

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS**

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 989**

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 10TH FEBRUARY, 2021/ MAGHA 21, 1942 (SAKA)

DEATHS DURING LOCKDOWN

989. DR. L. HANUMANTHAIAH:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that hundreds of people died on account of the unplanned lockdown, not directly related to the Novel Coronavirus;

(b) if so, the details thereof and response thereto;

(c) whether many people died due to financial distress, exhaustion, hunger, accidents during migration, denial of medical care, job loss during lockdown that took effect from March 25, 2020;

(d) whether Government has given compensation for these deaths of migrants, labourers during lockdown; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reason for not looking into the matter?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS
(SHRI NITYANAND RAI)**

(a) to (e): Soon after the outbreak of novel corona virus on 7th January, 2020, several measures like progressive tightening of international travel, issuing advisories for members of the public, setting up quarantine facilities etc. were taken by the Central Government to contain the spread of COVID-19. Experts, keeping in view the global experiences of countries

which have been successful in containing the spread of COVID-19, unlike some others where many people died, have recommended that effective measures for social distancing should be taken to contain the spread of this pandemic. Between 16-23 March, 2020, most of the States Governments/UTs resorted to partial or full lockdown in their respective State/UT based upon their assessment of the situation. COVID-19 is a highly infectious disease. Any mass movement of people would have spread the disease very fast amongst people in all parts of the country. Taking into consideration the above facts, the global experience and the need for consistency in the approach and implementation of various containment measures across the country, a Nationwide lockdown was announced on 24th March, 2020 to contain the spread of COVID-19 in the country.

Central Government was fully conscious that during the period of an inevitable lockdown, people should not be deprived of essential supplies. The situation was closely monitored 24*7 through Control Rooms at national level. Central Government has taken various relief measures for the migrant workers, and details of the important measures are given in 'Annexure'. Further, the number of people died, not due to COVID-19, is not maintained centrally, as registration of deaths is a State subject.

Details of the relief measures taken by Central Government for the migrant workers

- 1. With a view to provide food, health care and shelter to homeless people including migrant workers, Central Government on 28.03.2020, allowed the State Governments to use State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) for this purpose.**
- 2. Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) also issued regular advisories to States/Union Territories (UTs) to take all necessary measures to provide shelters, food, water, health facilities and also proper counseling to migrant workers.**
- 3. MHA on 19th April, 2020 allowed movement of migrant workers within the States/UTs so that these workers could be engaged in industrial, farming, construction, manufacturing and MNREGA works as additional new activities were permitted outside containment zones with effect from 20.04.2020. MHA vide orders dated 29th April and 1st May 2020, further allowed movement of migrant workers to their native places by buses and Shramik special trains respectively and all necessary steps were taken by Central Government to facilitate the movement of migrant workers.**
- 4. The Central Government, on 26th March, 2020 announced a relief package under the “Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana”, totaling Rs.1.70 lakh crore for the poor to help them fight the battle against Corona Virus.**
- 5. On 12th May, 2020, Central Government announced the Atmanirbhar (AN) Package, a special economic and comprehensive package of Rs. 20 lakh crores -equivalent to 10 per cent of India’s GDP –to combat the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in India. The package is pivoted on five pillars viz., quantum jump in economy; infrastructure; system based on 21st century technology driven arrangements; vibrant demography and demand.**
- 6. For the benefit of 50 lakh street vendors, Central Government on 1st June, 2020, launched Prime Minister Street Vendor’s Atmanirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) Scheme to provide them collateral free working capital loan upto Rs.10,000/- to resume their lost livelihood due to Covid and lockdown.**

7. The Central Government has launched the “Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan” on 20th June, 2020 to boost employment and livelihood opportunities for migrant workers returning to villages, in the wake of COVID-19 outbreak.

8. Approximately 80 crore beneficiaries have been 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.

9. In rural areas, wages under MGNREGA have been enhanced from Rs.182/- to Rs.202/- per day for the benefit of rural workers including returning migrant workers.

10. Ministry of Food Processing Industries have sanctioned 700 food processing/preservation and infrastructure projects in which migrant labourers can be employed.

11. In response to the Central Government’s directions, the State Welfare Boards have cumulatively disbursed around Rs.5000 crore, to approx.1.83 crore Building and Other Construction (BOC) Workers during lockdown and thereafter. In addition to this, around 30 lakh BOC workers were also provided food relief package.

12. Central Government has taken the decision to extend the scheme of Atal Beemit Kalyan Yojna for another one year i.e. from 1st July, 2020 to 30th June, 2021. It has also been decided to enhance the rate of unemployment relief under the scheme to 50% of wages from earlier rate of 25% along with relaxation of eligibility conditions for insured workers who have lost their employment due to COVID-19 pandemic and related lockdown.
