GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT

RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1059
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10.02.2021

IMPACT OF RELAXED LABOUR LAWS IN CHILD LABOUR

1059. SMT. PHULO DEVI NETAM:
SMT. PRIYANKA CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of Labour and Employment be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been an increase in child labour and hazardous work for children in States including Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh in 2020;
(b) if so, the details thereof;
(c) whether there is any correlation between such an increase and the relaxation of labour laws by these States along with school closures and reverse migration;
(d) whether Government will undertake new rescue and rehabilitation programmes for children forced into child labour;
(e) if so, the details thereof; and
(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (IC) FOR LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR)

(a) to (c): Child Labour is an outcome of various socio-economic problems such as poverty, economic backwardness and illiteracy. Labour being in the concurrent list, enforcement of the provisions of the Child & Adolescent Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016 is the responsibility of both Central and State Governments in their respective sphere. As such, data regarding increase/decrease of child labour is not centrally maintained.

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(d) to (f): The Government of India stands committed to the eradication of child labour from the country.

The Government has amended the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 and enacted the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016 which came into force with effect from 1.9.2016. The Amendment Act inter-alia provides for complete prohibition of work or employment of children below 14 years of age in any occupation and process and prohibition of adolescents in the age group of 14 to 18 years in hazardous occupations and processes. The Amendment Act also provides the stricter punishment for employers for violation of the Act and has made the offence as cognizable.

The Ministry of Labour and Employment is implementing the National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme since 1988 for rehabilitation of child labourers. Under the NCLP, the children in the age group of 9-14 years are rescued/withdrawn from work and enrolled in the NCLP Special Training Centres (STCs), where they are provided with bridge education, vocational training, mid-day meal, stipend, health care, etc. before being mainstreamed into formal education system. The children in the age group of 5-8 years are directly linked to the formal education system through a close coordination with the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan.

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