfare Fund

727. SHRI K. R. ARJUNAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Provident Fund money has been diverted for setting up of a Senior Citizens' Welfare Fund despite strong resistance from the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) Trustees;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that PF money cannot be expended for any purpose other than the payment to individual members; and

(d) if so, why this rule was violated or overruled?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of reply to part (a) of the Question above.

(c) As per paragraph 53 of the Employees' Provident Funds Scheme, 1952, the Fund shall not, except with the previous sanction of Central Government, be expended for any purpose other than the payment of the sums standing to the credit of individual members of the Fund or to their nominees or heirs or legal representatives in accordance with the provisions of the Scheme.

(d) No violation has taken place.

Basic minimum scheme for unemployed

728. SHRI DILIP KUMAR TIRKEY: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering to implement a nation-wide scheme namely Basic Minimum Scheme for the unemployed of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (c) There is no proposal with the Ministry to implement a nation-wide Basic Minimum Scheme for the unemployed of the country. However, Government has taken various steps for generating employment in the country like encouraging private sector of economy, fast tracking various projects involving substantial investment and increasing public expenditure on schemes like Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) run by Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA), Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) Scheme run by Ministry of Rural Development and Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM) run by Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation.

Government has also decided to strategically promote labour-intensive manufacturing and expand employment opportunities by promoting tourism and agro-based industries.