

20 Labour

LABOUR policy in India has evolved in response to specific needs of the situation to suit requirements of planned economic development and social justice and has a two-fold objective, viz., maintaining industrial peace and promoting the welfare of labour.

LABOUR REFORMS

Labour Reforms essentially means taking steps to increase production, productivity and employment opportunities in the economy while protecting overall interest of labour. Essentially it means skill development, retraining, redeployment, updating knowledge base of workers-teachers, promotion of leadership qualities etc. Labour Reforms also includes labour law reforms. Changes in the labour laws are also done protecting the interests of workers. Brief notes on different labour laws are given in subsequent paragraphs.

THE MINIMUM WAGES ACT, 1948

The Minimum Wages Act, 1948 provides for fixation, review, revision and enforcement of minimum wage, both by the Central Government and the State Government, in respect of scheduled employments in their respective jurisdictions. There are 46 scheduled employments in the Central sphere whereas the number of these employments in the State sphere is 1542.

To protect the wages against inflation, the Central Government has introduced a component of Variable Dearness Allowance (VDA), which is linked to Consumer Price Index. The VDA is revised every six months effective 1st April and 1st October every year. So far, 26 States/UTs have also adopted the VDA as a component of minimum wage.

In the absence of a uniform national minimum wage, the concept of a national floor level minimum wage was mooted by the Central Government in 1996, based on the recommendations of the National Commission on Rural Labour in 1991, and fixed, initially, at Rs. 35 per day, based on the subsequent increase in the price level. Since the adoption of national minimum wage is a non- statutory measure, all State Governments/Union Territories are requested to ensure that in none of the scheduled employments the rate of minimum wages fixed/revised are lower than the national minimum wage of Rs. 66 per day revised with effect from 1st February, 2004.

THE PAYMENT OF WAGES ACT, 1936

The Payment of Wages Act, 1936 was enacted to regulate payment of wages to workers employed in industries and to ensure a speedy and effective remedy to them against illegal deductions and/or unjustified delay caused in paying wages to them. The wage ceiling under Payment of Wages Act, 1936, was fixed at Rs. 1600/- pm in 1982. With a view to enhance the wage ceiling to Rs. 6500/- p.m. for applicability of the Act, to empower the Central Government to further increase the ceiling in future by way of notification and to enhance the penal provisions etc., the Payment of Wages (Amendment) Act, 2005, which was passed by both Houses of Parliament, has been notified on 6.9.2005 as an Act 41 of 2005 by the Ministry of Law & Justice. Subsequently, the Ministry of Labour & Employment has issued the Notification S.O. 1577(E) to

make the Payment of Wages (Amendment) Act, 2005 effective from the 9th November 2005.

THE PAYMENT OF BONUS ACT, 1965

The Payment of Bonus Act, 1965 provides for payment of bonus to employees as defined under the Act. According to the Act, "employees" means any person (other than an apprentice) employed on a salary or wage not exceeding Rs. 3,500/- per month in any industry to do any skilled or unskilled, manual, supervisory, managerial, administrative, technical or clerical work for hire or reward. However, according to Section 12 of the Act, the bonus is payable to employees whose salary or wage exceed Rs. 2,500/- per month, has to be calculated as if his salary or wage were Rs. 2,500/- per month. The above wage ceilings were last revised on 9th July, 1995 and made effective from 1st April, 1993.

The second National Commission on Labour (NCL) has recommended that the present system of two wage ceiling for reckoning entitlement and for calculation of bonus should be suitably enhanced to Rs. 7,500/- per month and Rs. 3,500/- per month respectively. Considering the recommendation made by Second National Commission on Labour in respect of eligibility/calculation ceiling and further developments, the amendments to Payment of Bonus Act, 1965 were again discussed in 41st Session of Indian Labour Conference (ILC) held on 27-28th April, 2007 at New Delhi. It was unanimously resolved for revision in calculation ceiling from Rs.2,500/- to Rs.3,500/- per month. As regards the eligibility limit, the Central Trade Union Leaders as well as the representatives of the Central and State Governments have agreed for enhancing the eligibility limit from Rs.3,500/- to Rs.10,000/- per month keeping in view the erosion in money value since June, 2002, when the eligibility limit was recommended by National Commission on Labour to be at Rs.7,500/. The Employers' representatives emphasized for increasing the eligibility limit to Rs.7,500/- per month only in the first instance as recommended by Second National Commission on Labour. However, the Employers' Organisation agreed that further increase in eligibility limit to a suitable level or to Rs.10,000/- may be decided by the Chairman, 41st Session of ILC i.e. Minister of State (Independent Charge), Labour & Employment.

Further, it was also agreed unanimously in 41st Session of Indian Labour Conference that the employees employed through contractors on building operations should also be made eligible for bonus under the Payment of Bonus Act, 1965.

In view of the recommendation of the National Commission on Labour and further consultations, a proposal to amend sections 2 (13) and 12 of the Payment of Bonus Act 1965, so as to enhance the eligibility limit from Rs.3,500/- to Rs.10,000/- per month and calculation ceiling from Rs.2500/- to Rs.3500/- per month and to make employees employed through contractors on building operations eligible for payment of bonus by deleting section 32(vi) of the Act is under active consideration of the Government.

WAGE BOARDS

In the 1950s and 60s, when the organised labour sector was at a nascent stage of its development without adequate unionization or with trade unions without adequate bargaining power, Government in appreciation of the problems which arise in the arena of wage fixation, constituted various Wage Boards. The Wage Boards are tripartite in character in which representatives of workers, employers and independent members participate and finalize the recommendations. The utility and contribution

of such boards in the present context are not beyond question. Except for the Wage Boards for Journalists and Non-Journalists newspaper and news-agency employees, which are statutory Wage Boards, all other Wage Boards are non-statutory in nature.

The Second National Commission on Labour (NCL) has recommended that 'there is no need for any wage board, statutory or otherwise, for fixing wage rates for workers in any industry'. However, Government decided not to accept the recommendations regarding the statutory wage boards i.e. Wage Boards for Working Journalists and Non-Journalists Newspaper Employees under the Working Journalists and Non-Journalists Newspaper Employees (Conditions of Service) and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1965.

WAGE BOARDS FOR NEWSPAPER EMPLOYEES

The Working Journalists and other Newspaper Employees (Conditions of Service) and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1955 regulates conditions of service of working journalists and other persons employed in newspaper establishments. The Act provides for setting up of Wage Boards for fixation and revision of rates of wages in respect of working journalists and non-journalists newspaper/news agency employees. The Wage Boards for such employees were set up in the years 1956, 1963, 1975, 1985 and 1994. The last Wage Boards i.e. Manisana Wage Boards was constituted in the year 1994 and submitted its report to the Government on 25th July, 2000.

The Government after examining the recommendations of the boards decided to accept them with some minor modifications. The Government have impressed upon all State Government/Union territories to take effective measures for implementing the recommendations of the Wage Boards. They have been advised to set up Tripartite Committees/Implementation Cells for speedy and effective implementation and to furnish the progress reports on quarterly basis.

So far 24 State Governments/Union territories viz. Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal, West Bengal, Chandigarh, Delhi, Puducherry have constituted State Level Monitoring Committee for implementation of the Awards.

A Central Level Monitoring Committee has also been constituted under the Chairmanship of Labour & Employment Adviser, Ministry of Labour and Employment for reviewing the implementation of the Awards. The Committee has visited various states for this purpose.

The Government has, now constituted two new Wage Boards one for Working Journalists and other for Non-Journalists Newspaper Employees under Sections 9 and 13 C respectively of the Working Journalists and Non-Journalists Newspaper Employees(Conditions of Service) and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1965 vide notification in the Gazette of India (Extra Ordinary) S.O. Nos. 809 (E) and 810 (E) dated 24.05.2007. The wage boards will submit its report within a period of three years to the Union Government. These Wage Boards will be headed by Dr. Justice K. Narayana Kurup, as a common Chairman who is a former, Judge, High Court of Kerala and acting Chief Justice of High Court of Madras. In addition, it has also been decided to have common full time Member Secretary besides two common independent members and three persons representing employers in relation to Newspaper establishments, three persons representing working journalists for Wage Board under

Section 9 and three persons representing non-journalist Newspaper Employees under Section 13 C of the Act. The Headquarter of the Boards shall be at New Delhi.

CONTRACT LABOUR

The system of employing contract labour is prevalent in most industries for different jobs including skilled and semi-skilled. It is also prevalent in agricultural and allied operations, and to some extent, in the services sector. A contract labour is a person who is hired, supervised, contracted and remunerated by a contractor, who, in turn, is compensated by the user enterprises. The concern to improve the working and living conditions of contract labour, and the Supreme Court of India's observations in the case of Standard Vacuum Refinery Company Vs. their Workmen resulted in the enactment of the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970.

The Act seeks to regulate the employment of contract labour in certain establishments and to provide for its abolition in certain circumstances and for matters connected therewith. The Act and the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Central Rules, 1971 came into force on 10 February 1971. The Act provides for the constitution of Central and State Advisory Contract Labour Boards to advise the respective Governments on matters arising out of the administration of the Act. The Act contains specific provisions to ensure payment of wages and certain amenities to be provided by the contractor to the contract labour.

The Central and State Governments are empowered to prohibit employment of contract labour in any activity in an establishment and also to grant exemption to establishments/contractors in the case of an emergency, from the applicability of the provisions of the Act. The Central Government has issued a number of notifications prohibiting employment of contract labour in different categories of works in different fields.

In the Central sphere, the Central Industrial Relations Machinery (CRIM) has been entrusted with the responsibility of enforcing the provisions of the Act and rules made thereunder. In a landmark judgement relating to contract labour, a five judge Constitution Bench of Supreme Court in the case of Steel Authority of India Ltd. Vs. National Union of Waterfront Workers & Others have held that the provisions of the Act do not, expressly or by necessary implication, provide for automatic absorption of contract labour. Consequently, the Principal Employer cannot be required to order absorption of the contract labour working in the concerned establishment.

CHILD LABOUR

ELIMINATION OF CHILD LABOUR

Elimination of child labour is an area of great concern and of commitment for the Government of India. Articles 24 and 39 of the constitution provides for protection of the children from involvement in economic activities and from avocations unsuited to their age. After the recent Constitutional Amendment, Right to Education for children up to 14 years is now a Fundamental Right (Article 21 A). Considering the magnitude and the nature of the problem, a gradual and sequential approach has been adopted to withdraw and rehabilitate children beginning with those working in hazardous occupations and processes.

Consistent with the constitutional provisions, the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 was enacted replacing the Employment of Children Act, 1938. The Act seeks to prohibit employment of children below 14 years in hazardous

occupations and processes and also regulates the working conditions of children in other employments. In the last 5 years, the number of hazardous 'occupations' listed in the Schedule of the Act has increased from 7 to 13 and 'processes' from 18 to 57 on the recommendations of the Technical Advisory Committee.

A National Policy on Child Labour was announced in August, 1987. The Action Plan under this policy is multi pronged. It mainly consists of: legal action, focuses on general development programmes for the benefit of the families of children; and project based action in areas of high concentration of child labour.

The National Child Labour Project Scheme (NCLP) is a Central sector scheme. Under the scheme, project societies are set up at the district level under the chairpersonship of the Collector/District Magistrate for overseeing the implementation of the project. Funds are directly allocated to the project societies formed in the districts and therefore, setting up of project societies is a pre-requisite for operationalisation of the scheme. Stipend @ Rs.100 per month per child and mid-day meals @ Rs.5 per child per day are also being provided. Besides, vocational training and health checks are essential components of the scheme. The NCLP Scheme has been revised in the 10th Plan. The revised scheme places emphasis on convergence with other related programmes of the Departments in the Government of India. In the 10th Plan, while special schools run by NCLP project society will mainstream working children in the age groups 9-14 years to the formal education system, working children in the age group 5-8 years will be mainstreamed directly through the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan of the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, Ministry of HRD. Efforts are being made to converge with the on-going schemes of other Departments/ Ministries such as Health, Rural Development and Social Welfare at the State, District, Mandal and micro level for the attainment of the objective. Besides this, the revised scheme has also strengthened other components such as health check ups, nutrition needs and vocational training. Approximately 3.38 lakh children have already been mainstreamed into the formal education system.

The Government of India and the US Department of Labour have also initiated a US\$ 40 million joint project aimed at eliminating child labour in 10 hazardous sectors across 21 districts in five States namely, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and NCT of Delhi. This project, popularly known as INDUS Project, is being implemented in coordination with ILO. An estimated 80,000 children will be withdrawn and rehabilitated through this project. Support activities will also be directed to 10,000 families of former child workers.

Under the Grants-in-aid Scheme, the Ministry of Labour also provides assistance to 88 Voluntary Organisations/NGOs directly to implement projects aimed at providing working children with education and vocational training opportunities in districts which are not covered under any of the aforementioned schemes.

Government has prohibited employment of children as domestic servants and in tea-shops and dhabas, etc. A Notification to this effect has been issued recently under the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 with effect from 10th of October, 2006. Going by this notice, employment of children as domestic workers or servants or in dhabas, restaurants, hotels, motels, tea-shops, resorts, spas or in other recreational centres is prohibited. The decision has been taken on the recommendation of the Technical Advisory Committee on Child Labour, which considered these occupations a hazardous for children and recommended their inclusion in the list of

occupations, which are prohibited for persons below 14 years under the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulations) Act, 1986.

WOMEN LABOUR

Women constitute a significant part of the work force of India but they lag behind men in terms of level and quality of employment. The Census of India (2001) has registered 25.60 per cent of female population as workers numbering 127.22 million in absolute terms out of a total female population of 496 million. The majority of women workers are employed in the rural areas. Amongst rural women workers, 87 per cent are employed in agriculture as labourers and cultivators. Amongst the women workers in the urban areas, 80 per cent are employed in unorganized sectors like household industries, petty trades and services building and construction, etc. The employment of women in the organized sector (both public and private sectors) as on 31.03.2002, was about 4.935 million. This constitutes of 17.8 per cent of the total organised sector employment in the country. The distribution of women employees in major industries reveals that community, social and personal services sectors continued to absorb the majority of women employees. The lowest employment of women was noticed in electricity, gas and water sectors. In factory and plantation establishments women workers constituted, 10%, and 5% respectively of the total workers in 2000. In mine establishment, women workers constitute 5% of the total work workers in 2000. The main focus of the policies of the Government with regard to women labour has been to remove the handicaps under which they work, to strengthen their bargaining capacity, to improve their wages and working conditions, to enhance their skills and to open up better employment opportunities for them.

A separate cell, namely, Women Labour Cell is functioning in the Ministry of Labour and Employment to address these problems. The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961, and the Equal Remuneration Act, 1976, are the two protective and anti-exploitative legislations, which have been enacted to protect and safeguard the interest of women workers at the workplaces. The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 stipulates payment of equal remuneration to men and women workers for same and similar nature of work. The Act also prohibits any gender discrimination in recruitment and service conditions. Under the Act, a Committee has been set up at the Centre, to advise the Government on providing increasing employment opportunities for women and generally reviewing the steps taken for effective implementation of the Act. The State Governments and Union Territory Administrations have also set up similar Committees. The Central Advisory Committee at the National level and the Advisory Committees at the State level along with competent authorities, oversee the process of implementation of the Equal Remuneration Act, 1976.

Further, the Women Cell in the Ministry is also administering a Grant-in-Aid Scheme for the welfare of women labour. This Scheme is implemented through voluntary organizations that are provided grants-in-aid for running projects for awareness generation among women workers with a view to educate them about their rights, women related schemes and programmes, etc. being implemented by Central/State Government. With a view to having a more focused approach on the subject in the 10th Plan, an enhanced outlay of Rs.225 lakh has been earmarked for the Scheme.

The Supreme Court of India in its landmark judgement dated 13.08.1997, in the matter of Visakha and others Versus the State of Rajasthan and others, laid down detailed guidelines/norms for prevention of sexual harassment of women workers

at work-places. These guidelines have the force of law under Article 141 of the Constitution.

The Government has taken up a number of initiatives to give effect to the guidelines laid down by the Supreme Court. These include circulation of the guidelines for action as indicated therein to all Secretaries to the Government of India/Chief Secretaries of the State Governments/Union Territories, Heads of Central Public Sector Undertakings and employees/employers organisations. Conduct Rules application to Government employees and officers of All India Services have been amended to incorporate the Supreme Court guidelines. To make the guidelines applicable to employees in the private sector, the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946 has also been amended suitably.

BONDED LABOUR

The system of debt bondage in India an outcome of certain categories of indebtedness, which have been prevailing for a long time involving certain economically exploited, helpless and weaker sections of society. The system originated from the uneven social structure characterized by feudal and semi-feudal conditions.

The issue of 'bonded labour' came to forefront in national politics, when it was included in the old 20-Point Programmed in 1975. To implement this, Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Ordinance was promulgated. This was later replaced by the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976. It freed unilaterally all the bonded labourers from bondage with simultaneous liquidation of their debts.

The district and sub-divisional magistrates have been entrusted with certain duties/responsibilities towards implementation of statutory provisions. The Act also provides for constitution of Vigilance Committees at the district and sub-divisional level for implementation of the provisions of the law. The Act provides for imprisonment up to three years and fine up to Rs.2,000 whoever compels any person to render any bonded labour and whoever advances any bonded debt. Under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976 identification and release of bonded labourers and rehabilitation of freed bonded labourers is the direct responsibility with the State Government concerned.

The issue of bonded labour has been discussed in the Supreme Court/High Court in the form of Public Interest Litigations. The Supreme Court has directed that the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) should be involved in dealing with the issue of bonded labour.

The Centrally Sponsored Scheme was modified in May 2000. In the modified scheme, besides increasing the rehabilitation assistance from 10,000/-to Rs.20,000/- per bonded labour, provision has also been made for giving Central grants to the States/U.Ts. for awareness generation, survey of bonded labour and evaluatory studies. As per the modified scheme, Rs.10.00 lakhs are provided per annum to State Government for creating awareness generation, Rs.2.00 lakh per district to survey of bonded labourers once in 3 years in a district and Rs.5.00 lakhs per annum for conducting evaluatory studies. So far 2,66,877 identified bonded labourers have been rehabilitated with the Central assistance of Rs.6881.26 lakhs.

UNORGANISED SECTOR

The term 'unorganised labour' has been defined as those workers who have not been able to organize themselves to pursue their common interests due to certain constraints

like casual nature of employment, ignorance and illiteracy, small and scattered size of establishments, etc.

As per the survey carried out by the National Sample Survey Organisation in the year 2004-2005, the total employment, in both organised and unorganised sectors in the country was of the order of 45.9 crore, i.e., around 2.6 crore in the organised sector and the balance 43.3 crore workers in the unorganised sector. Out of 43.3 crore workers in the unorganised sector, there are 26.8 crore workers employed in agricultural sector, about 2.6 crore in construction work and remaining in manufacturing and service.

In order to take care of the social security and welfare of unorganised workers, two-pronged strategy, i.e., legislative measures, and, implementation of welfare schemes and programmes have been followed so far. The legislative measures include the Minimum Wages Act, 1948, the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923, the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961, the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976, the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970, the Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979, the Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment & Conditions of Service) Act, 1996, etc.

The Government has set up Welfare Funds for providing welfare measures to the beedi, non-coal mine and cine workers. The Funds are used to provide financial assistance to these workers for education of their children, recreation, medical and health facilities, construction of houses, etc. The Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment & Conditions of Service) Act, 1996 also has provision for setting up of welfare Board/Fund by every State Government to provide welfare/social security measures to the construction workers. Some States, like Kerala, have constituted welfare funds for specific categories of workers in the unorganised sector.

The Government had constituted a National Commission on Enterprises in the Unorganised/Informal Sector under the chairmanship of Dr. Arjun Sengupta to look into the problems of the enterprises in the unorganised sector. The terms of reference, inter-alia, include review of social security systems available for the unorganised sector workers. The Commission has presented its report on Social Security of Unorganized Sector Workers to the Government in May, 2006 with a view to providing social Security to unorganized sector workers.

A proposal to enact a central legislation is under consideration of the Government. The bill is likely to be introduced in Parliament shortly. The bill seeks to provide for health insurance, life and accidental insurance, maternity benefit, old age pension and any other benefits that may be decided by the Central Government.

LABOUR STATISTICS

The Labour Bureau,, Chandigarh/Shimla is engaged in collection, compilation, analysis and dissemination of labour statistics at All -India level on different facets of labour, such as, employment, wages and earnings, strikes and lockouts, absenteeism, labour turnover, labour cost, working and living conditions of workers, etc., both in organized and unorganized sector of industries. It also constructs, maintains and publishes Consumer Price Index Numbers for: (i) Industrial Workers (Base 2001=100), (ii) Rural Labourers (Base 1986-87=100) and (iii) Agricultural Labourers (Base 1986-87=100). Labour Bureau also compiles Retail Price Indices of 31 essential commodities for both rural and urban centres and Wage Rate Indices for 21 industries. It imparts

training to price collectors, entrepreneurs or their representatives filing statutory returns under various Labour Act. IES/ISS probationers and international students under ISEC programme. The Labour Bureau, with the approval of the Government, has released on 09.03.2006 the new Series of CPI-IW with effect from January, 2006. The new Series is an improvement over the old Series (1982=100) as more centres, markets and consumption items are covered. An Index Review Committee under the Chairmanship of Prof. G.K. Chaddha has also been constituted to review the various aspects of the CPI-IW.

The serial statistics on labour, reports and reviews are loaded on the web-site of Labour Bureau, www.labourbureau.nic.in which is maintained and updated regularly by the Computer Unit of the Labour Bureau.

LABOUR RESEARCH

V.V. Giri National Labour Institute, NOIDA (Uttar Pradesh) is an autonomous body engaged in research pertaining to labour and training of labour administrators, trade unions, public sector managers and other government functionaries concerned with labour. Seminars, Workshops and Lectures are organized on specific issues from time to time.

Research occupies a primary place in the activities of the institute. It comprises a broad spectrum of labour related issues and problems, in both the organized and unorganised sectors. Issues of topical concern and relevance of policy are taken up for research. The Institute continues to place greater emphasis on the disadvantaged groups, such as, child labour, women labour and rural labour.

Research activities also explore the basic needs of different groups of trainees, such as, trade union leaders and organizers in both organized and unorganised sectors, managers of public and private sectors, labour administrators and volunteers of non-governmental organisations. There are seven Centres which carry out studies on the major themes related to research. Each Centre is guided by a Research Advisory Group, which consists of experts in the respective areas.

The Institute undertakes research projects in the areas of labour market, employment and regulations; agrarian relations and rural labour, integrated labour history, child labour and prevention of HIV/AIDS in the workplace. N.R. De Research Centre on Labour Information (NRDRCLI) at the institute is one of the most reputed library-cum-documentation centres in the area of labour studies in the country. Integrated Labour History Research Programme (ILHRP) has been started in the Institute with an aim to initiate, integrate and revive research on labour history.

The Union Minister of Labour and Employment is the President of the General Council comprising of representatives from Central Government, organization of employers and workers and Members of parliament and distinguished persons who have made noteworthy contributions in the field of labour. The Council elects the Executive Council, which is responsible for the management of the affairs of the Institute.

For the future, the V.V.Giri National Labour Institute (NLI) proposes to take up various initiatives for performance improvement in keeping with its immense potential. The Institute is geared to becoming responsive and alert in drawing upon contemporary knowledge and deploying the latest management tools. The target is towards wide dissemination of Research findings of the Institute. The purpose is to extend the reach of NLI's Research to international and national journals for

publication/articles, policy implementation at grass roots levels and to widen the outreach of NLI's training programmes and its digital archives.

WORKERS' EDUCATION

The Central Board for Workers Education (CBWE) was established in 1958 by the Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India to implement the workers' education scheme at national, regional and unit/village levels for the workers from organized, unorganized and rural sectors. Supervisory and managerial cadres are also covered through joint educational programmes. The Board's training programmes aim at creating awareness and education among the workforce for their effective participation in the socio-economic development of the country.

The Board has its headquarters at Nagpur, with a network of 50 Regional and 9 Sub-Regional Directorates spread throughout the country. The five Zonal Directorates at Delhi, Guwari, Kolkata, Chennai and Mumbai monitor the activities of the "Regional Directorates within their respective Zone. The Board had set up its Indian Institute of Workers Education, an apex training institute at Mumbai to conduct national level training programmes for the activists of Central Trade Union Organisations/Federations besides in-house training programmes for the Board's officials. The Board has so far conducted 3,64,409 training programmes and has trained 1,08,86,498 workers at various levels till 31st March, 2007.

To generate awareness among the informal sector workers about various welfare schemes of the Central Government, the Board designed a new programme called Labour Welfare & Development programme through which detailed information of the relevant schemes are given to the participants besides extending the necessary help as and when required by them.

WORKERS SAFETY

SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELFARE OF WORKERS IN FACTORIES

The Factories Act, 1948 is the principal legislation for regulating various aspects relating to safety, health and welfare of workers employed in factories. This Act is a Central enactment, which aims at protecting workers employed in factories from industrial and occupational hazards. State governments and Union Territory Administrations frame rules under the Act and enforce provisions of the Act and rules through their factory inspectorate. The Directorate General, Factory Advice Service and Labour Institute (DGFASLI), Mumbai, an attached office of the Ministry of Labour and Employment, renders technical advice to the States/Union Territories in regard to administration and enforcement of the Factories Act, 1948. With five regional labour institutes at Mumbai, Kolkata, Kanpur, Chennai and Faridabad under its control, the DGFASLI also undertakes support research facilities and carries out promotional activities through education and training in matters concerning occupational safety and health. The Directorate General also reviews the position regarding implementation and enforcement of the Act.

Prescribing a 48-hour week for adult workers, the Factories Act forbids employment of children under 14 years of age in any factory. Minimum Standards of lighting, ventilation, safety and welfare services, which employers must provide in their factories, have also been laid down. Factories employing over 30 women workers are required to provide a crèche for their children, Shelters, rest-rooms and lunch-rooms are required to be provided by factories employing over 250 workers. Factories with 250 workers or more have to appoint welfare officers. The Factories Act was

amended in 1987 in order to impose a general duty on employers to ensure health and safety of workers and on designers, manufacturers, importers and suppliers to ensure that articles designed, manufactured, etc., are without risk to the health and safety of workers. A new chapter for regulating safety and health aspect in hazardous industries was incorporated in the Act.

SAFETY IN PORTS AND DOCKS

Provisions relating to safety, health and welfare of workers employed in docks are contained in the Dock Workers (Safety, Health and Welfare) Act, 1986 and rules and regulations framed thereunder. The Act came into force on 15 April 1987. Enforcement of this Act in all the major ports is the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour and Employment and this responsibility is discharged through the DGFASLI, Mumbai. The DGFASLI, being the Chief Inspector of Docks is also entrusted with the responsibility of enforcing in major ports the Manufacture, Storage and Import of Hazardous Chemical Rules, 1989 framed under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

SAFETY IN MINES

Provisions for safety, health and welfare of workers employed in mines are contained in the Mines Act, 1952 and rules and regulations framed thereunder. These provisions are enforced by the Ministry of Labour and Employment through the Directorate General of Mines Safety. The Directorate General, with its headquarters at Dhanbad and its zonal, regional and sub-regional offices spread all over the mining areas in the country undertakes its functions, inspection of mines, investigation of all fatal accidents and also certain serious accidents depending upon the gravity of the situation, grant of statutory permission, exemptions and relaxations in respect of various mining operations, approval of mines safety equipment, appliances and material, conduct examinations for grant of statutory competency certificate, safety promotional incentives including organization of national awards and national safety conference, etc.

NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL

The National Safety Council was set up in 1966 to promote safety consciousness among workers to prevent accidents, minimize dangers and mitigate human suffering, arrange programmes, lectures and conferences on safety, conduct educational campaigns to arouse consciousness among employers and workers and collect educational and information data, etc. National Safety Day is celebrated on 4th March every year to mark the foundation day of the National Safety Council.

AWARDS :

PRIME MINISTER'S SHRAM AWARDS

Prime Minister's Shram Awards are given to workmen working in the departmental undertakings and the public sector undertakings of the Central Government and State Governments in recognition of their outstanding contribution in the field of productivity and for showing exemplary zeal and enthusiasm in the discharge of their duties. These awards are also given to the workmen working in the manufacturing units in the private sector employing 500 or more workers. The awards, in order of precedence, are: Shram Ratna, Shram Bhushan, Shram Vir/Shram Veerangana and Shram Shree/Shram Devi. The awards carry presentation of a Sanad and Cash Prize

of Rs. Two Lakhs, Rs. One Lakh, Rs. 60,000 and Rs. 40,000 respectively. The total number of awards is 33.

NATIONAL SAFETY AWARDS

To give recognition to good safety performance on the part of the industrial undertakings and to stimulate and maintain the interest of both management and workers in accident prevention programmes, the Government instituted in 1965 the National Safety Awards. The scheme is applicable to factories, docks and Nuclear Power Projects & Nuclear Power Stations.

The National Safety Awards for mines were instituted in 1983. The scheme is meant for giving recognition to outstanding safety performances of mines of national level, which comes within the purview of the Mines Act, 1952. There are 34 awards, 17 winners and 17 runners-up, which are given to the management.

VISHWAKARMA RASHTRIYA PURASKAR

Shram Vir Awards, now known as Vishwakarma Rashtriya Puraskar were instituted in 1965. These are meant for workers of factories, mines, plantations and docks, and are given to them in recognition of their meritorious performance, which leads to high productivity or economy or higher efficiency. There are a total of twenty-eight awards in three classes, i.e. Class-A – 5 awards, Class-B – 8 awards and Class-C – 15 awards.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

THE INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES ACT, 1947

The Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 basically provides for investigation and settlement of industrial disputes. The main objectives of the Act are: promotion of measures for securing and preserving amity and good relations between the employer and workmen; investigation and settlement of industrial disputes, between employers and employers, employers and workmen or workmen and workmen, with a right of representation by registered trade union or a federation or trade unions or an association of employers or a federation of associations of employers; prevention of illegal strikes and lock-outs; relief to workmen in the matter of lay-off and retrenchment; and collective bargaining.

The special provisions relating to lay off, retrenchment and closure are applicable to the establishments employing not less than 100 workmen on an average per working day. The Act also provides for protection in the shape of retrenchment compensation and notice to the workmen who have completed 240 days continuous service in the establishment in the preceding 12 months before effecting retrenchment, closure etc.

THE TRADE UNION ACT, 1926

The Trade Unions Act, 1926 provides for registration of trade unions of employers and workers, and, in certain respects, it defines the law relating to registered trade unions. It confers legal and corporate status on registered trade unions. The Trade Unions Act, 1926 is administered by the concerned State Governments.

The Trade Union Act, 1926 has been amended and the following amendments have been enforced from 9th January, 2002: No trade union of workmen shall be registered unless at least 10% or 100, whichever is less, of workmen engaged or employed in the establishment or industry with which it is connected are the members

of such trade union on the date of making or application for registration. In no case, a union shall be registered without a minimum strength of 7 members; a registered trade union of workmen shall, at all times, continue to have not less than 10% or 100 of the workmen, whichever is less, subject to a minimum of 7 persons engaged or employed in the establishment or industry with which it is connected, as its members; a provision for filing an appeal before the Industrial Tribunal/Labour Court in case of non-registration/restoration of registration has been provided; all office bearers of a registered trade union, except not more than one third of the total number of office bearers or five, whichever is less, shall be persons actually engaged or employed in the establishment or industry with which the trade union is connected; Minimum rate of subscription by members of the trade union has been revised as one rupee per annum for rural workers, three rupees per annum for workers in other unorganized sectors and 12 rupees per annum in all other cases.

INDUSTRIAL TRIPARTITE COMMITTEES

The Industrial Tripartite Committees have been constituted with the view to promote the spirit of tripartism. These tripartite bodies aim at deliberating on the industry-specific problems related to workers in that particular industry. These Committees are non-statutory and ad-hoc and their meetings are convened as and when required. At present, there are eight Industrial Tripartite Committees, one each for Engineering, Electricity Generation & Distribution, Road Transport, Chemical, Sugar Industry Cotton Textiles, Jute Industry and Plantation

SOCIAL SECURITY

THE WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT, 1923

A beginning was made in Social Security with the passing of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923. The Act provides for payment of compensation to workmen and their dependents in case of injury and accident (including certain occupational diseases) arising out of and in the course of employment and resulting in disablement or death. The Act applies to railway servants and persons employed in any such capacity as is specified in Schedule II of the Act. It includes persons employed in factories, mines, plantation, mechanically propelled vehicles, construction works and certain other hazardous occupations. Minimum rates of compensation for permanent total disablement and death are fixed at Rs.90,000 and Rs.80,000 respectively. Maximum amount for death and permanent total disablement can go up to Rs.4.56 lakh and Rs.5.48 lakh respectively depending on age and wages of workmen.

THE MATERNITY BENEFIT ACT, 1961

The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 regulates employment of women in certain establishments for a certain period before and after childbirth and periods for maternity and other benefits. The Act applies to mines, factories, circus industry, plantation, shops and establishments employing ten or more persons, except employees covered under the Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948. The State Governments can extend it to any other establishment or class of establishments. There is no wage limit for coverage under the Act.

THE EMPLOYEES' STATE INSURANCE ACT, 1948

The Employees State Insurance Act, 1948 is applicable in the first instance, to non-seasonal factories using power and employing 10 or more persons and non-power

using factories employing 20 or more persons. It covers employees drawing wages not exceeding Rs.10,000/- with effect from 18.10.2006 to 01.04.2004. The Act provides medical care in kind and cash benefits in the contingency of sickness, maternity and employment injury and pension for dependents in the event of death of a worker because of employment injury. Full medical care including hospitalization is also being progressively made available to members of the family of the insured persons. With effect from 01.04.2005, the Employees State Insurance Corporation has introduced "Rajiv Gandhi Shramik Kalyan Yojana" for the workers covered under the Scheme, who lose their job involuntarily due to retrenchment, closure of factories/ establishments and permanent disability not arising out of employment injury. The beneficiaries under this Scheme are entitled to get a monthly cash allowance of about 50-53 percent of the wage as well as medical care for themselves and their dependant family members, for a maximum of six months which may be available in a single spell or in spells of not less than one month each.

The main benefits provided under the Act are medical care for the entire family of the Insured Person (IP), cash compensation for loss of wages on account of sickness, temporary and permanent disablement arising out of employment injury, periodical payments to dependants of Insured Person who dies due to employment injury, maternity benefit in cash to Insured Women and funeral expenses.

As on March, 2006 there were 144 ESI Hospitals, 42 Annexes, 28,308 beds including 4396 beds reserved in hospitals other than ESI hospitals/annexes, 1427 ESI dispensaries, 2135 clinics of Insured Medical Practitioners (IMPs) under the scheme. The total number of Insured Persons is 91.49 lakh which also includes 16,22,300 Insured Women. The total number of beneficiaries under the scheme is 354.96 lakh. The scheme is financed mainly through contributions from employers (4.75 percent of the wages) and employees (1.75 percent of the wages).

THE PAYMENT OF GRATUITY ACT, 1972

The Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972 is applicable to factories, mines, oil fields, plantations, ports, railways, motor transport undertakings, companies, shops and other establishments. The Act provides for payment of gratuity at the rate 15 days' wages for each completed year of service or part thereof in excess of six months subject to the maximum of Rs.3.50 lakh. In case of seasonal establishments, gratuity is payable at the rate of seven days' wages for each season. The Act does not affect the right of an employee to receive better terms of gratuity under any award or agreement or contract with the employer.

THE EMPLOYEES PROVIDENT FUNDS AND MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS ACT, 1952

The Act seeks to provide the financial social security to the employees in the form of provident fund, pension and deposit-linked insurance. It extends to the whole of India except the State of Jammu and Kashmir. It applies to every establishment specified in the Schedule and in which twenty or more persons are employed. The Central Government by notification in the Office Gazette may specify, any other establishment employing twenty or more persons or class of such establishments, to which the Act shall apply. At present the Act covers 182 specified industries/classes of establishments. Three schemes are framed under the Act viz, Employees Provident Fund Scheme 1952, Employees' pension Scheme 1995, Employees' deposit Linked Insurance Scheme 1976. The Central Board of Trustees (CBT) through Employees

Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) administers the schemes. The CBT(EPF) is a tripartite body headed by the Hon'ble Union Minister of Labour and Employment. Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has approximately 43 million subscriber enrolled in the three schemes. Employees Provident Fund Organisation provides various services ranging from collection of members' contribution from establishments to maintenance of members' accounts to actual disbursement of money under various defined benefit plans to members and their nominees.

EMPLOYEES PROVIDENT FUND SCHEME, 1952

The Employees Provident Fund Scheme, 1952 provides financial security to the employees in an establishment by providing a system of compulsory savings. The scheme covers the employees getting wages not exceeding Rs. 6500 per month. From 01.11.1990 onwards the employee becomes the member of the fund from the date of joining the factory/establishment. As on 31st march 2006, total number of establishment and factories covered were 444464 in which total membership was 429.53 lakh. During the year 2005-2006, 35633 new establishments and factories enrolling 18.43 lakh new members were brought under the purview of the Act. A Death Relief Fund (DRF) has been set up under the Employees' Provident Fund Scheme. As a measure of immediate relief, upto Rs. 2000 is admissible to the nominees/heirs of such of the deceased member whose pay, at the time of death, does not exceed Rs. 1500/- per month, in case the death has occurred on or after 01.04.1988.

THE EMPLOYEES' PENSION SCHEME, 1995

The Employees' pension Scheme, 1995 came into effect from 16th November 1995 and aims at providing for economic sustenance during old age and survivorship coverage. The new entrants to the membership of Provident fund from 16.11.95 will also acquire membership of the Scheme on compulsory basis. On the introduction of EPS 95 the erstwhile Employees' Family Pension Scheme, 1971 ceased to operate and its existing members compulsorily became the members of the new Scheme. A minimum of 10 years service is required for entitlement to pension. The total membership of EPS 95 as on 31st march 2006 is 324 lakh out of which net addition during 2005-2006 is 12.4 lakh. The quantum of pension payable to a member shall correspond to the sum of pensionable service (i.e. service after 16.11.95) benefit and past service (i.e. service before 16.11.95) benefit.

Total number of beneficiaries as on 31.03.2006 is 23.36 lakh. The Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995 provides the following benefits to members and their families.

- Monthly member Pension
- Permanent total disablement Pension
- Return of Capital
- Commutation up to 1/3rd of pension amount
- Widow/widower Pensioner
- Children Pension
- Orphan Pension
- Disabled Children
- Nominee Pension
- Pension to dependent Father/Mother

The Scheme is financed by diversion of 8.33% of wages from employer's share

of Provident fund contribution and Central Government Contributes at the rate of 1.16% of the wage of the employee. The upper wage limit was raised from Rs. 5000 to Rs. 6500 with effect from 1st June 2001. As on 31.03.2006 the corpus stands at Rs. 70749.13 crore.

THE EMPLOYEES' DEPOSIT LINKED INSURANCE SCHEME, 1976

Another important social security measure, Employees' deposit Linked Insurance Scheme, 1976, was introduced for members of the Employees' Provident Fund and exempted Provident Funds with effect from 1st August, 1976. On the death of an employee, while in service, who is a member of the Employees' Provident Fund or of the exempted Provident Fund, the persons entitled to receive the provident fund accumulations would be paid an additional amount equal to the average balance in the provident fund account of the deceased during the preceding 12 months. The maximum amount of benefit payable under the Scheme is Rs. 60000 and the employees do not have to make any contribution to it.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

To help the youth build their career, the Directorate General of Employment and Training (DGE&T) has evolved various training programmes. These are formulated within the national framework as far as possible and also in collaboration with foreign countries and financial assistance from GOI and World Bank etc..

Craftsmen Training: Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) were set up all over the country to impart skills both in engineering and non-engineering trades to young men and women in the age group of 14-40 years. By 31.03.2007, 5419 such institutes with a total capacity of about 7.90 lakh were providing training to school leavers in the country. At present, 110 trades are covered under the scheme. The duration of the course varies from 6 months to 3 years for engineering and non-Engineering trades. Educational qualifications for admission vary from eighth standard to 12th standard depending upon the trades. Some State Governments and Union Territories have introduced training in certain trades to meet the requirements of local industries under the jurisdiction of state councils for vocational training.

Apprenticeship Training Scheme: The Apprentices Act, 1961 makes it obligatory for employers in specified industries to engage apprentices for undergoing Apprenticeship Training, which varies from six months to four years. The training consists of basic training followed by on-the-job or shop floor training in accordance with standards prescribed by the Government in consultation with the Central Apprenticeship Council. Presently 154 trades are designated for trade apprentices and 2.5 lakhs seats located in establishments in Central and State Public Sector & Private Sector. The Act was amended in 1973 to include training of Graduate and Diploma Engineers as "Graduate" & "Technician" Apprentices. The Act was again amended in 1986 to bring within its purview the training of 10+2 vocational stream as "Technician (Vocational)" Apprentices 104 subject fields have been designated for the category of Graduate & Technician apprentices and 95 for the category of Technician (Vocational) apprentices. 82,154 seats are located for these categories.

Women's Vocational Training Programme: Vocational Training facilities for women in the country are organized through a network of 356 Women Industrial Training Institutes and 527 Women wings in general ITIs/private WITIs with a seating capacity of about 48,014 under the control of State Governments.

National Council for Vocational Training has recommended that in general ITIs upto 25 per cent of the sanctioned seats may be reserved for women candidates. These seats could be filled up based on general reservation policy of each of the State/UT. Under the Vocational Training programme, managed directly by the Central Government and a National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) for Women, NOIDA as an apex centre and Ten Regional Vocational Training Institutes (RVTIs) for Women at Mumbai, Bangalore, Thiruvananthapuram, Hisar, Kolkata, Tura, Allahabad, Indore, Vadodara and Jaipur have been set up with an intake capacity of 3344 in basic, advanced and instructional skills. Besides this, short-term courses are also organized as per availability of infrastructure facilities. Till March, 2006 about 49,275 women have been trained in these institutes since inception.

Craft Instructors Training: Advanced Training Institutes (ATIs) at Howrah, Mumbai, Kanpur, Ludhiana and Hyderabad and Hyderabad and Central Training Institute for Instructors at Chennai were established in 1960s to train instructor trainees in the techniques of imparting industrial skills, who in turn train and make available skilled manpower for industry. These institutes with a seating capacity of 1099 offer a series of one-year courses, which provide comprehensive training, both in skill development and principles of teaching. Refresher courses are also conducted to update and upgrade the knowledge and skill of the instructors and keep them abreast of technological developments in industry. Facilities for training of instructors in some selected special trades continue to be available in farm mechanic trades at ATI, Ludhiana and Mechanic Machine Tool Maintenance trade at ATI Kanpur, Howrah and Ludhiana where seats for scheduled caste and scheduled tribe candidates are reserved as per the Central government norms. A course on Principles of Teaching of three months duration has been introduced in 11 institutes to train large number of untrained instructors.

Advanced Vocational Training Scheme: Advanced Vocational training Scheme was launched in October 1977 for training of highly skilled workers and technicians in a variety of advanced and sophisticated skills not available for other vocational training programmes. Regular full time courses of two to 12 weeks duration are offered under the scheme in a variety of advanced skill areas. The scheme was introduced in six advanced training institutes located at Mumbai, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Kanpur, Ludhiana, Chennai and 16 selected industrial Training institutes under 15 state governments. These institutes were modernized to conduct various advanced courses under the scheme as per requirement of the local industry.

National Instructional Media Institute (NIMI): National Instructional Media Institute (NIMI), Chennai has been set up to make available well prepared Instructional material for the use of the trainees and trainers in (i) Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and (ii) Industries and establishments implementing the Apprenticeship Training programme. The institute develops Instructional Media Packages (IMPs) comprising Written Instructional Material, Transparencies & Charts for different trades. So far, 138 Titles for 20 trades have been developed in English; out of which 48 Titles for 11 trades have been translated in Hindi. IMPs of 8 trades have been translated in Tamil of which 34 books have been published.

Foremen Training/Supervisory Training: Training programmes for supervisors/ foremen for industry are organized at two Foremen Training Institutes located at Bangalore and Jamshedpur.

Central Staff Training And Research Institute: The Government in collaboration with the Government of Republic of Germany has set up the Central staff Training and Research Institute, Kolkata in 1968. The Institute has three wings - Training, Research and Development. The training wing provides training to the executives and administrators of vocational and industrial training in the country. The Research wing conducts problem-oriented studies on different aspects of vocational training and the Development wing is to develop and disseminate instructional material and, aid/model for effective execution of industrial.

INITIATIVES UNDERTAKEN IN THE RECENT PAST

Upgradation Of 500 Existing ITIs Into Centers Of Excellence: Union Finance Minister in his Budget Speech 2004-05 and reiterated again in the Budget Speech 2006-07, had announced measures for upgradation of 500 ITIs in the country. The objective of the scheme is to upgrade the existing 500 ITIs into "Centers of Excellence (CoE)" for producing multi skilled workforce of world standard. The highlights of the scheme are introduction of multiskilling courses during the first year, followed by advanced/specialized modular courses subsequently by adopting industry wise cluster approach, multi entry and multi exit provisions, and Public-Private-Partnership in the form of Institute Management Committee (IMC) to ensure greater & active involvement of industry in all aspects of training. Curricula of 96 modules of Broad Based Training courses covering 20 sectors and 57 advanced modules covering 13 sectors have been developed and finalized.

The first 100 CoEs are being funded through domestic recourses and 400 ITIs through World Bank assistance. On 5th June 2007, World Bank has communicated the approval of a credit in the amount of 280 million \$US. Approval of CCEA is being sought for. So far, 200 new ITIs have been upgraded into "Centers of Excellence (CoE)" to make world class technicians, 300 more to be developed in next 3 years. The remaining 1396 Govt. ITIs to be upgraded as CoE under Public Private Partnership (PPP) Mode upto year 2012.

Testing And Certification Of Skill Acquired Through Non-Formal Means: A new scheme of 'Testing and Certification of Skills' acquired through informal means has been taken up on a pilot basis. To start with, the Construction Industry Development Council (CIDC), which has been engaged as one of the agencies for this programme, has tested and certified around 8400 construction workers so far. Another Construction Agency, namely, National academy of Construction, Hyderabad has recently been identified as the other agency of testing and certification of skills of workers in Construction sector. Competency Standards have been developed for 46 skill areas. The competency standards for several other skill areas are also being developed. The Scheme is already being implemented in the States of Punjab, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Jammu and Kashmir.

"Establishment of Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) in North-Eastern States and Sikkim and the State of Jammu & Kashmir"

A hundred percent centrally sponsored scheme for upgrading the 37 existing ITIs in the State of Jammu and Kashmir and for setting up of new Women ITI at Jammu has been taken up during the financial year 2005-06. After the scheme is fully implemented, it would result in an increase of 1836 training seats in the State. A hundred percent centrally sponsored scheme for the North Eastern states including Sikkim, with a total outlay of Rs.100 crores, for establishing 22 new ITIs and upgrading 35 existing ITIs is under implementation. Civil work for 16 ITIs out of 22; and

Upgradation of 30 ITIs out of 35 existing ITIs has already been completed. This will result in doubling the seating capacity in ITIs from 7244 to 16,144.

Skill Development Initiative: A new scheme – “Skill Development Initiative” for imparting vocational training / testing of competencies to one million persons over a period of five years by imparting short-term training courses with an outlay of Rs.550 crore has been taken up.

Employment: Employment in the organized sector, i.e., in all public sector and non-agricultural establishments employing 10 or more persons in private sector marginally increased from 264.43 lakh in March 2004 to 264.58 lakh in March 2005 recording an increase of 0.1 per cent. The increase in private sector employment during 2004-05 was 2.5 per cent.

National Employment Service: The national Employment Service (NES) has a network of 947 employment exchanges/Universities Employment Information and Guidance Bureau (UEIGBx) as on August 2006. The exchanges assist all employment seekers including special groups like handicapped, ex-servicemen, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, women, etc. through placement against jobs notified by employers. NES also carries out other functions such as vocational guidance and employment counseling, coordination and dissemination of employment market information and conducts studies in the field of employment and occupational research with a view to generate data for framing employment and manpower policies.

Under the Employment Exchanges (Compulsory Notification of Vacancies), Act, 1959, it is obligatory for all establishments in public sector and such of those non-agricultural establishments in private sector which employ 25 or more workers to notify their vacancies (with certain exemptions) to Employment Exchanges and supply periodic information as prescribed in the Act, the rules there under. Development of these programmes at the national level, particularly in the area of evolving common policies, laying down common standards and procedures, training of officers and evaluation of the programmes is the responsibility of the Central Government. The day-to-day administration of the employment exchanges on the other hand, rests with the State Governments/UT Administrations. There are 43 special exchanges for physically handicapped. Twenty vocational rehabilitation centers provide a comprehensive package of rehabilitation services to the physically challenged.

Vocational guidance: Vocational guidance and employment counseling services are provided to youth (applicants without any experience) and adults (with specific work experience). Such units were functioning in 386 Employment Exchanges as on Sep. 2006. In addition, Employment Information and Guidance Bureaus are functioning in 82 Universities. These units assist applicants and youth in planning their career. A special scheme operates in 22 selected districts on a pilot basis to motivate and guide job seekers to take up self-employment.

SC/ST Job Seekers; Coaching-un-Guidance Centers for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes provide registration guidance, pre-submission guidance, confidence building training, pre-recruitment training and special coaching in typing and shorthand to job-seekers.