

Non-payment of bonus to tea garden labourers

985. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for non-intervention when most of the tea garden labourers of Assam were debarred from getting 20 per cent bonus this year; and

(b) the reasons for not taking proper steps to improve the conditions of tea garden workers in Assam?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) In Assam the normal practice is to pay Bonus as per the provisions of the Payment Bonus Act, 1965. The balance sheet of the company is taken into reckoning in determining the bonus to be paid by that company. However, in some of the companies bonus is paid as per the negotiated settlement with recognized Unions.

(b) The Plantation Labour Act, 1951 provides for the welfare of the plantation labour and regulates the conditions of work in plantation. As per the Act, responsibility of the implementation of various provisions of the Act lies with the respective State Governments.

Changes in minimum wages act

986. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering changes in the Minimum Wages Act to safeguard interest of the workers in the unorganized sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the observations made in the report of the Second National Commission on Labour would be taken into consideration; and

(d) the steps Government propose to take to ensure that workers of unorganized sector would get the stipulated minimum wages?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) to (c) The Government has been considering certain amendments to the Minimum Wages Act to make the legal and

penal provision more deterrent. Meanwhile, the report of the Second National Commission has also been received. The Commission has recommended a unified law on wages including the Minimum Wages Act, 1948. The Government proposes to frame a law on wages and in that event, the amendments under consideration would not be required.

(d) The Minimum Wages Act provides for enforcement of minimum wages. In the Central sphere it is secured through the officers of the Central Industrial Relations Machinery while in the State sphere, through state enforcement machinery. The officers of these machineries conduct inspections regularly and advise the employers to make payment of shortfall of wages whenever they detect any case of non-payment or less payment of minimum wages. In case of non-adherence to the advice, there are legal and penal provisions against the defaulting employers.

Rate of interest on P.F.

987. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government intend to enhance the rate of interest on Provident Fund accumulation for the year 2002-03 to 10.5 per cent per year as against the 9.5 per cent; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR
(SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Employment opportunities

†988. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of new employment opportunities created in Government Services, organised industries, small scale industries and unorganized sector separately during the last three years; and

(b) the number of permanent casual and contract labourers out of these respectively?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.