

**Support to migrant labourers during the pandemic**

415. SHRI K.J. ALPHONS: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) what has been done to support migrant labourers during the pandemic;
- (b) how much food has been given free to migrant labourers since March; and
- (c) whether Government has provided any other facilities to them during the pandemic?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) The global spread of the corona virus (Covid-19) followed by lockdowns has affected economies across the globe including India. Covid-19 has resulted in large number of migrant workers going back to their native places.

Twenty control rooms were set up by Ministry of Labour and Employment across the country to receive and address the grievances of workers regarding wages etc. during the national lockdown.

Approximately 80 crore beneficiaries are being provided additional 5 kg wheat or rice and 1 kg of preferred pulses, free of cost every month till November, 2020 under provisions of National Food Security Act.

Around 1.83 crore Building and Other Construction (BOC) workers have been given cash assistance of ₹5000 crore (approx.) from the cess fund.

30 lakh BOC workers have been given food package relief also from cess fund.

Apart from above, various initiatives have been taken by the Ministry of Labour and Employment as part of Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY) and Atmanirbhar Bharat which, *inter-alia*, include (i) payment of 12% employers' share and 12% employees' share under Employees' Provident Fund (EPF), totalling 24% by the Government of India for six wage months from March to August, 2020 for all the establishments having up to 100 employees with 90% of such employees earning less than ₹ 15,000 monthly wage; (ii) reduction in PF contribution from 12% to 10% of wages for the wage months of May, June and July, 2020; (iii) non-refundable Covid advance from the PF by amending the EPF Scheme, 1952; (iv) extension in the date of filing of

returns; (v) issuing advisory to promptly attend to distress calls of workers /employees and also guide them in temporary shelters; (vi) using Building and other construction workers (BOCW) cess fund for transfer of adequate funds in the bank account of construction workers affected by COVID-19 outbreak; (vii) supporting employees and workers by not terminating them and not cutting their wages; and (viii) for taking preventive measures to contain the spread of COVID-19.

To boost employment and livelihood opportunities for migrant workers returning to villages, in the wake of COVID-19 outbreak, Government of India has launched Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan on 20th June 2020. The Abhiyaan focuses on durable rural infrastructure and providing modern facilities like internet in the villages. Skill Mapping of the rural migrant labour is being done to help them work closer home. The Abhiyaan involves intensified and focused implementation of 25 target driven works to provide employment and create infrastructure in the rural areas of 116 districts of 6 States with a resource envelope of Rs 50,000 crore. Apart from this, the Ministry of Women and Child Development has launched various schemes for migrant workers who have returned to their native places. One of the schemes is Anganwadi services which has been extended to children of migrant workers.

Ministry of Food Processing Industries have sanctioned 700 food processing/preservation and infrastructure projects in which migrant labourers will get employment.

To provide employment to the migrant workers Ministry of Transport and Highways has identified the ongoing works/new works for the road construction. Ministry of Steel assisted migrant workers and their families with food packets and face mask, milk powder etc.

The Department of Bio Technology has set up 30 Biotech -Kisan hubs in the country covering all Agroclimatic zones, 150 Districts including 101 aspirational districts which will help migrant workers to earn their livelihood through farming and expose them to the innovative methods of farming of high value crops.

#### **Employment rate**

416. SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the monthly unemployment rate in the country in the last twelve months and the details thereof;