

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF FINANCE
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1332
TO BE ANSWERED ON 6.12.2021

IMPACT OF CORONA ON MIDDLE AND LOWER CLASS

1332. SHRIMATI NAVNEET RAVI RANA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that the middle and lower middle class have been adversely affected due to the complete lockdown effected in the wake of the first and second wave of COVID-19 leading to a loss of life and livelihood both;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has taken or proposes to take special steps for extending economic assistance to the crises ridden middle and lower middle class people, particularly in respect of Amravati Parliamentary constituency which is malnourished and predominantly inhabited by lower class and tribal people; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE
(SHRI PANKAJ CHAUDHARY)

(a) to (c) In order to mitigate the adverse impact on lives and livelihoods of the people including middle and lower middle class during the COVID-19 pandemic, Government has taken several steps. The interventions are aimed to cover the entire population including the vulnerable sections and are not region/constituency specific. Details of some of the key initiatives are given in Annexure I.

**Statement referred to in reply to part (a) to (c) of
LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1332
for answer on 06.12.2021**

Annexure 1: Details of some of the key initiatives

(i) PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana: Additional allocation of food grain @ 5 kg per person per month free of cost was provided to all beneficiaries covered under the targeted public distribution system including those covered under Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT). Further, Pulses according to regional preferences @ 1 kg per family were provided for three months, free of cost. The scheme was extended till November, 2020. The scheme of free foodgrains was reintroduced during the current financial year for the period May 2021 to November, 2021 and has been extended upto March 2022.

(ii) Benefit to farmers: Government has implemented various measures to boost rural spending, employment generation and social security which includes the cash transfer scheme- Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) which provides an income support of Rs.6000 per year to farmers. The first installment of Rs 2,000 due in 2020-21 was front-loaded and paid in April 2020 itself under the PM KISAN Yojana, covering about 8.7 crore farmers. As on 30 November 2021, 11.61 crore farmers across the country have received at least one instalment under PM-KISAN.

(iii) Cash transfers:

- a. An ex-gratia of Rs. 500 per month for three months to a total of 20.40 crores (approx.) Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana women account-holders was provided.
- b. Free of cost LPG cylinders to 8.8 crore beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) provided as on 30 November 2021.
- c. Wage-earners, earning below Rs 15,000 per month, in businesses having less than 100 workers, were provided Twenty-four (24) percent of the monthly wages into their Public Fund accounts, for three months. The scheme was extended for another three months till August 2020.
- d. An amount of Rs.1000 to around 3 crore aged widows and people in Divyang category.

(iv) MGNREGA wages increased by Rs.20 with effect from 1 April, 2020.

(v) Other measures:

- Under the “Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan”, an additional Rs. 40,000 crore has been allocated for MGNREGS to help generate nearly 300 crore person-days to address the need for more work, for the returning migrant workers as well as to take care of the monsoon season.
- Under Garib Kalyan Rozgar Abhiyan, a massive rural public works scheme launched on 20 June 2020 to empower and provide livelihood opportunities to the returnee migrant workers and rural citizens. Within 125 days, nearly 25 schemes of the government will be brought together under the ‘Garib Kalyan Rozgar Abhiyan’ and villages across 116 districts in the six states viz. Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, and Odisha joined this programme through the Common Service Centres and Krishi Vigyan Kendras. This

Scheme involved intensified and focused implementation of 25 different types of works to provide jobs and create infrastructure in the rural regions of the country with a resource envelope of Rs.50,000 crore.

- Government has taken various steps for generating employment in the country like encouraging private sector of economy, fast-tracking various projects involving substantial investment and increasing public expenditure on schemes such as Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) and Deendayal Antodaya Yojana- National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM), Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana (PMRPY), Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS).
- Under Prime Minister Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKP) financial assistance was given to building & construction workers (BoCW) which largely included migrant workers from the funds collected under BOCW's cess.
- PM SVANidhi was launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, on June 01, 2020 for providing affordable Working Capital loan to street vendors to resume their livelihoods that have been adversely affected due to Covid-19 lockdown. This scheme targets to benefit over 50 lakh Street Vendors.
- Free food grains supply to migrants for 2 months: For the migrant labour, additional food grain to all the States/UTs at the rate of 5 kg per migrant labourer and 1 kg Chana per family per month for two months i.e. May and June, 2020 free of cost was allocated.
- Starting with 4 States in August 2019 the One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) plan has been enabled in 34 States/UTs by August 2021 covering about 75 Crore beneficiaries (94.3% National Food Security Act population) in the country. This is part of PM's Technology Driven System Reforms. This scheme enabled a migrant worker and their family members to access Public Distribution System (PDS) benefits from any Fair Price Shop in the country. This ensured that the people in transit, especially migrant workers also get the benefit of PDS benefit across the country.
- Scheme for Affordable Rental Housing Complexes for Migrant Workers and Urban Poor was launched in July 2020.
- 2% Interest Subvention for 12 months for Shishu MUDRA loanes was provided.
