

benefits. It has organised several camps for opening of bank accounts of labourers for payment of wages. The number of camps organised by the Ministry is around 1.66 lakhs and over 53.6 lakh bank accounts of labourers were opened to facilitate payment of wages.

Settlement of PF/EPF, etc. on retirement

418. DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has decided to settle the PF/EPF, Gratuity etc. of retiring person on the day of retirement itself; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) and (b) Directions have been issued by Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) to all its field offices to make the payment of Provident Fund and Pension to members of Employees' Provident Funds (EPF) Scheme, 1952 and Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS), 1995 on the date of retirement itself.

As regards settlement of Gratuity, as per Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972, the employer shall arrange to pay the amount of Gratuity within thirty days from the date it becomes payable to the person to whom the Gratuity is payable.

Number of employees in small and medium sized enterprises in the country

419. SHRI VIVEK GUPTA: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of small and medium sized enterprises in the country having less than 50 employees;

(b) the number of women in the country, as per the Ministry data who are currently working in enterprises with less than or equal to 50 employees;

(c) how will the Ministry ensure that the employment preferences for women would not reduce with reference to the new Maternity Bill coming into force; and

(d) whether Government is planning to draft a Paternity Bill too, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) and (b) As per 'Udyog Aadhar