

(c) the officer responsible for non-payment of salaries to the affected labourers and the action taken by Government against him; and

(d) the immediate orders proposed to be issued by Government to provide better treatment and payment of all the wage dues to the affected and ill labourers and by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI VIJAY GOEL): (a) No, Sir. No such complaint has come to the notice of this Ministry.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Payment of minimum wage

†3680. SHRIMATI GURCHARAN KAUR: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the provision of wages to be paid to men, women and minor labourers under Minimum Wages Act;

(b) the reasons for variation in amount paid as wages by the states; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government to ensure uniformity in the interest of labourers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI VIJAY GOEL): (a) The Minimum Wages Act, 1948 provides for different wages for adults, adolescents, children and apprentices. The Act does not discriminate between men and women. The women workers get the same wages as men do.

(b) and (c) The variation in the minimum wages in the States is attributable to factors like socio-economic & agro-climatic conditions, prices of essential commodities, productivity, paying capacity and local conditions which vary from State to State and region to region.

In order to minimize the disparity in wages, the Central Government mooted the concept of a national floor level wage in 1996 and fixed it at Rs. 35/- per day based on the recommendations of National Commission on Rural Labour (1991). The floor level was further increased to Rs. 45/- per day w.e.f. November, 1999 based on the rise in Consumer Price

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Index. The floor level wage was last revised to Rs. 50/- per day w.e.f. 1.9.2002. All States/UTs have been informed of this increase and requested to ensure that in none of the scheduled employments under their respective jurisdictions, the minimum wage is below the national floor. Majority of the State/UTs have adopted the national floor level wage introduced by the Central Government.

BPL Population

†3681. SHRI ISAM SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of people living Below Poverty Line in the first year of the Ninth Five Year Plan;

(b) the target set by Government for upliftment of people living Below Poverty Line during the Ninth Five Year Plan period and to what extent the same has been achieved; and

(c) whether Government are considering to act under a special plan to meet the target set for Tenth Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) The Planning Commission estimated poverty at national and state level from the large sample surveys on household consumer expenditure conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) at an interval of approximately five years. The latest two such surveys were conducted in 1993-94 (NSS 50th round) and 1999-2000 (NSS 55th round). As such, the number of people living below poverty line in the first year of the Ninth Five Year Plan is not available. However, the number of people living below poverty line has been estimated as 3203.68 lakhs in 1993-94. During the Ninth Plan period, poverty has been estimated only for the year 1999-2000 and the number of poor for this year has been estimated as 2602.50 lakhs.

(b) No target set by the Government for the upliftment of people living below poverty line during the Ninth Five Year Plan.

(c) There is a three-pronged action to alleviate and reduce the poverty in the country. These are: (i) acceleration of economic growth, (ii) human, and social development through literacy, education, health,

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