

Child labour due to poor condition of their families

1217. SHRI SAMBHAJI CHHATRAPATI: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that despite existing laws child labour has still not stopped because of poor economic condition of their families;

(b) if so, details thereof and also what special measures Government plans to introduce to stop child labour and rehabilitate such children; and

(c) whether Government proposes to introduce relevant laws more strictly by amending them wherever necessary and making the law enforcing agencies accountable for showing laxity in implementation of the law?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) Child Labour is an outcome of various socio-economic problems such as poverty, economic backwardness and illiteracy etc. The number of main workers in the age group of 5-14 years in the country is 43.53 lakh as per 2011 Census which shows a decline from 57.79 lakh as per 2001 Census.

(b) and (c) Government has amended the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 and enacted the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016 which came into force w.e.f. 1.9.2016. The amended Act *inter alia* provides for complete prohibition on employment or work of children below 14 years of age in any occupation or process and prohibition of employment or work of adolescents (14-18 years) in the hazardous occupations and processes. Subsequent to the amendment in the Act, a State Action Plan has been circulated to all State Governments/UTs for effective enforcement of the provisions of the Act. Further, Government has framed the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Rules, 2017 on 2.6.2017 which provides for District Nodal Officer and Task Force at district level, under chairpersonship of District Magistrate, to ensure that the provisions of this Act are properly enforced.

Government is also implementing the National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme for rehabilitation of child labour. Under the Scheme, children rescued/ withdrawn from work in the age group of 9-14 years are enrolled in the NCLP Special Training Centres, where they are provided with bridge education, vocational training,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.