

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2399

TO BE ANSWERED ON 16.12.2024

DISCREPANCIES IN UNEMPLOYMENT DATA

2399. SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE:

Will the Minister of STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has identified discrepancies between the unemployment data reported in the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) and other data sets available in public domain;
- (b) if so, the reasons for these discrepancies, including differences in methodologies, sampling frameworks, or definitions used for data collection;
- (c) whether Government is taking steps to reconcile these discrepancies and ensure the reliability and accuracy of unemployment data; and
- (d) the measures being implemented to improve the timelines, consistency, and comprehensiveness on unemployment data reporting?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION; MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE [RAO INDERJIT SINGH]

(a) to (d): The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has been conducting Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) since 2017 to estimate various indicators related to employment and unemployment situation in the country. PLFS gives estimates of key employment and unemployment Indicators like the Labour Force Participation Rates (LFPR), Worker Population Ratio (WPR), Unemployment Rate (UR), etc. PLFS is used by various Central Ministries/Departments as the official data source of employment statistics in India. Further, the ILO also cites PLFS as the source of employment statistics in respect of India on its ILOSTAT database.

MoSPI is committed to ensuring that accurate and reliable employment statistics are brought out from PLFS. To achieve this, robust and well-defined mechanisms are employed which undergo periodic improvements based on evolving needs, feedback and advancements in methodologies to enhance their effectiveness. The primary data collection is being done in digital platform using Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI) or web-based application with in-built validation mechanism to ensure consistency at the stage of data collection. This digital platform ensures simultaneous data processing and has resulted into a drastic reduction in the time lag for releasing the reports of PLFS. The Quarterly Bulletins are being released within 45 days of completion of field work and the Annual Report 2023-24 has been released within 90 days of completion of field work. A robust training mechanism is followed to address the conceptual queries and monitoring the data quality. MoSPI places a strong emphasis on transparency and public accountability. To ensure the same, the entire PLFS microdata, on which the PLFS survey findings are based, are brought out along with the annual disseminations

of PLFS. This ensures that users can verify the PLFS findings at their ends also. The survey instruments of PLFS are also placed in the public domain. This ensures that users of the data can understand the survey methodology used in PLFS comprehensively and interpret the survey findings properly. The survey methodology of PLFS is developed under the supervision of the National Statistical Commission (NSC). The findings of the survey are also brought out under the supervision of National Statistical Commission. The concepts and definitions in the surveys of MoSPI are formulated conforming to various standards. Further, various facets of internationally accepted standards on labour statistics are studied in MoSPI to assess their applicability and relevance in the country context.
