

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1217
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21ST SEPTEMBER, 2020

LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT TO DIFFERENTLY ABLED DURING COVID-19

1217. SHRI K.K. RAGESH:

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether any measure to extend special financial support to the differently abled people are being considered who suffer loss of employment due to the COVID-19 pandemic;**
- (b) If so, the details there of;**
- (c) whether any allotment of any fund to various State Governments is under consideration; and**
- (d) If so, the details there of?**

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d): Government has taken several measures to ensure that the country is well prepared to face the challenges and threats posed by Covid-19 pandemic through various schemes extended to Differently Abled.

National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation (NHFDC), a Public Sector Enterprise under Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment extended moratorium of three months on payment of loan (under the schemes viz “Divyangjan Swavalamban Yojana”, Vishesh Micro Finance Yojana and “Small loan connect to PwDs for encouraging Self Help Group(SHG)”) instalments outstanding with implementing agencies as per Reserve Bank of India guidelines. Government also extended the utilization period by another 120 days in respect of funds released to implementing agencies during the last quarter of last financial year 2019-20. To make differently abled employable and self-reliant, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities implements the National Action Plan for skilling of Persons with Disabilities.

Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) Act provides coverage to differently abled workers with a higher wage limit of Rupees 25000/- per month vis-a-vis wage limit of Rs 21000/- per month for non divyang workers. Employers' contribution for differently abled Insured Persons(IPs) is exempted for three years. Employees' State Insurance Corporation also provides relief for upto 90 days in the form of Cash Compensation to the Insured Persons who become unemployed under Atal Beemit Vyakti Kalyan Yojana. During COVID-19 pandemic, the ESIC has enhanced quantum of benefit from 25% to 50% of average daily earning and relaxed the eligibility conditions for Insured Persons including differently abled IPs under Atal Beemit Vyakti Kalyan Yojana for the period 24.03.2020 to 31.12.2020.

Government has also taken following steps to boost the employment opportunities for the workers including differently abled;

Government has announced an economic package of Rupees 20 lakh crore and advocated for Atmanirbhar Bharat which aims at creating jobs for the youth including Differently Aabled.

Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY) is being implemented for the poor to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 pandemic. Under PMGKY, Government of India is contributing 12% employers' share and 12% employees share under Employees Provident Fund (EPF), totalling 24% for the wage month from March-August, 2020.

Statutory PF contribution of both employer and employee has been reduced to 10% each from existing 12% each for all establishments covered by EPFO for three months.

An Ex-gratia of Rs. 1,000 has been envisaged under PM Garib Kalayan package to 3 crore poor senior citizens, poor widows and poor disabled.

To boost employment and livelihood opportunities in the wake of COVID-19 outbreak, Government is implementing Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan to provide internet, skill mapping facilities to the rural migrant workers including differently abled so as to find the work at their vicinity. The Abhiyaan involves intensified and focused implementation of 25 target driven works with a view to provide employment and create infrastructure in the rural areas of 116 districts of 6 States with a resource envelope of Rs 50,000 crore.

The MNREGA wage has been increased from Rs. 182 a day to Rs. 202 to benefit 13.62 crore families including differently abled.

Government has also launched Prime Minister SVANidhi Scheme to facilitate collateral free working capital loan to approximately 50 lakh street vendors including differently abled.
