

NATIONAL COMMISSION ON LABOUR

NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTRE OF LABOUR
INFORMATION & DOCUMENTATION
V.V. GIRI N.L.L.
NOIDA

ACC. No. L-19
DATE 21-1-99

PAPERS FOR THE CONFERENCE
ON
AGRICULTURAL LABOUR

DECEMBER 1968

NATIONAL COMMISSION ON LABOUR

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INTRODUCTION

One of the terms of reference of the National Commission on Labour requires it to "study and report in particular on the measures for improving conditions of rural labour and other categories of the unorganised labour"; another calls for formulation of recommendations about amelioration of their conditions. In pursuance of this Section IX of the Questionnaire circulated by the Commission relating to rural and unorganised labour sets out the issues to which the Commission sought a reply. The problem of rural labour as visualised by the Commission in the early stage of its exercise was categorised into social and economic; the first resulting from the low social status of labour in rural hierarchy; and the second from chronic lack of sufficient employment opportunities. Unemployment was sought to be tackled by a combination of technical and institutional measures to promote fuller and fruitful utilisation of local manpower in rural areas, apart from implementation of local projects designed to promote increase in agricultural production and development of animal husbandry, forestry and fishing. It was considered worthwhile to develop viable small-scale industries, such as, local processing of agricultural products and manufacture of simple consumers' and producers' goods by rural people. Difficulties in implementation of Minimum Wages Act, 1948 in rural areas were recognised, and creation of a separate agency for effective implementation of the Act for agricultural labour was envisaged.

1.2 The Commission received memoranda and examined persons/institutions on the basis of the questionnaire issued in the course of its collection of evidence at the State/Central Government Headquarters and elsewhere. The replies to the questionnaire though not quite adequate yielded interesting findings (summarised in paper II).

1.3 The questionnaire was followed up with diagnostic studies which covered 197 villages spread over 46 districts in 15 States. Though the survey was largely impressionistic, it brought out directions of changes in the countryside. (See paper III).

1.4 Another line of enquiry was through observation visits paid by officers of the Commission to both IADP and non-IADP districts of evaluate the impact of changes on agricultural labour. These visits covered selected areas in a number of states.

1.5 The Commission also made use of the census data and the data which emerged out of the 18th round of the N.S.S. rural Labour Enquiries (RLE). It is trying to get hold of the findings of intensive-type studies concerning agriculture labour and the results of the 19th N.S.S. round (RLE) about to be processed by the Labour Bureau at Simla.

1.6 As a result of these enquiries, the canvas of exercise undertaken by the Commission has been extended beyond the questionnaire initially envisaged.

1.7 This paper aims at presenting a synoptic view of the changes in conditions of agricultural labour over last 20 years in terms of categories and definitions, population and composition; policy and administration; organisation and leadership; and unemployment and wages. An attempt has also been made to evaluate the impact of the changes in rural society generated by land reforms, rural reconstruction

programmes, agricultural development, famine and scarcities on agricultural labour.

2. Agriculture worker in national economy:

2.1 In the stratified rural pyramid agricultural labour occupies the lowest position. Unlike Western countries where latifundia and capitalist estates preponderate in rural economy, poor peasant and landless labour dominate the agrarian system in India. Rural stratification is linked with land and caste which govern standard of living, social prestige, political influence and economic power in the countryside. Agriculture unlike trade has cut across castes and has been the traditional occupation of many castes. At the apex of the pyramid, owner cultivator and high caste tenants who belong either to 'so-called' high castes or to new emerging peasant castes, such as Kurmis, Gujar, Jats, Ahirs, etc. The agricultural labour comes from the 'so-called low castes' which adopt agriculture as a subsidiary occupation; poor sections among the tribes also swell their ranks.

2.2 Agricultural worker occupies a pivotal position in the country's socio-economic structure. Labour force in agricultural sector constitutes 13.43 crores out of the total labour force of 16.23 crores (1961 census). For every 100 industrial or factory workers, there are 766 agricultural workers in the country.

2.3 75 per cent of rural households depend on agriculture, 50 per cent of these on self-employment in agriculture and 27.3 per cent on agricultural wage earnings. A characteristic of under-developed economy is a large proportion of population depend on agriculture. In a developed economy a relatively small proportion of workers and resources is employed in the primary sector. In the United States the national income derived from the primary sector is only 18% accounting for 12.5 per cent of the working force; in the United Kingdom the corresponding percentages are 6 and 5.3; in India about 48% of the national income comes from the agricultural sector which accounts for about 70% of the working population:

T A B L E - A

National Income by Source

Source	(Percent)	
	1950-51	1960-61
Agriculture	51.3	48.7
Small-scale Industry	9.6	7.9
Large-scale Industry	6.5	10.5
Other Sources	32.6	32.9
	TOTAL : 100.0	100.0

Source: Agriculture and India's Economic Development -
By Dr. N.P. Patil.

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Occupational Distribution of Workers

(Percent)

Workers engaged in	1951	1961
Cultivation	50.0	52.8
Agricultural labour	19.7	16.7
Mining, manufacturing and household industry	12.0	13.4
Other workers	18.3	17.1
Total :	100.0	100.0

Source: Agriculture and India's Economic Development -
By Dr. N.P. Patil.

2.4 The population is increasing at an annual rate of over 2 per cent compound. Potentialities for extension of agriculture to new areas are not commensurate with this increase nor can non-agricultural employment opportunities grow fast enough. The resources available for a broad-based programme for promoting productive employment in rural areas are limited.

2.5 Agriculture is also at a low level of productivity, though a breakthrough is in the offing. Agriculture holds the key; 'Development of agriculture, based on utilisation of the manpower resources of the countryside the maximum use of the local resources holds the key to the rapid development of the country'. It is the most important single factor in the country's economic situation and that it would have to be 'our main concern for many years to come'.

2.6 The future of agricultural labour is intimately bound up with all-round improvement of agriculture which has both long-term and short-term perspective. The immediate objective is to create conditions for growth of a progressive cooperative rural economy with diversified occupational structure in which the weaker sections of the community, particularly the agricultural labour class, are raised to the level of the rest of the community. The rest of the rural community will grow in the meanwhile but the distance between the two should go on diminishing.

3. Definitions and categories:

3.1 Agriculture, according to the International Standard Industrial Classification, includes not only cultivation of land but also rearing and maintenance of livestock, forest operation, fishing and hunting. The term 'agricultural worker' refers only to workers engaged on cultivation of land (cultivators and agricultural labour). Cultivation involves ploughing, sowing, harvesting and other activities on land; it does not include fruit

Contd....4/-

growing or keeping an orchard or groves or working for plantations, such as tea, coffee, rubber, cinchona and other medicinal plantations.

3.2 There are four categories of agricultural labour; the first two are cultivating owners and tenant cultivators who invest their own capital in the form of land, tools and cattle and who own their land. They employ their own family and hire labour and sub-let their holdings. The distinction between these two categories was subtle and relevant only to the pre-land reform era. While cultivating owners were owner cultivators, tenant cultivators, cultivated rented holdings of land belonging to hereditary landlords and were categorised into occupancy ryots. The last two categories were formed by agricultural labour and field labour - they owned neither land nor capital. While agricultural labour performed skilled work involving such operations as ploughing, sowing and irrigation, field workers were mobile but had no special skill. The former cultivated non-cultivating owners' lands.

3.3 Under the census classification workers in the agricultural sector are distributed into three categories - 'cultivators', the 'agricultural labour' and 'other agricultural workers' (those working in forestry, fishing, etc.).

4. Trends in population growth of agricultural workers:

4.1 Rural workers constitute 36.96 per cent of the rural population. Of these, agricultural workers constitute a preponderant portion (30.61%). The total number of workers in agriculture so defined is 1.375 lakhs (1961 census). A vast majority of these workers, about 1311 lakhs, work on land; the balance of 64 lakhs workers are engaged in fishing, hunting, forestry and livestock. Among agricultural workers, cultivators form the major category (22.30%), followed by agricultural labour (6.97%) and other agricultural workers (1.33%). A chart showing distribution of population of workers is enclosed (Appendix Chart 'A'). A study of the growth of population of all workers and agricultural workers during the period 1901 to 1961 (Tables 1 and 2) shows that the proportion of agricultural workers to total workers except for 1901 fluctuated around 70 per cent of the total population. In the decade 1951-61 particularly proportion of agricultural workers to total workers remained almost stationary at about 70 per cent, though in absolute terms there was an increase from 972 lakhs to 1310 lakhs. A significant feature of growth of working population during this decade was that more than two-thirds of the increase in the working force was absorbed in the agricultural sector.

4.2 Among agricultural workers, the more numerous category of cultivators increased from 697 lakhs in 1951 to 995 lakhs in 1961, an increase of 43.0 per cent; the percentage to total workers went up from 50.0 per cent to 52.8 per cent. There was also a significant increase among women cultivators; their proportion to total women workers increased from 45.4 per cent to 55.7 per cent, as compared to a slight decrease among males (from 51.9 to 51.5). Agricultural labour, i.e. those who sustain themselves mainly from wage-paid employment in agriculture, increased from 275 lakhs in 1951 to 315 lakhs in 1961, an increase of 14.5 per cent as against 43.0 per cent of cultivators.

The percentage of agricultural labour to total workers declined from 19.7 per cent to 16.7 per cent. The proportion of male agricultural labour to total male workers declined slightly, from 14.9 per cent to 13.4 per cent; the corresponding proportion among women agricultural labour fell significantly from 31.4 per cent to 23.9 per cent. the number of agricultural labour per 100 cultivators declined from 39 to 32 (vide Table 6).

4.3 Agricultural labour was slightly under-enumerated in the census of 1951. The method followed for identifying the worker at the 1961 census was more refined than that followed in the 1951 census. There is evidence to believe that in some States, in the 1951 census, there was under-enumeration of cultivators due to the failure to record unpaid family workers as economically active persons. This under-enumeration of unpaid family workers specially the women workers, may, to some extent, have accounted for significant increase among cultivators. But decline in the proportion of agricultural labour of both sexes and ordering of the questions in the 1961 census with an implied priority for cultivators among workers indicate that there might have been some shifts in enumeration of workers in different categories at the last census. In other words, some workers who strictly belong to the category of 'agricultural Labour' especially among women might have been enumerated or got themselves enumerated as 'cultivators' in the 1961 census. This could only partly explain the reduction in the proportion of agricultural labour, especially women among them during the decade 1951-61.

4.4 There are two important factors which probably contributed to the slight change in rural structure in favour of cultivators as against agriculture labour during the decade 1951-61. The first was obviously the growing pressure on land which led to (a) sub-division of existing holdings through partition by law of inheritance, and (b) replacement of hired labour by family labour on reduced holdings as a result of the fragmentation of landed property. The second and more important factor was passage of land reforms legislation which made an impact on agricultural workers during this decade. In non-ryotwari areas land reforms abolished the estates of ex-intermediaries and their rights became vested in the state. Occupancy rights were conferred on a very large number of small cultivators who were in de-facto if not de-jure possession of land under zamindars. This class of cultivators now become full-fledged tenants and figured in the revenue records of rights. Secondly, this class was further swelled by entry of large number of the persons who benefited from the distribution or settlement of fallow or surplus lands yielded by clearance of forests and vesting of estates. Settlement and distribution of lands were of the order of about 10 million acres of cultivable waste land by end of the Third Plan. This led to increase in number of cultivators and upgrading of agricultural labour in some areas to the category of cultivators. The process was particularly noticeable in Madhya Pradesh where the number of cultivators rose during the decade and that of agricultural labour fell markedly. The cultivator category preponderated over landless labour in U.P., Rajasthan, Punjab and also the two States of Orissa and Assam with their small population and large areas and also with a sizeable proportion of tribals with their agrarian institutions almost intact.

4.5 Cultivators include such categories as owner-cultivators; tenant-cultivators, sharecroppers and lessees.

4.6 In both Ryotwari and non-Ryotwari areas, the 'Ceiling legislation was wrought to be evaded by transfer of lands on a large scale to a large number of persons with small holdings. In many States, tenancy law provided for resumption of land for personal cultivation after leaving a certain minimum area with tenants.

4.7 Changes in land holdings reduced demand for agricultural labour because new owners with their small holdings had neither the need nor the capacity to employ hired labour. Thus hired labour was replaced by family labour. Recent farm-management studies reveal higher contribution of family labour to total labour on small farms. This puts in perspective slight fall in proportion of agriculture labour during the decade 1951-61. Migration to urban areas where more work opportunities were available during this decade, depression in agricultural wages in rural areas were also contributory factors.

4.8 As a result of resumption of lands for direct cultivation by land-owners of late, there has been considerable disturbance in the category of cultivator class. There have been evictions of small cultivators particularly, share croppers in Bihar, U.P. and Bengal. This probably explains sharp fall in the category of cultivators and rise in the number of landless labour in U.P. during this decade (Table 6).

Distribution:

4.9 1961 census placed the percentage distribution of agricultural labour to total workers at 16.71. It varied from 3.65 in Assam, 4.11 in Rajasthan, and 7.66 in Punjab to 28.59 in Andhra Pradesh, 23.80 in Maharashtra and 22.97 in Bihar (Table 4.). So did distribution of agricultural workers consisting of two categories of cultivators and agriculture labour (Table 5). Kerala accounts for the lowest percentage of cultivators (1.45 in 1951 and 1.18 in 1961) and Uttar Pradesh claims the highest (25.71 in 1951 and 18.52 in 1961). Assam accounts for the lowest percentage of agricultural labour (0.46 in 1951 and 0.60 in 1961); Maharashtra, Gujarat for the highest (20.91 in 1951 and 18.31 in 1961). All States except Madhya Pradesh keep up their relative position in this respect.

Composition:

4.10 Agricultural labour is not homogeneous in its composition. It reveals regional variations dependent on demographic, ecological and other factors. It is not a pure type. It is mixed with such occupational categories as share-croppers, cultivators, construction workers and other unskilled rural labour. Socially, it cuts across all peasant groups in villages, but consists mainly of two dominant social groups, Scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Out of the population of 64.4 million scheduled castes as many as 57.6 million live and work in rural areas; similarly out of 29.8 million scheduled tribes, 29.1 million work and live in rural areas. A point of difference between scheduled castes and scheduled tribes agricultural workers deserves to be noted. Scheduled castes have been exposed more to the force of change and Hinduisation. Scheduled tribes have been able to preserve in some areas their cohesive and legally protected socio-agrarian institutions; quite a good many sections among them have settled down as agricultural communities. But in those areas which have been

exposed and opened up and where more advanced and Hinduised agricultural communities have moved in, there has been a disintegration of socio-economic institutions of both scheduled caste and scheduled tribe communities. A tragic symptom of it has been the institution of bonded labour consisting of members of both these social groups.

4.11. • The proportion of agricultural workers from scheduled caste (Table 8A) and scheduled tribes (Table 8B) varies from state to state. The largest percentage of labour from scheduled tribe is noticed in Orissa (38.21%), Gujarat (36.27%), Madhya Pradesh (29.45%) and Assam (18.77%). This is because of the large percentage of scheduled tribes in these states and also because of the poverty and backwardness of non-peasant communities among them. Scheduled castes workers preponderate in Punjab (71.92%), Uttar Pradesh (56.67%), Madras (47.15%), Rajasthan (45.07%) and West Bengal (56.80%). Both social groups are distributed over all states except Jammu and Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh from where no scheduled tribes have been reported.

5. Characteristics of Labour Households:

5.1 Two important studies about agricultural labour households based on all-India coverage of agricultural labour were the First (1950-51) and Second (1956-57) Agricultural Labour Enquiries. As a result of discussions held in the Ministry of Labour and Employment and at the Seminar held in the Institute of Economic growth and of recommendations of the Agricultural Labour Advisory Committee set up by the Ministry of Labour, it was decided to enlarge the scope of the Third Agricultural Labour Enquiry by including rural labour households other than agricultural labour. Accordingly, an all-India Rural Labour Enquiry was conducted; it was integrated with the 18th (1963-64) and 19th (1964-65) rounds of N.S.S. In the 18th round, data in respect of income and expenditure of rural labour households including agricultural labour have been collected. The income data have been processed and brought out; the expenditure data have just been processed and incorporated. The 19th round data in respect of employment, wages and indebtedness are being collected and processed and will be available after some time.

5.2 A rural labour household is defined as one mainly dependent on wage-paid manual employment of working members. The estimated number of rural households, according to the 18th round of N.S.S. 1963-64, in the country was 676 lakhs of which 172 lakhs were rural labour households (67 lakhs household with land and 105 lakhs households without land).

5.3 Agricultural labour household is defined as one which derives the major share of its income from wage-paid manual labour in agriculture. Out of rural labour households, 141 lakhs were agricultural labour households (55 lakhs households with land and 86 lakhs households without land). The total number of estimated wage-earners in these two classes of labour households were 344 lakhs and 282 lakhs respectively.

5.4 A study of rural and agricultural households under two ALEs and the RLE over the period 1950-51 to 1964-65 (findings of the 19th round are not yet available) reveals interesting features (Table 'E'). Rural households have gone up, while the

number of agricultural labour households has fallen, which is probably because of diversion of agricultural labour. The Census data also reveal a shift in favour of cultivator against agricultural labour. The earning strength of agricultural labour households has remained stationary. The average annual income has gone up. So has average annual expenditure on consumption because of rise in prices particularly during the period 1956-57 and 1963-64. Consequently, incidence of indebtedness has markedly increased. During the same period, wage-paid employment shows some improvement. Another independent survey carried out by the National Council of Applied Economic Research (1962) put the average household income of rural households dependent on self-employment in agriculture at Rs.1690 and of those dependent on agricultural wage earnings at Rs. 765, the increase in both cases being significant. For details. (See Table 33).

5.5 These characteristics of rural and agricultural households have been tabulated as below:-

Table - C

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF RURAL AND AGRICULTURAL
LABOUR HOUSEHOLDS.

S. No.	Characteristic	First A.L.E. 1950-51	Second A.L.E. 1956-57	R.L.E. <u>1963-64</u> <u>1964-65</u>
1.	Estimated number of rural households (Millions)	58.9	66.6	67.6
2.	Estimated number of rural Labour households (Millions)	-	-	17.2
	(a) With land	-	-	6.7
	(b) Without land	-	-	10.5
3.	Estimated number of agricultural labour households (Millions)	17.9	16.3	14.1
	(a) With land	8.9	7.0	5.5
	(b) Without land	9.0	9.3	8.6
4.	Average household size			
	(a) Rural labour households	-	-	4.5
	(b) Agricultural labour households.	4.3	4.4	4.4
5.	Average earning strength			
	(a) Rural labour households	-	-	2.0
	(b) Agricultural labour households.	2.0	2.2	2.0

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S. No.	Characteristic	First A.L.E. 1950-51	Second A.L.E. 1956-57	R.L.E. 1963-64 1964-65
6.	Average annual income (Rs)			
	(a) Rural labour households	2	-	702(593)
	(b) Agricultural labour households.	447	437	668(660)
7.	Average annual consumption expenditure (Rs)			
	(a) Rural labour households	-	-	1053
	(b) Agricultural labour	461	617	1030
8.	Indebtedness			
	(i) Rural Labour Households			
	(a) Percentage of Indebted households.	-	-	-
	(b) Average debt per household (Rs)-	-	-	-
	(c) Average debt per indebted households.(Rs)	-	-	-
	(ii) Agricultural Labour Households			
	(a) Percentage of Indebted households.	44.5	63.9	-
	(b) Average debt per household (Rs)	47.0	88.0	-
	(c) Average debt per indebted household(Rs)	105.0	138.0	-
9.	Wage paid Employment (Average number of days per year) of agricultural labour			
	(a) Men ---	218	222	-
	(b) Women ...	134	141	-
10.	Average daily wage for all agricultural operations (paise)			
	(a) Men ---	109	96	-
	(b) Women ...	68	59	-
11.	Average daily non-agricultural Wage (Paise)			
	(a) Men ...	108	107	-
	(b) Women ...	61	62	-

Note:- The income in kind was evaluated in 1950-51 Enquiry at retail price whereas the same was evaluated at whole-sale price in 1956-57 Enquiry. In the 1963-64 Enquiry, the evaluation was done at both the prices. The figures in brackets indicate those evaluated at whole-sale prices.

6. The pattern of employment and its prospects

6.1 A feature of employment in rural areas is seasonality and varying intensities of employment in different seasons. Shortage of labour is acutely felt in many areas during busy agricultural seasons. A considerable portion of labour is otherwise either unemployed or under-employed during the slack season. This adds to the problems faced by rural workers in the agricultural sector. The 'seasonal aspect' affects not only wage paid workers but also self-employed workers. In fact, in the agricultural sector, most of the self-employed work below capacity and do less work than what they are capable of doing and are willing to do.

6.1 The 16th round of N.S.S. (July, 1960 to June 1961) revealed that 1.62 per cent (1.44 per cent males and 1.80 per cent females) of the rural population was un-employed. When this percentage is applied to the rural population of 360 million in 1961, rural unemployment is estimated at 5.8 million of whom about 5 million would be in the age group of 15-59. The census authorities, however, caution that their estimates have significant limitations for policy formulation.

Table 'D'

Percentage distribution of persons by activity and sex

Period	(Base, persons of each sex-100)					
	Employed			Unemployed		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
11th and 12th Round (Aug. 1956-Aug. 1957)	52.29	21.12	37.03	2.48	2.21	2.35
14th Round (July, 1958-June, 1959)	54.81	24.04	39.51	2.07	2.62	2.34
15th Round (July, 1959-June, 1960)	56.89	21.61	39.53	1.85	1.97	1.92
16th Round (July, 1960-June, 1961)	54.23	25.92	40.26	1.44	1.80	1.62

Source: N.S.S. Reports - 52 (Page 55),
100 (Page 37, 148 (Page 28),
114 (Page 20).

6.3 The proportion in the labour force remained almost stationary during the period 1956-61. It increased only slightly from 39.38 in 1956-57 to 41.88 in 1960-61 (table 'D'). The proportion of persons available for work (unemployed declined considerably from 2.35 per cent in 1956-57 to 1.62 per cent in 1960-61, the decline among male workers being significant.

6.4 It was also observed that 1.62 per cent of the rural population in 1960-61 (males 1.44 per cent and females 1.80 per cent) are unemployed. In fact the incidence of unemployment measured

in terms of percentage of persons in the labour force was 3.86 (males 2.58 per cent and females 6.50 per cent). The labour force belonging to the age group 15-19, 20-24 and 25-29 are relatively affected by unemployment incidence as compared to other age groups. As regards average number of days at work during a week for different periods (table 9), the figures do not bring out any definite trend, except that the average number of days at work during a week for agricultural labour was slightly less compared to all rural workers. It is relevant to state here that these figures being the yearly averages do not clearly reflect seasonal unemployment.

6.5 Under-employment in term of those "who have some work but are willing to take up additional work" cannot be estimated with precision. The number of such under-employed persons is estimated at 15-18 million according to the Third Plan.* Assuming an employment norm of 300 days per annum, the total labour required for raising crops and allied activities was estimated at 85.16 million male equivalent of work years (25,547 million man days) at the 1961 level of technology in India, against 114 million actually used for work. In other words, the extent of under-utilisation estimated was about 28.84 million or 25.3 per cent. A number of farm management studies also revealed that seasonal component of total under-employment was 'most important' and that the removable surplus was small, in fact, negligible in holdings of about 2 hectares in size.

6.6 Estimates of under-employed given above are subject to limitations and tend to err rather on the high side. A look at the percentage distribution of working persons by number of days at work during the period 1960-61 (table 10) shows that an overwhelming majority of working population (72.68 per cent) work all seven days in a week. Persons working from 1 to 4 days a week are not negligible, the percentage being 11.17 of the total working population (males 10.25 and females 13.17).

6.7 Intensity in terms of 'days at work' however, does not reflect the prevailing conditions in so far as actual quantum of work performed by working persons during the day is concerned. The survey considers a person 'at work' whatever be the number of hours of work performed by him; the amount of work measured in terms of 'hours' of work in a day varies from person to person. So the measure of intensity of work by 'hours at work' in a week makes for a more realistic appraisal of the work content of the working day in rural areas. Even here not all persons working less than the norm fixed for a day can be considered as under-employed. They should be willing or available for additional work if they are to be considered as under-employed. A look at percentage distribution of working population by 'hours at work' and 'availability for additional work' (table 11) shows that 17.69 per cent of the working population (12.22 per cent of males and 29.44 per cent females), work for 4 hours or less in a day. The proportion of working population working for more than 4 hours and not above 6 hours in a day is 20.59 per cent (17.43 per cent males and 27.35 per cent females). About 10.7 per cent of the persons employed have indicated willingness or 'availability for additional work'. In 1961, this figure could be round about 13 million. Of them those already employed over 48 hours a week on an average and still wanting to work can be ignored, because they wish to raise their earnings and do not seek employment. Their problem is one of raising productivity or wage rates. Such workers can be estimated to be around 2 million in 1961. A person who works 28 hours or less during the week or on

* There is urban element in this estimates but a firm break-up between urban and rural is not available.

an average 4 hours or less per day and reports 'available for additional work' may be treated as severely under-employed. Similarly persons who work 29 to 42 hours per week and report 'available for additional work' may be called moderately under-employed. According to the above definition, the severely under-employed in 1960-61 comes to 4.70 per cent of the total working population in the rural areas: 3.84 per cent among males and 6.55 per cent among females. Similarly, the proportion of moderately under-employed among rural working population is 3.53 per cent, 1.48 per cent among males and 3.64 per cent among females.

6.8 A careful and detailed analysis of data on labour-time disposition of working population from round to round of N.S.S. brings out the fact that rural under employment measured in terms of idle time available with working population has undergone slight reduction in magnitude during 5 or 6 years ending 1958-59. The subsequent data relating to 1960-61 reveal further reduction of considerable magnitude. Decline in idle time available with rural workers during the period 1958 to 1961 is brought out in table 12. The same conclusion can be drawn in another way: in table 11 are furnished data on the employed by weekly 'hours at work' and the proportion 'available for additional work in each 'hours of work' group during the reference week for the period 1956-57 in brackets along with the data for 1960-61. A comparison of the figures for the two periods brings out the decline in under-employment:

Table 'E'

Under-Employment of gainfully employed persons during 1956-57 and 1960-61 in Rural India

	1956-57	1960-61
1. Percentage of workers willing or available for additional work.	15.29	10.71
2. Percentage of workers severely under-employed.	7.03	4.70
3. Percentage of persons moderately under-employed.	5.10	3.53

6.9 So far we have discussed the employment position in the rural areas as a whole. What is the position of agricultural labourers in rural areas in this regard?

The incidence of unemployment is far more serious among agricultural labour households than other rural households. The 11th and 12th round of N.S.S. (1956-57) revealed that nearly 63 per cent of the rural unemployed were agricultural labour (N.S.S. Report No. 52, Table 3 (18), P.74): according to the Second Agricultural Labour Enquiry (1956-57), agricultural

labour households constituted only 24.5 per cent of total rural households. Distribution of population of rural India by activity status for 'agricultural labour households' and 'other rural households' (table 13) shows that the percentage of the unemployed among members of 'agricultural labour households' was 6.46 (6.06 per cent for males and 6.87 per cent for females). These percentages are much in excess of corresponding figures for the members in 'other rural households' for the same period. This underlines the fact that unemployment is more severe among members of agricultural labour households: the incidence of unemployment is as high as 15 per cent as compared to about 3 per cent among 'other rural households'. The proportion of the unemployed, not seeking work but available for work in the former group, was slightly less than a third of the number unemployed: in the latter group it was about half. Among 'agricultural labour households', the labour force participation rates for females was 31 per cent, which was much higher than that among 'other rural households' (21 per cent). The incidence of unemployment among females in 'agricultural labour households' was exceedingly high (22 per cent) compared to 4.3 per cent in 'other rural households'. Distribution of gainfully employed workers in 'agricultural labour households' by days 'at work' during a week along with the corresponding figures for the gainfully employed from 'other rural households' during 1956-57 (table 14) reveals that while 67.56 per cent of rural workers from households other than agricultural labour worked for 7 days in a week, the corresponding figure for the workers in agricultural labour households was much less only 46.78. The percentage of workers in the former households working for 4 days or less a week has 16.61, and the corresponding percentage for workers in the latter households was 36.07, which again brings out the more serious nature of unemployment, among workers of 'agricultural labour households'. Distribution of gainfully employed persons by 'weekly hours at work' in 'agricultural labour households' along with the corresponding figures in 'households other than agricultural labour' for the period 1956-57 (table 15) shows that the percentage of workers who have worked 42 hours or less during the reference week was 52.42 in 'agricultural labour households' compared to 43.30 per cent in 'other rural households'. This underlines the extent of under-employment among workers in agricultural labour households.

6.10 What are the prospects of the future growth of labour force in rural areas and the possibilities of their employment in various sectors? A well-known characteristic of under-developed economy is the very high proportion of contribution of agriculture to the national income and the large proportion of the population engaged in it. In India about 50 per cent of the national income is derived from agriculture, and about 70 per cent of the working force is engaged in that sector. According to the census of 1961, the total rural labour force in the age group 15-59 was 1379 lakhs. Among them 1138 lakhs are workers in the agricultural sector (cultivators plus agricultural labour plus workers in forestry, fishery and livestock). In view of the fact that the workers participation rate is rather high in rural areas as compared to the urban areas in the age groups 0-14 and '60 and above', the number of rural workers as well as the workers in the agricultural sector of all ages is much higher than corresponding figures in the age group 15-59:

T A B L E 'F'

Labour Force Characteristics -
1961-Census

Figures in Lakhs

<u>Category</u>	<u>All India</u>	<u>Rural</u>
1. Total population	4389 (2340)	3600 (1896)
2. Total Labour Force	1887 (1622)	1623 (1379)
3. Labour Force in the agricultural sector including fishing, forestry, etc.	1375 (1165)	1343 (1138)
(a) Cultivators	996 (843)	979 (829)
(b) Agricultural Labour	315 (268)	306 (260)
(c) Forestry, Fishing, Livestock, etc.	64 (54) *	58 (49) *

Note: Figures given in brackets indicate the corresponding figure for the age group 15-59.

* Estimated assuming the same proportion as for the rest of the workers in the agricultural sector.

Source:- 1961 Census of India.

6.11 Estimates of labour force in the age group 15-59 are available separately for rural and urban areas (table 'G'). With expansion of educational facilities in rural areas and better standards of living, the labour force participation rate in the age groups 0-14 and '60 and above' is expected to decline considerably. The projected labour force is confined to the age group 15-59.

T A B L E 'G'

Projected Labour Force of All India by
Urban and Rural areas.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Rural</u>	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Figures in lakhs</u>
			<u>Total</u>
1961	1379	243	1622
1966	1529	287	1816
1971	1691	343	2034
1976	1898	412	2310
1981	2136	496	2632

Source: Office of the Registrar General.

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6.12 The total all-India labour force would increase from 1622 lakhs in 1961 to 2310 lakhs in 1976, the corresponding increase in the rural area being from 1379 lakhs to 1898 lakhs. The above projection had already taken into account the possible migration from rural to urban areas. There is no possibility of any further absorption of rural workers in urban areas. The perspective Division of the Planning Commission assumed that percentage of agricultural workers to total workers would be reduced from the current 70 per cent to about 60 per cent by 1976. On this assumption, total workers in agricultural sector would be about 1386 lakhs in 1976, as compared to 1165 lakhs in 1961, an increase of 221 lakhs. If we take only rural areas, total number of workers in the agricultural sector would be about 1353 lakhs in 1976 as against 1138 lakhs in 1961, an increase of 215 lakhs:

T A B L E 'H'

d Distribution of Additional Labour Force by Sector of Activity and Rural and Urban Areas.

Particulars	Labour Force		Figures in lakhs	
	1961	1976	₹ Increase 1961-76	Percentage increase in 1976 over 1961
<u>All-India</u>	1622	2310	688 (100.0)	42.4
(a) Agricultural	1165	1386	221 (32.1)	19.0
(b) Non-agricultural	457	924	467 (67.9)	102.2
<u>Rural</u>	1379	1898	519 (75.4)	37.6
(a) Agricultural	1138	1353	215 (31.2)	18.9
(b) Non-agricultural	241	545	304 (44.2)	126.1
<u>Urban</u>	243	412	169 (24.6)	69.5
(a) Agricultural	27	33	6 (0.9)	22.2
(b) Non-agricultural	216	379	163 (23.7)	75.5

- Note: 1. Figures in brackets indicates the percentage to total.
 2. Agricultural workers in rural and urban areas for 1976 are estimated on the basis of 1961 population.
 3. Perspective Planning Division of Planning Commission estimated for 1976 total labour force of 2445 lakhs (14 years and above) and an agricultural labour force 1402 lakhs. These estimates are very close to the estimates given in the table.

6.13 It is important to develop non-agricultural job opportunities in rural areas. Any failure to create such opportunities for absorbing additional labour force will increase the burden on agriculture; these workers would, of necessity, fall back on agriculture; the assumed shift from agriculture would not be realised, thus frustrating the development strategy. An added fact will be the absolute number of agricultural working force which will increase during 1961-76, even if the proportion to total working force declines by 10 per cent. This addition to the working force in agriculture could only be tackled by creating

sufficient job opportunities in non-agricultural sector of rural areas. What is important is drawing workers away from agriculture, not from rural areas.

7. Development of policy and strategy.

7.1 Successive famines, particularly those from the latter half of the 19th century, revealed vulnerable conditions of such weaker sections of the rural community as agricultural labour. The Famine Commission of 1880 observed that those who had no employment other than agriculture were greatly in excess of those really required for thorough cultivation of land. The Royal Commission on Labour (1929-31) endorsed this view and underlined \angle employment and availability of spare time (from 2 to 4 months of absolute leisure during a year). \angle under- The Royal Commission on Agriculture (1926-28) suggested location of industries in rural areas and their multiplication within economic limits of the state to solve to the problem of spare time employment.

7.2 The Freedom Movement poignantly reacted to the conditions of agricultural labour. Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya's address at Agricultural Labourers' Conference in 1940 sums up the Movement's sympathetic understanding of the problems of agriculture labour:

"The cultivator who spends the day between slush and mud, who works now with a starving stomach and now with a half appeased appetite, who knows no rest in storm or sunshine, who often-times has not dwelling sites which can be called his own, he grows our paddy but starves. He feeds our milch cows but never knows anything beyond water. He digs our wells but must keep off from them when they are full. He is a perpetual hewer of wood and drawer of water for those who fatten on his labour and rise to wealth and plenty. His condition is appalling and heart-rending."

7.3 Leaders of industrial workers looked upon problems facing rural and industrial proletariat as a piece; they emphasised the need for a proper assessment of the volume of under-employment and for improvement in methods of cultivation and expansion of rural industries so as to provide employment for agricultural labour. \angle of One of the leaders favoured an international convention in agriculture and effectively encountered the criticism that it could not be implemented because agriculture labour is scattered. The political movement also emphasised the need for transforming agrarian structure. The Faizpur Session of the Indian National Congress (1937) called for radical changes in antiquated and repressive land tenure and land revenue system. The Congress Ministries in 1937 introduced measures reducing rent or debt, commuting rent etc. The National Planning Committee (NPC) in one of its reports brought out the complex character of agriculture labour as both (i) small land-holder and (ii) actual worker - the two roles combined in one and the same person, scattered character of holdings and vast organisational problems involved in improving agriculture. The Jaipur Session of the Congress (December, 1948) appointed a Congress Agrarian Reforms Committee with Shri J.C. Kumarappa as the Chairman. The Committee recommended that land should belong to the tiller, and that there should be no place for intermediaries. There should be security of tenure, protection against eviction of tenants and against rack-renting and illegal rejection. There should be compulsory scaling down of debt on the basis of paying capacity and equity of loans in cases of farmers and complete wiping out of all indebtedness for agricultural labour, compulsory registration and control of money lenders. The plank of Gandhian Programme of rural reconstruction which aimed at making village a viable and self-sufficient economic unit rested on giving relief to and improving conditions of peasantry including agricultural labour. The promotion of village industries and khadi was undertaken through All-India Spinners' Association and All-India \angle Industries Association \angle Village in the 30s.

7.4 The Freedom Movement also witnessed development of such socio-agrarian organisations as Kisan Sabhas or Krishik Samities which spearheaded demands for reduction of rent, abolition of zamindaris, security of tenure and protection against eviction for small tenants.

7.5 For all disturbing observations on distressing conditions of agricultural labour no concrete step could be taken towards betterment of his lot. No enquiry on a nation-wide scale into the conditions of rural labour, which could assess the magnitude of the problem, was undertaken before Independence. A few regional studies formed the only source of information on the subject. Notable among village-type investigations mostly relating to farm accounts and family budgets may be mentioned those of G. Keatinge and Harold Mann in Bombay, J.C. Jack in Bengal, Gilbert Slater in Madras, E.V. Lucas in Punjab; these evoked interest in the subject by focussing attention on social and economic conditions in the villages surveyed and by stressing the necessity for further detailed studies.

7.6 In 1943 the Tripartite Labour Conference, while recommending an enquiry into the conditions of labour, suggested that the study should be extended to agricultural wage-earners. The First National Government in 1946 formulated a Five Year Plan for labour. According to this programme 'minimum wages of agricultural workers' were to be fixed and 'an enquiry into the earnings of agricultural workers was to be undertaken'. Upon the results of the enquiry were to depend the nature and extent of the measures necessary to prevent the wages of these classes of workers from sliding below the minimum. In pursuance of this programme, the Minimum Wages Act was passed in 1948. Agriculture was included in the schedule of employments appended to Minimum Wages Act where minimum wages were required to be fixed.

7.7 Non-availability of reliable data relating to economic and working conditions of agricultural labour was a handicap. The Government of India, therefore, decided to conduct an All-India Agricultural Labour Enquiry (A.L.E.). The First A.L.E. (1950-51) was conducted in about 800 villages selected on the principle of stratified random sampling to study occupational structure of rural families and employment, wage structure income and expenditure etc. pertaining to agricultural labour households. The findings of the A.L.E. gave broad statistical support to the then prevailing general notion regarding economic conditions of workers. Agricultural labour occupied the lowest rung in the ladder of rural hierarchy. Their average per capita annual income was Rs. 104 as compared to the per capita national income of Rs. 250 during 1950-51. The enquiry brought out the immensity of problem of unemployment and poverty among workers in agricultural labour households.

7.8 The results of the enquiry were placed before the Indian Labour Ministers' Conference in 1955. There was an unanimity of opinion in regard to the following aspects:-

- (i) immensity of problem of unemployment and poverty among agriculture labour households;
- (ii) ineffectiveness of the instrument of minimum wage fixation in the present Indian conditions to help in the amelioration of conditions of agricultural labour;
- (iii) importance of general economic development in rural areas through the promotion of cottage and village industries; and
- (iv) inadequacy of the action so far taken in this regard.

7.9 The Second Five Year Plan reflected the four-fold viewpoints. Upto the Second Plan the approach of the planners to agricultural labour appeared to be to treat this problem as a part of larger rural development programme. Through the First Plan advocated a selective approach to agricultural labour, very little was done about it. The Second Plan recognised the limitations of the 'Minimum Wages' legislation but it called upon the States to intensify their efforts in implementing the Act. It stressed in no unmistakable terms that the main efforts had to be 'in the direction of providing greater employment opportunities'. The measures recommended for this larger purpose included development and diversification of village industries, re-distribution of land, provision of housing facilities, encouraging labour cooperatives and small industries, promoting scientific agriculture.

7.10 The First Enquiry was followed by the Second Enquiry in pursuance of the recommendation of the Planning Commission to collect data on changes in conditions of agricultural labour during the First Plan period, to provide insight into problems of agricultural labour and to serve as a basis for the approach to be adopted in the preparation of the Third Plan. This enquiry (1956-57) was integrated with the 11th and 12th rounds of National Sample Survey (NSS). The formulation of a set of more rigorous concepts in the Second Enquiry precluded a strict comparison of the results of the First with those of the Second Enquiry. The Technical Committee set up by the Planning Commission was required to examine and report on the extent of changes in conditions of agricultural labour after taking into account the limitations of the comparability of results of the two Enquiries.

7.11 The Technical Committee came to the conclusion that there had been neither marked deterioration nor improvement in general conditions of agricultural labour households during 1956-57 as compared to 1950-51. In the light of the increase in per capita real income of the country and absence of any marked improvement in conditions of agricultural labour, who were admittedly at the lowest rung of the country's economic ladder, the objective of planning, namely reduction of inequalities of income, could not be said to have been achieved. The results of the two Enquiries however, represented the picture at the points at which the Enquiries were undertaken, and these should not be viewed as revealing trend in working and living conditions of agricultural labour.

7.12 Five Years later, Seminar held in the Institute of Economic Growth in March 1961 found the economic position of agricultural labour in a fundamental sense, weakened during the intervening period. This was due to structural changes in the rural economy as a result of land reforms in their later phases which led to evictions, resumption of land for personal cultivation and partition of large holdings. There was also reduction in average size of cultivated holdings with the consequent emphasis of self-cultivation, decline in demand for hired labour and increase in the ranks of agricultural labour who offered themselves for wage paid employment. The size of the problem concerning agricultural labour was such that it could not be solved within the ambit of even a reformed and improved agricultural economy. Industrialisation alone was the ultimate remedy for effecting substantial improvements in conditions of agricultural labour in the country.

7.13 A significant element, which induced a shift in the thinking of policy makers, emerged from these enquiries, studies and discussions. Providing more employment opportunities for rural workers was more important than fixing minimum wages for them, a line which had prevailed till the First A.L.E. Among the factors which influenced this change about agriculture labour were widespread unemployment and underemployment existing in the rural agricultural sector, large increase in the population which adversely effected rural workers, deteriorating conditions of life, of agricultural labourers with no or small holdings. These conclusions were reinforced by results of Bench Mark Surveys undertaken by the Programme Evaluation

Organisation.

7.14 In formulating its basic approach to the problems of rural labour during the Third Plan, the Planning Commission postulated that it was only by a rapid and intensive development of rural areas as a part of the process of economic development of the country as a whole that the landless sections of the rural population could be substantially benefited. The Plan provided for an outlay of over Rs.1700 crores in the public sector on agriculture community development and irrigation. In recognition of the fact of availability of large idle labour-time among rural workers, the Plan envisaged Rural Works Programme (R.P) which would create additional employment opportunities and harness large manpower resources available in rural areas for rapid economic development of the country. R. .P. was one of the two programme under the 'Third Five Year Plan' initiated with a view to utilising to the fullest possible extent manpower resources of the country and to ensure a substantial expansion in employment opportunities in rural areas. The programme lays down labour intensive works to increase agricultural production and to create community assets. Another aspect of the programme was that, ordinarily, wages should constitute at least 60 per cent of the cost of the schemes. These works were to be undertaken in slack season so that they might provide underemployment relief. The consideration that weighed in selection of areas for such a programme was severity of unemployment/under-employment. Development of dairy farming, poultry breeding, rural industries, construction of houses, school buildings and tube-wells, purchase of pumping sets and other items involving large expenditure on materials and providing less employment, were not to be included. Priority was given to minor irrigation, soil conservation, land reclamation, drainage and other items to promote agricultural production in formulating supplementary works programme. The programme aimed at exploiting opportunities for building up productive assets at the level of the local community and at drawing on local initiative to the maximum extent. It was expected to show a degree of flexibility and serve as a catalytic agent in the process of rural development. A measure of decentralisation of functions was to be effected to ensure more effective implementation; individual schemes were to be executed at the block level; overall responsibility for planning and for linking up the rural works programme more effectively with other development programme was placed at the district level.

7.15 The Third Plan envisaged that employment through R. .P. should be found for one lakh persons in the first year, about 4 to 5 lakh persons in the second year and about 10 lakh persons in the third year, for 25 lakhs in the last year of the Plan. As the programme developed, the possibility of paying wages partly in the form of food-grains was to be considered. It involved building up of construction organisations and labour cooperatives at the block level for supplying tools, obtaining contracts, securing necessary technical and administrative assistance, organising cadres of trained and skilled workers and to work in close cooperation with district authorities, panchayat samities and others. A sizeable amount of Rs.150 crores was earmarked for these programme in the course of 1961-1966, through separate allocation for these scheme was not made. A provision was to be made from year to year.

7.16 Implementation of the programme did not make much headway. In financial terms, not even a sixth of the amount mentioned above but which was not provided could be spent on the project. In physical terms of employment generated, as against the expectation of 2.5 million persons in the last year of the Plan, the achievement was about 400,000 only.

7.17 This slow progress of R. .P. led to a critical reappraisal at a conference convened by the Planning Commission in April 1965 in which

State Governments participated. The conference reviewed the performances of the programme in the Third Plan and laid down guidelines for formulation of the programme during the Fourth Plan.

7.18 The Conference endorsed the basis character and strategy of R.W.P. which should continue to provide employment of the basis of existing skills and also improve and create skills of rural working force. The selection of areas for implementation of the programme should primarily be governed by employment considerations; economic considerations should weight in selection of production-oriented projects and maintenance and development of community assests. The scheme should include village tanks, field channels, drainage works, soil conservation, land reclamation, village fuel plantation, rural market roads and brick kilns. R.W.P. should be an integral part of local areas plans in which local institutions should be duly involved. Skills of workmen, both agricultural and artisans should be improved through training at a chain of training institutions. The practice of giving wages slightly lower than prevailing wage rate and showing the difference as public contribution should be dispensed with. Administrative and technical organisations involved in the programme should be strengthened. Labour cooperative rather than professional labour contractos should be entrusted with execution of schemes.

7.19 The Seminar on Agricultural Labour organised by the Ministry of Labour and Employment in August, 1965 generally endorsed the above recommendations and emphasised that the schemes under-taken for the benefit of agricultural labour should be more specific and their implementation firm and effective. Unemployment and underemployment in rural areas should be assessed by surveys based on labour-time disposition approach and supplementing such data by diagnostic studies on background characteristics of agricultural labour. A part of the surplus labour must be removed from land and provided with regular and continuous employment on a large scale. New skills should be imparted to agricultural workers and their children to facilitate their shift from agricultural to non-agricultural work and setting up Rural Industrial Institutes for providing training facilities in handicrafts and agro-industries Village and Small industries and new types of handicrafts based on local raw material for providing employment should developed. Greater emphasis should be placed on production-oriented programmes of minor irrigation, construction of tanks and ponds and digging of wells. Labour cooperatives should be energised and protected against exploitation by contractos or their agents; and association or guirdls of artisans should be encouraged. Reluctance of agricultural labour to move out of the village for fear that they may lose their homes-teads may be tackled by allotment of house-sites and provisions of interest-free loans or concessional finance and cheap credit facilities for constructing houses. Resettlement of landless workers on agricultural lands should be speeded up as land is the only means of safe and independent from of employment, Condition of public participation in rural manpower projects, a limiting factor in successful implementation of the schemes, should not be insisted upon. Labour officers should be appointed in projects employing upon. Labour officers should be appointed in projects employing 500 or more workers for enforcement of the existing statutory provisions concerning agricultural labour. The minimum wages Act should be extended to areas not so far covered, fixing Rs.1/- as the minimum of the minimum wage and strengtning of the State Labour Department to ensure vigorous implementation of the Minimum Wages Act, etc. Voluntary organisations and trade unions should take greater interest in organising labour on sound lines because it is widely scattered and suffer from lack of organisation. Welfare facilities like drinking water, medical aid, rest scheds, etc. as provided under the existing statutes should be extended to workers engaged on farms employing 50 or more workers. The exisiting provisions for grant of stipends and scholarships to children in the agricultural labour families may be enhanced. 'Grain Golas' in rural areas are to be strengthened and set up to ensure regular supply of essential commodities to agriculture labour.

8.1 Wages, income and Minimum Wages Act

A steering Group set up to study the problems of wages, incomes and prices policies (1967) made pertinent observations.

8.2 The problems of agricultural wages and incomes are vastly more complex and difficult, because employment, is in considerable part, casual, seasonal, or non-regular and wages are governed to a substantial extent by non-economic considerations such as tradition, caste, etc. Wages are also not always paid in money. Monetisation or payment in cash varies according to the crop and has been on the increase. There are considerable disparities in wages between regions between different crops and between the wages paid to men, women and children. Casual labour which forms the bulk of the labour force is paid wages on a daily basis; attached labour with continuity of employment for periods ranging from 3 to 12 months or more is paid at longer intervals - generally quarterly, half-yearly or annually. In case of payments in kind, these differentials are not easily apparent, because composition of kind payments and their quantum vary widely. On the other hand, the differentials, in wages paid in cash among men and women or between regions are striking. These differences are at least partly a result of sociological factors which impart rigidity to wage levels at both higher and lower ends. But regional or area differences are largely relating to comparative intensity of agricultural operations e.g. between irrigated and rain-fed tracts. Agricultural labour is not able to employ methods of collective bargaining.

8.3 In the beginning the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 which contains Agriculture in its Schedule was restricted in effect to some areas selected for intensive development. This was the position in the First Plan - subsequently the Act was extended to all areas and emphasised the need for making consistent efforts to implement the wage rates fixed under the Act. In some State there are tripartite advisory bodies which advise in the matter of fixation of wages. In Bengal a Committee has submitted its report laying down need based wages for agricultural labour. In Assam the Labour Department fixes the minimum wages. In Gujarat Revenue Officers and the Factory Inspectors collaborate with Labour Officers in fixing wages. In Punjab team consisting of labour officers and Revenue Field functionaries are fixing wages. In some other States the Revenues Collector fixes the wages.

8.4 The machinery for enforcement of minimum wages also varies: in some States Revenue staff and in some other labour officers constitute the implementing agency. The field inspectors are too few to cope with their work. The registration of cases for not paying or paying less wage than the wages fixed under the Act has been negligible. Minimum wages under the Act are also not fixed at suitable intervals. These are also not fixed at suitable intervals. These are artificial. In peak agricultural seasons, actual wages rule higher than the minimum wages. Therefore, the Minimum Wages Act has remained a dead letter. Apart from the non-existence of an effective machinery to implement the Act, the machinery of Panchayat Raj Institutions has not been involved in the process of enforcement. The States have suggested strengthening of implementation agencies, setting up of labour Inspectorate, and involving Panchayat :

Raj Institutions in enforcement. Some have suggested representation of labour on representative agencies of Panchayats. Other States have favoured appointment of Revenues staff for enforcing minimum wages where they are not in charge of it as against Panchayat Raj Institutions.

8.5 Other difficulties arise mainly from poverty and illiteracy and from such structural factors as small and scattered nature of agricultural farms, casual character of employment and dispersal of farms. But the main obstacle to implementation of any wage policy in agriculture is low productivity of this sector in general and unorganised character of agricultural labour.

8.6 Any substantial improvement of wage of agricultural labour is possible only by implementation of measures of far reaching reforms and reorganisation of agricultural sector, an improvement in productivity of agriculture and assurance of suitable and reasonable remunerative prices for agricultural products. These, together with transfer of labour from agriculture to industry following growth of the industrial sector should lead to improvement in wages and conditions of work of agricultural labour. When this is achieved labour productivity in agriculture will be considerably improved, and wages of agricultural labour and its standard of living will go up. Better farming methods and education of the farmers in modern agricultural skills may help in this direction. Both these imply investment in agricultural sector.

8.7 The problem posed by self-employed persons in agriculture is somewhat different from that of agricultural labour. In terms of income received, these persons are not any better off than agricultural labour, but they are in a position to benefit directly from any increase in productivity that may occur as a result of investment by government, provided prices of agricultural products are maintained at a remunerative level. The problem in their case is mainly one of an appropriate price policy and of enabling them to take advantage of developmental programme and inputs.

8.8 Towards the end of 1966 a One-Man Committee consisting of Shri K.I. Vidyasagar submitted a "Report on the working of the Minimum Wages Act." The Report estimated the number of workers of about 310 lakhs in agriculture and about 40 lakhs in other employments included in the Schedule. These industries are spread over the entire country in small units and their organisation is a very difficult task. In respect of the majority of the workers covered by the Minimum Wages Act, the appropriate Government is the State Government. The workers covered under the Central Government are comparatively few. The enforcement of legislation is difficult for the same reason. The Act should be extended gradually, beginning with very low wage pockets and extending to other areas profiting by the experience gained in the area already brought under the purview of the Act, vide Proviso to Section 3(1)(a). A number of the State Governments, therefore, fixed minimum wages for only part of the State, particularly in the case of agricultural employment. This question was discussed in the last Seminar on Agricultural Labour. Its recommendation was that the benefit of the Act should be extended to the entire State as a number of years have elapsed since the passing of the enactment of 1948. Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madras Government have yet to extend the Act to the entire State in the area of agricultural employment.

8.9 In some cases, piece-rate wages have been fixed.

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This system should be encouraged, as far as possible, as it provides incentive for a worker to earn more by his additional effort than he would otherwise do under a time-rated system. It is necessary to guarantee a minimum time-rated wage even under the piece rate system to avoid exploitation of labour. Most of the State Governments have not fixed this type of guaranteed wage. They should introduce it; incentive becomes really effective when a minimum wage is assured to the worker it results in greater productivity. Other incentive schemes of wages also could be introduced in this sector of scheduled employments on the same basis.

8.10 A minimum wage of Rs.2.80 for an unskilled worker in the scheduled employments in urban areas is considered to be a just wage. Wherever the rates are lower than Rs.2.80 per day, which may be a uniform minimum wage for all scheduled employments in urban areas, they may be brought up to this level during the period of one year. The wages for other categories may be left to the individual wage fixing authorities to determine according to the nature of skill required and the time and effort required to learn or for developing and maintaining the same. For industries in semi-urban and rural areas the minimum rates for unskilled workers may be fixed lower than the employments in urban areas. A circular letter was issued from the Union Labour Minister in 1964 requesting all the State Governments to maintain a uniform rate not lower than Re.1/- per day. Steps have been taken by various State Governments to implement this directive (the results of the steps taken by them are available at Appendix XIV of the Report). It will now be necessary to raise this minimum level to Rs.2/- on an ad-hoc basis. These rates may be considered to be uniform minimum wages for scheduled employments, below which no minimum wage should be fixed.

8.11 The Committee recommends, inter alia, the following measures:

- (i) In areas where the actual wages are reported to be higher than the rates fixed, immediate steps should be taken to revise the wages.
- (ii) Periodical surveys and evaluation studies to evaluate the working of the Act are recommended at the Centre and in States.
- (iii) There should be a periodical review of the rates fixed in each scheduled industry by the Central Minimum Wages Advisory Board and an attempt should be made to standardise and bring about a uniformity as far as possible in the rates fixed or revised in all States.

9. Organisation, Leadership and Movements

9.1 In the 20s or 30s of the present century many socio-political organisations came into existence. These were known as Kisan Sabhas, Sanghs, Krishak Sabhas, Peasant Unions etc. In 1926 Kisan Sanghs in U.P. agitated against high rents exacted by landlords. An Independent Kisan Sabha was also organised and

it demanded abolition of zamindari system. In 1926 Kisan Sabha in Bihar came into being. As a result of the peasant movement in the State the tenancy bill was enacted in 1936. In 1931 the Kisan Sabha in Bengal demanded abolition of 'permanent settlement' and 'forced labour'. In 1935 and All India Kisan Sabha took shape. A 'mass peasant movement developed after the Second World War' in Bengal, U.P., Bihar and the Punjab, in Bombay and Tamilnad led by local organisations of Kisan Sabhas which had passed under the control of Communists after the Congress and other political organisations had been banned following the Quit-India Movement: The Sabhas claimed "in 1945 an enrolled membership of 8,25,000". The movement reached its climax during the Telengana phase of radical communist movement; the peasant seized and distributed one million acres of landlords' lands. After the struggle was withdrawn in 1951, peasant organisations spread to Rajasthan, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh and Bombay. Bonded labour from backward communities and tribes (Halis and Warlis) in Bombay, Pannayals in Madras joined the movement. The Kisan Sabha called for abolition of landlordism without compensation, free distribution of lands among agricultural labour and poor peasants and the stoppage of eviction of peasants and substantial reduction in rent (1953). The peasant movement acquired 'sharp forms of struggle' in some areas of Madras and West Bengal, they seized grains belonging to landlords, ploughed and sowed their uncultivated and disused lands. Similar agitation also occurred in districts of Andhra and Kerala, Basti and Ballia in U.P., Manipur and Tripura and in some districts of the Punjab. 'A feature of the struggle was the unity between small peasant and agricultural labour, the merger of local peasant organisations (Gujarat, Maharashtra and U.P.) and demand for higher prices for farm produce.

9.2 The All-India Kisan Sabha under the leftist influence have been agitating against 'pro-landlord' and 'pro-capitalist' policies of "landlord-bourgeois Government", and against eviction of small peasant, for radical land reforms, distribution of waste land (there are 10 crores of acres of cultivable waste-land according to the spokesman), provision of irrigation facilities for all small cultivators and for unity between poor peasantry and agricultural labour who constitute the bulk of the population in the countryside.

9.3 Besides this political organisation, there are also many small organisations, largely non-political, some of which are also recognised. These are Khatihar Mazdoor Congress in Punjab, Agricultural Workers Union in part of Andhra, Co-operative Organisation of landless labour in different parts of the country, Central Mechanised Farm Workers Union at Suratgarh, etc. These organisations have not been able to bring within their ambit vast mass of unorganised and scattered agricultural labour into a disciplined body.

9.4 This is also because of the character of the middle-class leadership and workers of the organisation. The dual character of this middle-class leadership emerges from its simultaneous interest as small land-owners in villages and as salaried employees in urban areas; while the members of this leadership fight for democratic rights in towns and cities

they hesitate to fight for higher wages for agricultural labour in rural areas. This explains the essential weakness of kisan movement.

9.5 Sarvodaya Movement.

Another struggle is being carried by peaceful and non-violent means by Sarvodaya workers under the leadership of Acharya Vinoba Bhave. The movement for distribution of lands called 'Bhoodan' started in 1951 under the shadows of the 'Telengana uprising'. Since then the movement has developed into an integrated programme and philosophy of Sarvodaya which aims at reconstruction of rural society, and at placing agrarian relations in a village on rational and democratic lines. The elements of this programme (Sulabh gramdan) are : construction of a village government (gram sabhas) in which proprietorship of land will vest, though the cultivating possession of lands may remain with cultivators; formation of Gram Kosh out of a certain percentage of the contribution in kind and earnings of the members of the village community; non-alienation of lands outside the village and distribution of lands out of the pool of lands gifted at the rate of the twentieth part of the existing land-holdings by land-owners in the village. The main significance of Gram Dan Movement lies in sorting out the agrarian relations in the countryside, and in evolving an order out of agrarian chaos in the interest of the landless. The movement has assumed various forms as it has developed. These are Sampttidan (donation of a part of property), Buddhidan (placing one's intellect at service,) and Jivandan (dedicating one's life). The village community as a family, and every member, whether landless or otherwise has a share in the land which belongs to 'Gopal' (God).

9.6 We may now turn to Sarvodaya views on agriculture labour (Paper IV). There is no organisation to look after them or represent their true interests. This is because they are scattered over villages and organising them involves taking pains and using resources. Consequently they have little voice in development of the country though they occupy a position of fundamental importance. Development programmes in villages have benefited only the rich. Land reforms have been defective and have not made an appreciable impact on agriculture workers. So the need for Gramdan. Lands must be distributed or re-distributed. Labour must have land because land gives security, no matter howsoever small his holdings may be. This may be supplemented by adequate wages and wage-paid employment. Wage should be paid in kind because this will provide a cushion against rise in prices. Intensive farming on small land holdings, which are ideally suited for Indian conditions, should be taken up. Local industries should be organised based on local needs and locally available raw materials. Agriculture should be organised like industry and industrial laws should apply to agriculture labour.

9.7 The movement has apparently caught on: thousands of villages and many districts have been gifted away. The similarity between the Community Development and Gramdan movement in the context of development of villages has been emphasised. Sarvodaya seeks to create a community, which Community Development failed to do, and thus lays the foundation for all round development in countryside.

9.8 The impact of the movement on distribution of lands despite all criticisms about the character of lands is significant. About 4.2 million acres of land were donated upto March 31, 1968. These include cultivable lands, cultivable waste lands, and uncultivable lands. About 2/3rd of this area is either cultivable or is cultivable waste available for distribution. Over a million acres of land have been distributed to the landless. Delay in further distribution of land is because of the absence of adequate organisation and resources and of a fairly large motivated and energetic cadre of workers.

9.9 Legislation has been enacted in many States, like Bihar, Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra, Madras, Mysore, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh to give shape to tenets of the movement. Government has provided financial assistance for a scheme of settlement of the landless on Bhoodhan lands.

9.10 A study of the settlement schemes revealed that the settlers were benefited by this programme. The average income per family has gone up. Their economic status has improved. They own assets in the shape of land, livestock and equipment. This is brought about by the comparative study of the conditions before and after settlement in two colonies as shown in the table 'I' below:

Table 'I'

Source	Bhupnagar Colony		Gandhidham Colony	
	Prior to settlement	1965-66	Prior to settlement	1965-66
	(A.V. Value settler)	(in rupees)	Per reporting settler	
1. Land	265.0	371.2	51.6	458.0
2. Buildings	310.5	487.5	350.4	360.0
3. Implements & tools	17.2	28.0	5.0	30.0
4. Livestock	106.7	135.0	102.2	138.2
	341.0	1021.8	400.4	969.6

Settlers have been progressively freed from the influence of money lenders and big cultivators for whom they had to work to redeem their debts. Ownership of land has increased their social standing and given them economic security. But other improvements have not caught up. Irrigation facilities are not properly utilised and no efforts are made to educate and persuade the settlers to take to improved agricultural practices by extension agency in Blocks.

10. Bonded Labour System and Its Disintegration

10.1 Bonded labour in India has been described in terms of agricultural (agrestic) serfdom and agricultural servitude. But neither of these concepts appropriately describes the Bonded Labour System. Bonded labour is not a serf because he is not tied to the land and he cannot be so in a vast and populous country like ours. He is also not a slave because he cannot be sold away, and slavery as it existed in Western countries did not have an exact counterpart in India. Bonded labour should best be described in term of debt bondage fixed for a time

or a life-time or in some cases hereditarily descending from father to son. It is forced labour but not quite 'serfdom'. Article 2 of the I.L.O. Convention "No.29 of 1930" defines forced labour or compulsory labour in terms of a work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily.

10.2 The system of bonded labour grew out of acute indigence and helplessness of tribal or semi-tribal scheduled caste or backward communities in the grip of a precarious subsistence and closed rural economy. There was combination of reasons for the depression of this section of the population: uneconomic holdings, little income from forest produce, high incidence of rent, insecurity of tenure, lack of irrigation which made expansion of proper cultivation difficult. To these were added the social and economic compulsions which constitute the ostensible causes of the system: these are the anxiety of incurring expenditure over marriage which is encouraged by landlord anxious to secure an 'extra member in the family for serfdom', payment of arrear of rent, unavoidable expenditure on birth and death and general economic depression.

10.3 This system which was noticed as early as the first decade of the 19th century assumed different forms and names in the country. Bonded labour was called Halias, Chakar and Muliya or Nag-muliya in Orissa, Chakar or Nit-majoor in Bengal, Harwais and Baranasiyas in North-Bihar, Kamia in South Bihar and Chotanagpur, Hurwahee in old C.P., Sewak and Harias in U.P., Adiamars in Travancore Cherumas in Malabar, Holayas in South Kanara, Padias or Pannayals in Tamilnad, Palarus in Andhra, Baghalas in Hyderabad, Hali in Gujarat, Sagri in Rajasthan, Jeetha in Mysore and Seri or Sanji in Punjab.

10.4 A micro survey of the institution of Kandauti in Palamau (Bihar) in the 20s revealed that there were about 60,000 kamias and their dependants, who came from such backward communities as Bhuiyas, Chammars, Kabars or Dusadhs. Out of 3,000 cases of kamias examined, some two-thirds had entered into agreements with their masters during preceding 10 years, one quarter between 10 and 20, and the remaining between 20 and 30 years. Out of another group of 368 cases examined, two-thirds were the sons of kamias. The bondage descended from father to son. The report further said: "The kamiauti bond generally executed in the first instance when some poor man required cash for a wedding or a funeral, or for the payment of rent, or even for the purchase of food when times are bad. A bond is then agreed upon which is usually reduced to writing but not registered. The borrower undertakes to labour for the lender as he may require until the original loan is repaid in cash. He usually receives a rent-free house and about one-sixth of an acre of bari land, and possibly a small area of rice land, called palhath, in addition. He is to be remunerated for his labour on the days on which he gives a full day's work by 2 or 3 kachcha seers of whatever foodgrain the master may find it convenient to give; at harvest time he receives one out of every 21 (or 16) bundles he reaps, which amounts to about 15 kachcha seers in two days. On the average he is likely to work on two out of three days

in the year. His own remuneration is supplemented by less liberal rewards to his dependants for doing part-time jobs when required. It is clear that at this rate the kamia can never hope to save enough money to pay off his original debt, even if other difficulties were not thrown in his way. Once a kamia always a kamia.

10.5 In the beginning the main effort to deal with this problem was through legislation. Slavery was finally abolished in 1860. Following the report mentioned above, the Bihar and Orissa Kamiauti Agreements Act of 1920 was passed which declared the agreements entered into between kamias and their masters void unless, (i) full terms of the agreement were duly embodied in document, (ii) a copy of the document was given to kamia, if the period of agreement exceeded one year, (iii) the kamia's remuneration under the agreement was fair and equitable and (iv) his liability was to be completely extinguished within the terms of the agreement. This Act remains a dead letter and it was completely and absolutely evaded. Kamias flourished under a different name called 'Harwais' in other parts. A system similar to Kamias has been abolished in Gujarat and Rajasthan. In the former Bombay State the Khoti Settlement Act, 1880, prohibited the possession of lands and services by any khot. The Tenancy Act both in Bombay and Central Provinces provided for abolition of these practices. The Madras Government in 1938 adverted to the practice of veeti (forced labour) exacted by land-owners in agency tracts of east and west Godavari Districts. But these legislative measures did not make much impact.

10.6 With slow improvement of economic conditions, enforcement of tenancy laws, security of tenure and opportunity for employment, the system has shown signs of disintegration. Growing monetisation of agricultural economy, development of agriculture, spread of educational consciousness has also somewhat mitigated the evils of this system. There are reports about the erosion of system from different States - Haryana, Gujarat and Punjab. In the Punjab availability of financial assistance through cooperative societies has dealt a blow to the system.

11. Impact of changes in rural society and economy
(see paper III)

(A) Impact of land reforms

11.1 Three important trends during pre-land reforms period were growing concentration of land in hands of non-cultivating, non-agricultural and rent-receiving class, growth and pauperisation of landless agriculture labour, decline of peasant proprietors and their deterioration into the ranks of peasant proletariat. As an economist observed, "The economic position of the small tenant, small holder has deteriorated while the contrast between landless and ex-propriated peasant, between the increasing class of rent receivers and toiling agricultural servants, betokens a critical stage in our agricultural history."

11.2 The two most important changes in countryside which impinged on agricultural labour were (i) enactment of land reforms and other allied measures, and (ii) the role of the State in developing rural economy. There were two aspects of land reforms : one related to the reform of the system of land holding through abolition of inter-mediaries and tenancy legislation; the other to the reform of the system of land cultivation by ceiling on land holdings, cooperative farming, distribution of lands through official agencies or through such movements as Grandan and Bhoodan, and consolidation of holdings. The land policy aimed at removing such 'motivational and other impediments' by increase in agricultural production as arise from the 'degrading structure' and creating conditions for evolving an agricultural economy with high levels of efficiency and productivity.

It sought to remove elements of exploitation and social injustice within the agrarian system. Land to the tiller was a cardinal feature of the policy. Land reforms abolished forced labour and praedial conditions which shackled small peasant and agricultural labour. It put an end to administrative and political authority of ex-intermediaries. It led to emergence of a new larger and socially upgraded class of tenants and cultivators who acquired occupancy rights as a result of recognition of their de-facto cultivation of land of fresh settlement of land with them in non-ryotwari areas. Some sections of agricultural labour cultivators and agricultural labour benefited from distribution of lands and from the provisions for security of tenure under land reforms. They figure as tenants and have now acquired occupancy rights. About 3 million tenants and share-croppers acquired ownership in more than 7 million acres. The Ceiling Act yielded over million acres of surplus land which were distributed to tenants, uneconomic holders and landless agriculturists. It could have yielded much more. Right of ownership was conferred on tenants. Rents have been regulated. Records of tenancies have been opened. Settlement of landless agriculture labour has been speeded up. Bhoodan movement distributed 10,17,166 acres of land out of 42,27,476 acres of land donated till 31st March, 1964. Much remains to be done in regard to settlement of lands in this area. Reclamation of land resulted in extension of agriculture but only through primitive agricultural techniques.

Agrarian reforms and distribution of lands have not been followed up by a suitable credit policy designed to protect and secure the interest of poor peasant and agriculture labour. No tenurial reforms have been carried out to protect the interests of share-croppers. A farm study pinpoints tenurial bottlenecks to agricultural development in some package districts. Tillers are not prepared to invest in lands which they do not own. Small farmers have not been able to take advantage of the development programme because they are not creditworthy. Rural indebtedness and exploitation of agricultural labour by petty traders continue and in some areas have been intensified.

11.3 Yet another important development was transformation of some of old feudal landlords and former big cultivators into 'new style landlords' or 'owners of capitalistically-run farms using modern techniques'. This was facilitated by two factors (i) ex-intermediaries' continued undisturbed possession of khas or khud-bakasht lands and (ii) payment of large compensation to them. In some areas the pattern of agrarian relationship was 'transformed from a semi-serf tenant - landlord into a capitalistic relation of wage labour and capital.' Attached labour was replaced by casual labour payment in kind by payment in cash, traditional relation between master and servant gave way to contractual relation between employer and employee. The new rural elite today performs the functions of direct cultivator who cultivates through hired labour, money-lender, profiteer and hoarder. A recent study of the leadership pattern in a district revealed that it was heavily dominated by the ex-landlord, new owner cultivator and money-lender class. The land reforms did not result in complete abolition of non-cultivating ownership of land.

11.4 Even most radical land reforms provide for resumption of lands by their owners under certain conditions. Eviction of

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tenants and share-croppers following resumption of lands for direct cultivation has of late been on the increase. The Home-Stead Tenancy Act has not been enforced in many areas and labour is not possession of the small strip of land on which his house stands. Ceiling has been imposed on family rather than on individual and there are many exemptions under the Act. The Act has also not been firmly implemented. Consolidation of holdings has made some progress but still many areas are to be brought under it, as also such sections of the population as agricultural labour cultivator. Programme of resettlement of labour has not made much headway; by 1966-67 only 96,000 families could be resettled on about 3.54 lakh acres, much below the target set by the Third Plan.

11.5 The pattern of land holding remained almost undisturbed. The old type rural landlord was replaced by a new type landlord who came from the ranks of both the old landlord and new tenants. A study in U.P. showed that some change occurred in 5 to 15 acres group rather than below 5 acre group 7 to which 'cultivator' workers belong. That the pattern of land distribution has, on the whole, remained unchanged throughout the country is brought out by 8th and 16th rounds of National Sample Survey:-

Table I

Group based on size of holdings	Percentage of holding in the group of total number of holdings.		Percentage of land held by the group to total land held.	
	8th Round	16th Round	8th Round	16th Round
0-5 acres	69.11	71.09	30.18	30.74
5-15 acres	25.73	24.12	43.32	41.81
15-50 acres	4.95	4.52	23.11	23.04
Over 50 acres	0.27	0.27	3.39	4.41

(B) Impact of rural development.

11.6 The second important change has been coverage of the countryside by a network of Community Development Blocks. From 1959 onwards, Panchayat Raj institutions have been set up as a process of democratic de-centralisation of administration and as a part of the strategy to involve the people in planning and execution of development programmes.

11.7 A third important change has been execution and intensification of rural development programmes through agencies of these institutions. The Community Development Programme evoked great popular enthusiasm in the beginning and provided some measure of employment by creating and building up

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community assets. In tribal development blocks larger financial outlays and more intensive execution of development programmes created great expectations. But though these institutions built up a channel of communication with villages, their early promise was not entirely fulfilled. Execution of development programmes benefited only the well-to-do sections and fell through on account of the provision for 50 per cent public contribution which was not forthcoming in later stages. Financial stringencies slowed down the pace of this programme. However, these programmes along with rural works programme which came up during the third Plan provided a measure of employment relief for agricultural labour and more importantly, set in motion a process of change and development in rural areas.

(C) Impact of agriculture development.

11.8 From 1960-61 a more intensive phase of agricultural development opened in Intensive Agricultural Development Projects (IADP). It aimed at achieving rapid and significant increases in agricultural production through integrated and intensive use of improved agricultural techniques and inputs. There were two important aspects of IADP - (i) multicropping programme (MCP) and the other (ii) high-yielding varieties programme (HYVP). By end of 1964-65, the programme covered 280 out of 311 blocks and in terms of cultivated area, the coverage accounted for about 3 million hectares representing 35% of the gross cropped area of the districts. The coverage is likely to extend till it brings 13 million hectares under HYVP and 12 million hectares under MCP. Projections for farm output are 150 million tonnes by 1975, 185 million tonnes by 1985 and 280 million tonnes by 2000 A.D. This will involve intensification of IADP programme in its twin aspects.

11.9 As the new strategy has developed, it has assumed new dimensions. Short-term high yielding varieties of seeds have been found to be drought resistant. Shortening of the period for growth of crops under these has proved to be an 'insurance against spells of drought' as brought out by last two years scarcities. Ground water support is being developed. Intensive field operations including levelling of lands, contour bunding, construction of field channels in some areas has begun. A new strategy to wipe out protein deficiency is under way. Mechanisation of a part of agriculture operation has also begun. In a way it is unavoidable: there is tremendous shortage of power in agriculture. So there is need for intermediate technology to fill this gap. But the pattern for future will continue to be set by a combination of labour and small machinery. Even though labour is displaced in some areas, the intensive farming may redress the balance in other areas. All this does not mean that agriculture has 'taken off'. Far from it. Deterioration of man-land ratio has assumed serious proportions and this could only be met by adopting the New Strategy. Moreover, there is a fundamental relation between agricultural and land organisation; and only land reforms can produce structural changes, which may take agriculture appreciably forward.

11.10 A study of the newly developing farms shows that even a three-acre farm can become a surplus economic unit; the return per acre in intensive agriculture is substantial in view of favourable remunerative prices for agricultural produce. A second important aspect is that these new farms have larger man-days per acre of the holding than traditional farms, and intensity of employment on the first is much more. (See paper V) Observation visits to IADP districts

reveal that agricultural labour in these areas is more intensively and continuously employed than ever before. Reports from States indicate that the agriculture production programme has resulted in increase in employment, reduction of under-employment, increase in wages both in cash and kind above the minimum wages fixed under the Act, and general improvement of the economic health of labour. In the Punjab wages of agricultural labour increased by 60% during the last two years and by 100% during the peak season.

11.11 These farms also represent emergence of capitalist agriculture encouraged by remunerative prices for foodgrains and by the agricultural strategy followed by the Government which makes large scale scientific agriculture highly profitable. Before 1960's there were only a few pockets of genuinely capitalist agriculture in parts of Punjab and Western U.P., Central Gujarat, Coimbatore and coastal Andhra. Now it is spreading into IADP areas. It is led by gentlemen farmers drawn from ex-zamindars' or former absentee landlords' families, higher castes, retired civil servants, former money-lenders, etc. There is also the emergence of well-to-do sections among peasant castes such as Marathas and Tellis, Bhumihars and hajputs, Kurmis and Sadgops, Nayars and Tilyans, Lingayats and Vokkaligas, Kammas and Reddis, Kallans and Nadras, Jats and Ahirs, etc. at the intermediate level. Urbanisation has also added to this process. Daniel Thorner observes: "The great cities of Delhi, Baroda, Bombay, Lucknow, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Coimbatore, and Madurai are being ringed with poultry farm, fruit orchards, vegetables and spice growing farms. Some of these are registered in the names of the industrialists or members of their families, others in the names of the company, a cooperative or friends. Although the farm may be called on Orchard (Bagh) it is quite common to see fields with latest varieties of paddy, wheat or one of hybrid millets. The owners take pride in their understanding of scientific farming".

11.12 The labour in these capitalist farms is paid fairly well and in some cases incentives are also provided. An instance is worth quoting: "In Central Gujarat an enterprising farmer retained on permanent basis 11 families who supplied him with 40 hands-men, women and children. These families had been working for him for the last ten years. As he had a tubewell he was in a position to water some land for hybrid bajra during the slack summer months. And so he was able to keep these worker families busy during the off season by assigning to each of them about 1.2 hectares for cultivation. The owner provided water, seeds, fertilizers and everything except labour. At harvest time each labour family was given as bonus, 1/4 of the crop on the 1.2 hectares they had worked. This amounted to (2000 kgs.) each worker at prevailing prices a total of Rs.1000/-. Since this was in addition to payment of Rs.2½ per day per adult male and Rs.2/- per adult female it was not surprising that the families had stayed with him".

11.13 Another effect of personal cultivation on modern lines has been eviction of Bataidars (share croppers) or Panniyals (permanent farm servants). These people have been reduced to the status of landless casual labour.

11.14 Only the educated and well-to-do have been able to take advantage of agricultural innovation. A micro-study shows that respondents with an average size of farm of 7 acres and above are innovators, not those owning farms less than five acres; there are more innovators with average assets

of Rs.15000/- or above than those with average assets of less than Rs. 5000. Innovators have higher owned land holding, more assets and more contact with extension agencies. A majority of farmers with an average size of farm less than 3 acres and/or with an average wealth of less than Rs.5000 are only either mere imitators or non-adopters. Innovators have also a higher level of education than imitators and non-adopters; majority of the latter are illiterates.

11.15 IADP has also created conditions for rural industrialisation which did not make much headway through Community Development programme which trained only smaller number of artisans in new trades. With the success of I.A.D.P. Programme in such areas, the prospect of rural industrialisation has improved. With remunerative prices for foodgrains, there has been a progressive shift of income in favour of agriculturists. This may lead as in the Punjab to a progressive rural orientation of Indian industries. The future pattern of industrial location may have to be increasingly away from metropolitan cities to smaller towns and semi-urban areas. There will also be a rapid development of agro-industries such as, pesticides, sprayers, fertilizers, agricultural implements and tractors to cater to rural demands.

(D) Impact of Scarcities and Famines

11.16 Agriculture labour, as the most vulnerable section of rural community, acutely suffers under conditions created by scarcities and famines. Scarcities have particularly been endemic in post-Independence India. There are areas in the country lying in 'rain-shadow' or 'brown-belt,' susceptible to vagaries of the monsoon. Scarcity results from deficient, ill-distributed or ill-timed rainfall. In 1965, as many as 125 districts with a population of 476 lakhs in eight States were affected by drought; in 1966, 157 districts with a population of 1026 lakhs in seven States were visited by severe droughts. In 1966-67 a famine occurred in Bihar; a terrible scarcity deteriorated into a famine and it was the first famine to have been declared as such in Post-Independence India. During the current year, areas in Mysore, Andhra and Rajasthan have passed under the lengthening shadows of a severe scarcity.

11.17 Scarcity or famine conditions witness new developments in organisation of agriculture labour, new experiments with types of schemes, agencies for execution of schemes, fixation and revision of wages, and distribution of foodgrains to the landless and the working labour through a chain of foodgrains. Extraordinary measures are undertaken to provide work for the unemployed, to take care of the children, nursing and expectant mothers and the sick. Welfare measures are introduced on a large scale. Lessons of famine or scarcity in this areas of experience are lost when these conditions pass away, and both administration and people tend to slide back to the normal and the routine. But there is a good deal in these experiences and experiences to derive from to tackle the problem of the rural unemployed on a permanent and continuous basis. There are areas in Bengal where massive relief is annual feature. There could be a more concentrated approach to such 'areas' in the country (See Paper III for details).

12. Profile of agriculture labour

12.1 Over the years the profile of agricultural labour has changed. The process of commercialisation of agriculture, agrarian reforms and availability of employment outside

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agriculture have transformed the traditional type of relationship between master and the/servant into contractual bonds between employers and employees. Contractual relations deprive agricultural labour of the customary privileges and also of some measures of security.

12.2 Agricultural labour has been involved in political processes of elections to Panchayats and the highest elected bodies in the country and also in development programmes. He is politically conscious. His children have benefited from the provision for primary education, and he is keen about their higher education. Diseases and epidemics have almost been eradicated in countryside; agricultural labour today is relatively disease-free. His aspirations are high and he is responsive to opportunities for changes and development. In intensive agricultural development districts new farm strategy has brought about a revolution by doubling the yield per acre through the practice of multiple cropping and sowing of improved varieties of seeds supported by heavy consumption of inputs and by irrigation; here his wages both in kind and cash show an increase. He is also assured of almost round the year employment in areas where double or tripple cropping is practised. Agriculture is being organised as an industry and agricultural operations are becoming both sophisticated and labour-intensive. Raising of more than one crop, construction of field channels, levelling of lands have not only mitigated under-employment but have also opened up avenues for further employment. The increased yield has also impinged on marketting. Capacity of agricultural labour for taking advantage of the new opportunities to increase his wage or to get more employment is however conditioned by his bargaining power which depends on his economic situation.

12.3 Bonded agriculture labour or traditional debt bondage is also showing signs of disintegration with growing monetisation of rural economy. But a large majority of labour is still steeped in debt; it is not in possession of the lands on which it is housed; it has not been able to benefit from cooperative credit or improved seeds and fertilisers for the uneconomic holdings because it is not credit-worthy. Evictions from lands are common. There are reports of decline in efficiency of agricultural land because of an inter-play of many factors, such as, rise in prices, malnutrition and worsening agrarian situation. The last two years' droughts and steep rise in prices of foodgrains have hit agricultural labour the hardest. The new agricultural revolution is the triumph of the new technology based on incentives and inputs. Its benefits have reached agricultural labour in some parts but in many others labour is left as dry as ever and so are the areas themselves, a majority of them outside the reach of new technology or new programmes.

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TABLE 1: TOTAL POPULATION, WORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL WORKERS (CULTIVATORS AND AGRICULTURAL LABOUR) FOR THE CENSUS YEARS 1901 TO 1961 (EXCEPT 1941) FOR ALL INDIA.

(Figures in Lakhs)

Census Year	Total Population	Total workers	Agricultural Workers			
			Agricultural Labour	Cultivators	Total	Total Agricultural workers (Col 6) as percentage to total workers
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1901	2362.8	1107.1	172.6	519.5	692.1 (29.3)	62.52
1911	2521.2	1213.0	240.6	584.7	825.3 (32.7)	68.04
1921	2513.2	1177.5	196.5	616.0	812.5 (32.3)	69.00
1931	1790.2	1206.7	221.1	576.7	797.8 (28.6)	66.12
1951	3611.3	1394.2	275.0	697.4	972.4 (26.9)	69.75
1961	4392.4	1885.2	314.8	995.1	1309.9 (29.8)	69.48

Note:- Figures in brackets in col. (6) are percentages to total population (col.2)

Source:- Agricultural Labour in India - A Compendium of Basic Facts prepared by Labour Bureau (Page 16).

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TABLE 2: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION, TOTAL WORKERS, AGRICULTURAL WORKERS (CULTIVATORS AND AGRICULTURAL LABOUR) OF EACH SEX, 1901 TO 1961 (EXCEPT 1941) ALL INDIA.

Year	Percentage to total population of			Percentage to total workers of		
	Total workers	Cultivators	Agricultural Labour	Cultivators	Agricultural Labour	
1	2	3	4	5	6	
1901	P.	46.61	23.61	7.87	50.64	16.89
	M.	61.11	32.52	7.57	53.22	12.39
	F.	31.70	14.44	8.17	45.54	25.81
1911	P.	48.07	23.94	9.88	49.79	20.57
	M.	61.90	32.94	9.46	53.22	15.28
	F.	33.73	14.59	10.34	43.26	30.65
1921	P.	46.92	25.52	8.16	54.39	17.40
	M.	60.52	34.11	8.18	56.36	13.51
	F.	32.67	16.52	8.15	50.57	24.95
1931	P.	43.31	19.51	10.73	45.04	24.79
	M.	58.27	29.59	10.46	50.78	17.95
	F.	27.63	8.95	11.02	32.39	39.89
1951	P.	39.10	19.56	7.71	50.02	19.72
	M.	54.05	28.05	8.08	51.90	14.95
	F.	23.30	10.59	7.31	45.42	31.39
1961	P.	42.98	22.70	7.18	52.82	16.71
	M.	57.12	29.41	7.67	51.46	13.42
	F.	27.96	15.59	6.67	55.72	23.86

Source:- Census of India, 1961, Final Population Totals (pages 396 and 397)

TABLE 3: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION OF EACH SEX INTO WORKERS (CULTIVATORS AND AGRICULTURAL LABOUR) IN DIFFERENT STATES ACCORDING TO 1951 AND 1961 CENSUS.

State	SEX	Total population.	1951			1961		
			Total workers.	Culti-vators.	Agricul-tural labour.	Total workers.	Culti-vat-ors.	Agricul-tural labour.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. All India	P	100	39.10	19.56	7.71	42.98	22.70	7.18
	M	100	54.05	28.05	8.08	57.12	29.41	7.67
	F	100	23.30	10.59	7.31	27.96	15.59	6.67
2. Andhra Pradesh	P	100	36.90	12.95	12.32	51.87	20.81	14.83
	M	100	52.43	21.64	12.60	62.22	25.63	13.52
	F	100	21.13	4.14	12.03	41.32	15.89	16.17
3. Assam	P	100	42.53	26.09	1.40	43.28	27.99	1.58
	M	100	53.57	34.40	1.65	54.10	34.61	2.50
	F	100	29.98	16.65	1.11	39.91	20.45	0.53
4. Bihar	P	100	34.96	21.00	8.35	41.40	22.31	9.51
	M	100	49.12	29.65	11.00	55.60	29.72	11.05
	F	100	20.66	12.28	5.67	27.12	14.84	7.97
5. Gujarat	P	100	43.69	17.16	11.92	41.07	21.90	6.07
	M	100	55.10	22.61	9.84	53.47	26.49	6.39
	F	100	31.60	11.38	14.12	27.89	17.02	5.73
6. Mahara-shtra.	P	100				47.91	22.09	11.40
	M	100				57.09	23.23	10.34
	F	100				38.10	20.87	12.54
7. Jammu & Kashmir	P	100	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	42.79	32.39	0.52
	M	100	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	57.84	42.10	0.88
	F	100	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	25.64	21.33	0.10
8. Kerala	P	100	32.28	7.47	8.23	33.31	6.97	5.79
	M	100	46.66	11.95	10.62	47.20	10.82	6.18
	F	100	18.28	3.11	5.90	19.71	3.20	5.40
9. Madhya Pradesh	P	100	49.31	22.41	16.59	52.30	32.78	8.70
	M	100	60.40	32.62	13.15	60.21	35.79	8.43
	F	100	37.83	11.84	20.14	43.99	29.62	8.98
10. Madras	P	100	29.18	11.07	6.51	45.57	19.17	8.40
	M	100	45.81	18.78	8.12	59.74	25.01	8.55
	F	100	12.67	3.43	4.91	31.29	13.28	8.25
11. Mysore	P	100	34.08	16.60	6.91	45.48	24.62	7.47
	M	100	49.54	25.87	7.20	58.38	31.15	7.36
	F	100	18.03	7.00	6.62	32.02	17.81	7.58
12. Orissa	P	100	37.37	19.39	6.90	43.66	24.80	7.43
	M	100	56.40	32.66	9.12	60.75	36.32	9.18
	F	100	18.76	6.40	4.72	26.58	13.30	5.68

Contd... (v)

(v)

TABLE - 3 (contd.)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
13. Punjab	P	100	37.99	20.91	4.35	34.97	19.68	2.68
	M	100	55.57	30.28	5.44	52.92	27.45	4.43
	F	100	17.54	10.01	3.09	14.20	10.69	0.63
14. Rajasthan	P	100	49.35	32.43	3.74	47.55	35.00	1.95
	M	100	59.59	38.48	2.94	58.14	39.81	2.18
	F	100	38.24	25.88	4.60	35.89	29.71	1.70
15. Uttar Pradesh	P	100	41.76	28.39	3.19	39.12	24.99	4.42
	M	100	58.25	38.94	3.77	58.19	37.02	5.27
	F	100	23.63	16.78	2.56	18.14	11.75	3.49
16. West Bengal	P	100	34.47	12.24	5.28	33.16	12.77	5.07
	M	100	54.23	19.70	7.98	53.98	20.92	7.78
	F	100	11.63	3.60	2.16	9.43	3.47	1.99

- Note:
1. Figures for Gujarat and Maharashtra are not available separately for 1951. The figures given pertain to the then existing Bombay State.
 2. The data in respect of Jammu and Kashmir are not available for 1951.
 3. N.A. Denotes - Not available.

Source: Census of India 1961, Final Population Totals (pp-404 & 405 and also 410 and 411).

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Table: 4: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WORKERS OF EACH SEX INTO CULTIVATORS AND AGRICULTURAL LABOUR IN DIFFERENT STATES ACCORDING TO CENSUSES OF 1951 AND 1961.

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State	S E X	Total work- ers.	1951		1961	
			Cultiva- tors.	Agricul- tural labour.	Cultiva- tors.	Agricul- tural Labour.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. All India	P	100	50.02	19.72	52.82	16.71
	M	100	51.90	14.95	51.46	13.42
	F	100	45.42	31.39	55.72	23.86
2. Andhra Pradesh	P	100	35.10	33.38	40.11	28.59
	M	100	41.27	24.03	41.19	21.72
	F	100	19.59	56.92	38.47	39.13
3. Assam	P	100	61.35	3.29	64.69	3.65
	M	100	64.21	3.09	63.97	4.62
	F	100	55.53	3.70	66.14	1.71
4. Bihar	P	100	60.09	23.88	53.87	22.97
	M	100	60.37	22.39	53.46	19.87
	F	100	59.41	27.47	54.73	29.37
5. Bombay	P	100	39.27	27.28	}	
	M	100	41.03	17.85		
	F	100	36.02	44.69		
6. Gujarat	P	100			53.32	14.77
	M	100			49.54	11.95
	F	100			61.03	20.54
7. Maharashtra	P	100			46.11	23.80
	M	100			40.69	18.11
	F	100			54.79	32.90
8. Jammu & Kashmir	P	100	N.A.	N.A.	75.70	1.20
	M	100	N.A.	N.A.	72.79	1.53
	F	100	N.A.	N.A.	83.20	0.39
9. Kerala	P	100	23.15	25.49	20.92	17.38
	M	100	25.62	22.75	22.92	13.10
	F	100	17.02	32.30	16.25	27.42
10. Madhya Pradesh	P	100	45.45	33.64	62.68	16.63
	M	100	54.01	21.77	59.44	14.00
	F	100	31.31	53.23	67.34	20.41
11. Madras	P	100	37.95	22.30	42.07	18.42
	M	100	40.98	17.72	41.87	14.30
	F	100	27.08	38.72	42.45	26.36
12. Mysore	P	100	48.69	20.29	54.13	16.42
	M	100	52.21	14.53	53.36	12.60
	F	100	38.71	36.61	55.61	23.67

Table: 4 (contd.)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. Orissa	P	100	51.88	18.45	56.82	17.01
	M	100	57.92	16.17	59.78	15.11
	F	100	34.12	25.17	50.06	21.37
14. Punjab	P	100	55.04	11.46	56.27	7.66
	M	100	54.48	9.79	51.86	8.38
	F	100	57.09	17.61	75.36	4.55
15. Rajasthan	P	100	65.72	7.58	73.61	4.11
	M	100	64.56	4.94	68.47	3.75
	F	100	67.67	12.04	82.79	4.75
16. Uttar Pradesh	P	100	67.98	7.65	63.89	11.30
	M	100	66.86	6.47	63.62	9.06
	F	100	71.03	10.83	64.78	19.24
17. West Bengal	P	100	35.49	15.31	38.50	15.30
	M	100	36.32	14.71	38.76	14.41
	F	100	31.00	18.56	36.83	21.10

- Note: 1. Figures for Gujarat and Maharashtra are not available separately for 1951. The figures given pertain to the then existing Bombay State.
2. The data in respect of Jammu & Kashmir are not available for 1951.
3. N.A. denotes - Not available.

Source:- Census of India 1961 Final Population Totals: (pp.406 and 407 and also 412 & 413).

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**TABLE: 5 : AGRICULTURAL WORKERS (AGRICULTURAL LABOUR AND CULTIVATORS)
IN EACH STATE AS PERCENTAGE OF CORRESPONDING ALL-INDIA
FIGURE ACCORDING TO THE CENSUSES OF 1961 AND 1951.**

State	Agricultural Labour		Cultivators	
	1961	1951	1961	1951
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
All-India	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Andhra Pradesh	16.95	13.99	7.52	5.80
Assam	0.60	0.46	3.34	3.38
Bihar	14.03	11.77	10.41	11.67
Mharashtra-Gujarat	18.31	20.91	13.32	11.86
Kerala	3.11	4.05	1.18	1.45
Madhya Pradesh	8.94	15.74	10.66	8.38
Madras	8.98	7.09	6.49	4.76
Mysore	5.59	4.89	5.84	4.61
Orissa	4.14	3.67	4.37	4.07
Punjab	1.73	2.55	4.02	4.83
Rajasthan	1.25	2.17	7.09	7.41
Uttar Pradesh	10.36	7.34	18.52	25.71
West Bengal	5.63	5.04	4.48	4.61

Source:- Census of India 1961: Final population totals: Appendix III
A note on Agricultural workers in 1961 census by P.S.Sharma,
Research Officer, Office of the Registrar General, India-
Table I, Page 433.

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TABLE 6: AGRICULTURAL LABOUR PER 100 CULTIVATORS ACCORDING TO
1951 AND 1961 CENSUSES IN DIFFERENT STATES AND ALL-INDIA

State	Agricultural Labour					
	Persons		Males		Females	
	1961	1951	1961	1951	1961	1951
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
All-India	32	39	18	21	14	18
Andhra Pradesh	71	95	33	49	38	46
Assam	6	5	5	3	1	2
Bihar	43	40	25	26	18	14
Maharashtra- Gujarat	43	70	21	30	22	40
Kerala	83	110	44	70	39	40
Madhya Pradesh	27	74	13	30	14	44
Madras	44	59	22	37	22	22
Mysore	30	42	15	22	15	20
Orissa	30	35	19	23	11	12
Punjab	14	21	12	14	2	7
Rajasthan	5	12	3	5	2	7
Uttar Pradesh	18	11	11	7	7	4
West Bengal	40	43	33	35	7	8

Source:- Census of India 1961 Final Population
 Totals.- Table 8 (Page 437)

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TABLE 7 : PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF AGRICULTURAL LABOUR BY SCHEDULED CASTES, SCHEDULED TRIBES AND OTHER CLASSES ACCORDING TO 1961 CENSUS

State	All Classes			Scheduled Castes		
	Persons	Males	Females.	Persons	Males	Females
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
All India	100.00	54.96	45.04	33.20	18.49	14.71
Rural	100.00	55.00	45.00	33.33	18.58	14.75
Urban	100.00	53.87	46.13	27.82	14.73	13.09
1. Andhra Pradesh	100.00	46.00	54.00	32.92	15.26	17.66
2. Assam	100.00	84.79	15.21	7.86	6.82	1.04
3. Bihar	100.00	58.26	41.74	39.86	21.44	18.42
4. Gujarat	100.00	54.25	45.74	13.44	6.70	6.67
5. Jammu & Kashmir	100.00	91.02	8.98	17.77	15.65	2.12
6. Kerala	100.00	52.83	47.17	31.90	16.03	15.87
7. Madhya Pradesh	100.00	49.63	50.37	23.14	11.31	11.83
8. Madras	100.00	51.09	48.91	47.15	24.08	23.07
9. Maharashtra	100.00	46.85	53.15	12.11	5.67	6.54
10. Mysore	100.00	50.31	49.69	26.75	13.72	13.03
11. Orissa	100.00	61.76	38.24	25.31	16.37	8.94
12. Punjab	100.00	88.13	11.87	71.92	63.73	8.19
13. Rajasthan	100.00	58.48	41.52	45.07	27.33	17.74
14. Uttar Pradesh	100.00	62.41	37.59	56.67	33.26	23.41
15. West Bengal	100.00	81.65	18.36	36.80	30.13	6.67

Contd..... (xi)

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TABLE : 7 -(Contd)

Census - 1961						
State.	Scheduled Tribes			Other Classes		
	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females
1.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.
All India	10.59	5.37	5.22	56.21	31.10	25.11
Rural	10.78	5.46	5.32	55.89	30.96	24.93
Urban	3.90	2.08	1.82	68.28	37.06	31.22
1. Andhra Pradesh	5.18	2.48	2.70	61.90	28.26	33.64
2. Assam	18.77	12.17	6.60	73.37	65.80	7.57
3. Bihar	5.35	2.44	2.91	54.79	34.38	20.41
4. Gujarat	36.75	18.43	18.32	49.81	29.05	20.76
5. Jammu & Kashmir	-----	-----	-----	82.23	75.37	6.86
6. Kerala	4.24	2.10	2.14	63.86	34.70	29.16
7. Madhya Pradesh	29.45	14.69	14.76	47.41	23.63	23.78
8. Madras	10.44	5.60	4.84	42.41	21.41	21.00
9. Maharashtra	11.95	5.80	6.15	75.94	35.48	40.46
10. Mysore	16.82	8.72	8.10	56.43	27.87	28.56
11. Orissa	38.21	21.29	16.92	36.48	24.10	12.38
12. Punjab	0.21	0.08	0.13	27.87	24.32	3.55
13. Rajasthan	13.23	7.36	5.87	41.70	23.79	17.91
14. Uttar Pradesh	-----	-----	-----	43.33	29.15	14.18
15. West Bengal	16.50	8.77	7.73	46.70	42.75	3.95

Source: 1961 Census Tables C-VIII pages 538-549 and paper No. 1 page 408.

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TABLE 8-A: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MALE AND FEMALE WORKERS AMONG SCHEDULED CASTES BY INDUSTRIAL CATEGORY FOR RURAL INDIA ONLY:
BASE : TOTAL SCHEDULE CASTE WORKERS OF EACH SEX AS 100.

		SCHEDULE CASTE					
Sl.	State	Cultivators			Agricultural Labourers		
		Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	India	40.78	43.30	36.42	36.80	32.37	44.48
1.	Andhra Pradesh	24.60	27.50	21.19	60.25	51.94	69.99
2.	Assam	63.78	65.05	60.84	4.55	5.48	2.39
3.	Bihar	24.83	25.37	24.10	57.00	53.16	62.25
4.	Gujarat	31.67	33.53	29.07	35.02	30.21	41.77
5.	Jammu & Kashmir	81.89	79.90	86.89	2.83	3.46	1.24
6.	Kerala	4.04	5.54	2.26	47.24	43.72	51.42
7.	Madhya Pradesh	52.50	52.63	52.33	29.26	26.14	33.03
8.	Madras	32.25	35.74	27.55	44.26	39.37	50.86
9.	Maharashtra	21.57	22.06	20.98	55.50	46.92	65.82
10.	Mysore	49.14	52.30	44.56	31.44	27.15	37.68
11.	Orissa	38.18	43.10	28.97	26.60	26.39	26.99
12.	Punjab	27.84	24.32	42.61	29.55	32.68	16.44
13.	Rajasthan	67.61	65.15	71.42	11.47	11.47	11.47
14.	Uttar Pradesh	52.95	56.09	45.99	28.51	24.21	38.07
15.	West Bengal	44.69	47.95	27.14	30.62	29.67	35.74

Source: Statement 3, (page 521 - 525), Census of India (1961)
 Volume I, Part II-C(i).

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Table: 8 B PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MALE AND FEMALE WORKERS AMONG SCHEDULE TRIBES BY INDUSTRIAL CATEGORY FOR RURAL INDIA ONLY BASE : TOTAL SCHEDULED TRIBE WORKERS OF EACH SEX AS 100

Sl.	State	SCHEDULE TRIBES					
		Cultivator			Agricultural Labourer		
		Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	India	69.32	69.65	68.94	19.91	18.62	21.44
1.	Andhra Pradesh	49.93	51.34	48.27	34.78	30.73	39.55
2.	Assam	85.53	88.45	82.19	3.15	3.74	2.48
3.	Bihar	79.18	76.96	81.56	9.63	8.47	10.90
4.	Gujarat	61.28	61.79	60.67	31.79	29.25	34.85
5.	Kerala	26.51	28.79	23.47	42.51	37.08	49.72
6.	Madhya Pradesh	72.97	72.86	73.09	20.50	19.62	21.47
7.	Madras	60.79	61.40	59.95	20.70	19.28	22.64
8.	Maharashtra	53.04	53.57	52.45	38.82	35.81	42.17
9.	Mysore	45.39	46.97	43.27	29.52	26.76	33.20
10.	Orissa	62.78	65.97	58.28	22.22	21.09	23.82
11.	Punjab	86.70	82.15	90.63	4.93	4.50	5.31
12.	Rajasthan	87.93	87.68	88.24	3.96	3.90	4.04
13.	West Bengal	49.65	52.14	46.09	28.76	25.90	32.86

Source: Statement 4, (page 528-29) of Census of India (1961) Vol. I Part II-C(i)

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TABLE 9 : AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS AT WORK OF RURAL WORKERS
DURING THE WEEK - ALL INDIA-RURAL.

Period of survey	Average number of Days at work		
	Males	Females	Persons
1	2	3	4
N.S.S.14th Round July 58-June 59	5.91(5.57)	5.66(4.94)	5.83(5.36)
N.S.S.15th Round July 59 June 60	6.22(5.76)	6.08(5.07)	6.18(5.55)
N.S.S.16th Round July 60 June 61	6.33(6.37*)	6.19(6.13*)	6.30(6.29*)

Source: N.S.S. Reports - No.100 (page 132), No.148 (page 92),
 No.114 (Page 255). Figures in brackets refers to
 Agricultiural Labour except for 16th round where it refers
 to Agricultural Enterprises and those are indicated by star mark.

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TABLE 10: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WORKING PERSONS BY DAYS AT WORK DURING REFERENCE WEEK.

Period: 16th Round of N.S.S. July '60-June '61.

All-India- Rural

Days at work	Male	female	all persons
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
0	0.59	0.87	0.68
1	1.32	2.21	1.60
2	1.85	2.65	2.10
3	2.72	3.49	2.96
4	4.36	4.82	4.51
5	5.65	5.09	5.47
6	9.74	8.31	9.29
7	73.07	71.82	72.68
Not recorded	0.70	0.74	0.71
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source : N.S.S. Report No.114, Table (3.8) p.10

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TABLE 11: DISTRIBUTION OF GAINFULLY EMPLOYED BY WEEKLY HOURS AT WORK AND THE PROPORTIONS AVAILABLE FOR ADDITIONAL WORK IN EACH 'HOURS-AT-WORK' GROUP DURING THE REFERENCE WEEK: PERIOD: 16TH ROUND N.S.S. JULY '60- JUNE '61

	Males				Females				Persons			
	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
0	0.59	0.59	2.47	0.01	0.85	0.85	7.95	0.08	0.67	0.67	4.69	0.03
1-14	3.13	3.72	37.07	1.10	8.15	9.00	34.21	2.77	(4.77)	(4.77)	(5.43)	(0.26)
15-28	8.50	12.22	31.48	2.67	20.44	29.44	18.11	3.70	(5.60)	(10.37)	(39.22)	(2.20)
29-42	17.43	29.65	19.96	1.48	27.35	56.79	13.31	3.64	(12.34)	(22.71)	(37.02)	(4.57)
43-56	35.51	65.16	6.03	2.14	29.18	85.97	5.15	1.50	(18.37)	(41.08)	(27.83)	(5.10)
57 and above	34.07	99.23	1.72	0.58	13.19	99.16	2.17	0.28	(32.09)	(73.17)	(7.79)	(2.50)
not recorded	0.77	100.00	-	-	0.84	100.00	-	-	27.44	99.20	1.79	0.49
									(26.83)	(100.00)	(19.1)	(0.66)
									0.80	100.00	-	-
									(-)		(-)	
Total	100.00	-	10.11	10.11	100.00	-	11.99	11.99	100.00	-	10.71	10.71
									(100.00)	-	(15.29)	(15.29)

A stands for: Percentage of Employed persons.

B stands for: Cumulative percentage.

C stands for: Percentage reporting available for additional work.

D stands for: Persons reporting available for additional work as percentage of employed persons.

Source: N.S.S. Report No. 114, table (3.10) page, 12.

Figures within brackets in columns 10 to 13 refer to the Corresponding figures for the period August '56 - Aug. '57 (taken from N.S.S. report No. 52 p. 11).

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Table: 12 BREAK UP OF THE IDLE TIME AVAILABLE WITH THE WORKING POPULATION IN RURAL AREAS.

Reference Period : Work

Rural : All India

REASON	Average No. of days not at work during the week per person employed.		Average No. of idle days not at work per working person per year.	
	1958-59	1960-61	1958-59	1960-61
1	2	3	4	5
1. Seasonal non-availability for work.	-	-	33.0	32.9
2. Seasonal non-availability of work.	-	-	18.5	12.8
3. Casual absence due to sickness, etc.	0.70	0.43	31.2	19.6
4. Casual non-availability of work.	0.25	0.19	11.2	8.6
5. Casual non-availability for work.	0.11	0.08	4.9	3.6
No. of days not at work.	1.06	0.70	98.8	77.5
No. of days at work.	5.94	6.30	266.2	287.5
Total	7.00	7.00	365.0	365.0

Source: (i) Paper submitted by Shri M.V.S. Rao, C.S.G., New Delhi for the All-India Seminar on Agricultural Labour.

(ii) Agricultural Labour in India - A Compendium of Basic Facts, p. 54.

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TABLE 13: DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION OF INDIA IN AGRICULTURAL LABOUR AND OTHER RURAL HOUSEHOLDS IN RURAL AREAS BY ACTIVITY STATUS ON THE REFERENCE DAY.

1	(Percentages)					
	Agricultural labour Households			Other Rural Households		
	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female	Persons
2	3	4	5	6	7	
Employed	49.22	24.38	36.82	53.52	20.20	37.09
Unemployed: Seeking work	4.55	4.38	4.47	0.92	0.28	0.60
Not seeking but available for work	1.51	2.49	1.99	0.58	0.63	0.61
Persons in labour force.	55.28	31.25	43.28	55.02	21.11	38.30
Persons not in labour force.	44.42	68.30	56.35	44.85	78.74	61.56
Not recorded	0.30	0.45	0.37	0.13	0.15	0.14
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source:- The National Sample Survey, Eleventh and Twelfth Rounds, Report No. 52 table 3(5), p. 54.

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Table:14 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF GAINFULLY EMPLOYED PERSONS IN 'AGRICULTURAL LABOUR' AND OTHER RURAL HOUSEHOLDS BY DAYS AT WORK DURING THE REFERENCE WEEK.

Period of Survey: August '56 - August '57

Rural : All India.

Days at Work	Households	
	Agricultural Labour	Other Rural
1	2	3
0	6.03	3.82
1	3.70	1.43
2	6.14	2.53
3	8.27	3.55
4	11.93	5.28
5	9.08	5.42
6	7.87	10.09
7	46.78	67.56
Not recorded	0.20	0.32
Total	100.00	100.00

Source: The National Sample Survey (Eleventh and Twelfth Round-August, 1956 - August, 1957) Report Number 52, pp. 103 and 91

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TABLE: 15 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF GAINFULLY EMPLOYED PERSONS
IN 'AGRICULTURAL LABOUR' AND 'OTHER RURAL' HOUSEHOLDS
BY NUMBER OF HOURS WORKED PER WEEK.

Period of Survey: August '56 - August '57

Rural : All India.

No. of Hours worked per week.	Households	
	Agricultural Labour	Other Rural
	6.03	3.82
1-7	1.38	1.26
8-14	5.16	4.89
15-28	16.54	13.63
29-42	23.31	19.70
43-56	26.87	32.10
57-70	18.58	22.44
Above 70	1.34	1.89
Not recorded	0.79	0.27
Total:	100.00	100.00

Source:- The National Sample Survey (Eleventh and Twelfth
 Round - Aug., 1956 - Aug., 1957) Report Number
 52 pp. 104 and 94.

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TABLE 16 : DISTRIBUTION OF RURAL HOUSEHOLDS, RURAL LABOUR HOUSEHOLDS AND AGRICULTURAL LABOUR HOUSEHOLDS DURING THE FIRST AGRICULTURAL LABOUR ENQUIRY (1950-51) SECOND AGRICULTURAL LABOUR ENQUIRY (1956-57) AND RURAL LABOUR ENQUIRY, (18TH ROUND 1963-64) BY STATES.

State	Estimated Number of Rural Households (in Lakhs)			Percentage to total Rural Households			
				Rural Labour Households.	Agricultural Labour Households		
	1963-64	1956-57	1950-51	1963-64	1963-64	1956-57	1950-51
1.	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
India@	676	666	589	25.53	20.90	24.47	30.39
Andhra Pradesh	56	59	55	34.74	29.39	35.59	50.91
Assam*	20	22	19	15.32	11.68	18.18	10.53
Bihar	78	88	64	32.88	26.28	29.55	40.63
Gujarat	27	% 73		19.78	15.85	% 26.03	% 28.99
Maharashtra	52		% 69	30.01	26.64		
Kerala	26	22	21	36.69	27.16	22.73	38.10
Madhya Pradesh	56	53	46	22.61	19.54	24.53	28.26
Madras	54	52	49	57.86	49.25	36.54	55.13
Mysore	34	33	29	23.57	19.49	27.27	37.93
Orissa	35	34	28	29.75	26.47	29.41	42.86
Punjab**	29	32	26	14.92	12.23	9.38	11.54
Rajasthan	35	29	26	11.78	4.46	6.90	7.69
U.P.	119	116	111	15.21	12.39	17.24	14.41
W. Bengal	47	48	43	33.81	27.47	25.00	25.58
Jammu & Kashmir	5	N.A.	N.A.	2.54	0.92	N.A.	N.A.

Note: @ All-India including Jammu and Kashmir.

* Includes Manipur and Tripura.

% These figures relate to the old Bombay State as a whole, since bifurcation took place only in May, 1960. Hence separate figures for the States of Gujarat and Maharashtra are not available.

** Includes Delhi and Himachal Pradesh.

N.A. Not available.

Source: 1. Agricultural Labour in India, Report on the Second Enquiry, Vol. I-All India.

2. The National Sample Survey (Eighteenth Round Feb., 63-Jan-64)- Report Number 152.

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TABLE 17: ESTIMATED NUMBER OF RURAL LABOUR HOUSEHOLDS AND ITS
DISTRIBUTION ACCORDING TO POSSESSION OF LAND
RURAL LABOUR ENQUIRY 18TH ROUND 1963-64

STATE	Estimated number of Rural Labour Households in '000'	Percentage of Rural Labour Households.	
		With land	Without land.
1	2	3	4
All India	17,247	39.1	60.9
Andhra Pradesh	1,	29.0	71.0
Assam*	314	42.27	57.73
Bihar	2,566	48.5	51.5
Gujarat	539	12.4	87.6
Jammu & Kashmir	13	50.0	50.0
Kerala	955	67.6	32.4
Madhya Pradesh	1,257	47.6	52.4
Madras	1,962	28.4	71.6
Maharashtra	1,575	28.9	71.1
Mysore	799	31.6	68.4
Orissa	1,055	42.4	57.6
Punjab**	439	14.53	85.47
Rajasthan	414	45.70	54.3
U.P.	1,814	50.7	49.3
W. Bengal	1,590	38.1	61.9

Note: * Includes Manipur and Tripura.

** Includes Delhi and Himachal Pradesh.

Source: The National Sample Survey
(Eighteenth Round February, 1963-
January, 1964, Report Number 152.

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TABLE 18: ESTIMATED NUMBER OF AGRICULTURAL LABOUR HOUSEHOLDS AND THEIR PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION ACCORDING TO THEIR POSSESSION OF LAND.

State	1963-64		
	Agricultural	Labour	Households
	Estimated No. in '000'	Percentage of those with land : without land	
1	2	3	4
India @	14,124	38.83	61.17
Andhra Pradesh	1,654	27.33	72.67
Assam *	239	39.56	60.44
Bihar	2051	47.27	52.73
Gujarat	431	13.66	86.34
Maharashtra	1398	28.57	71.43
Kerala	707	60.87	39.13
M.P.	1086	49.56	50.44
Madras	1670	28.97	71.03
Mysore	661	31.41	68.59
Orissa	939	44.76	55.24
Punjab **	360	14.75	85.25
Rajasthan	157	39.62	60.38
U.P.	1478	51.49	48.51
W. Bengal	1289	37.78	62.22
Jammu & Kashmir	5	50.00	50.00

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TABLE 18 (CONTD.)

State	1956-57		
	Agricultural Labour Households		
	Estimated No. in '000'	Percentage of those with land : without land	
	5	6	7
India @	16300	42.87	57.13
Andhra Pradesh	2100	34.26	65.74
Assam *	400	36.99	63.01
Bihar	2600	61.22	38.78
Gujarat	% 1900	% 33.28	% 66.72
Maharashtra			
Kerala	500	51.59	48.41
M.P.	1300	40.52	59.48
Madras	1900	37.28	62.72
Mysore	900	36.18	63.82
Orissa	1000	46.47	53.53
Punjab **	300	9.26	90.74
Rajasthan	200	37.20	62.80
U.P.	2000	55.59	44.41
W. Bengal	1200	36.51	63.49
Jammu & Kashmir	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.

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TABLE 18 (CONTD)

State	1950-51		
	Agricultural Labour Households.		
	Estimated No. in '000.	Percentage of those with land : without land	
1	8	9	10
India @	17900	49.93	50.07
Andhra Pradesh	2800	46.29	53.71
Assam *	200	56.65	43.35
Bihar	2600	64.11	35.89
Gujarat)	% 2000	% 36.71	% 63.29
Maharashtra)			
Kerala	800	55.02	44.98
M.P.	1300	36.97	63.03
Madras	2700	59.00	41.00
Mysore	1100	59.64	40.36
Orissa	1200	55.23	44.77
Punjab **	300	16.37	83.63
Rajasthan	200	41.15	58.85
U.P.	1600	40.13	59.87
W.Bengal	1100	46.29	53.71
Jammu & Kashmir	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.

Note : @ All-India including Jammu & Kashmir.

* Includes Manipur and Tripura.

% These figures relate to the old Bombay State as a whole since bifurcation took place only in May, 1960. Hence separate figures for the States of Gujarat and Maharashtra are not available.

** Includes Delhi and Himachal Pradesh.

N.A. Not available.

- Source :
1. Agricultural Labour in India, Report on the Second Enquiry Vol. I - All-India.
 2. The National Sample Survey (Eighteenth Round February, 1963-January, 1964) Report Number 152 Agricultural Labour in India, A Compendium of Basic Facts.

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TABLE 19 : PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF AGRICULTURAL LABOUR FORCE BY AGE AND SEX IN 1950-51, 1956-57 AND 1961.

Base: All Persons=100

State	ADULTS								
	M E N			W O M E N			C H I L D R E N		
	1950-51*	1956-57*	1961	1950-51*	1956-57*	1961	1950-51*	1956-57*	1961
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. All India	54.66	55.82	49.40	40.43	36.52	40.48	4.91	7.66	10.12
2. Andhra Pradesh	50.00	47.32	40.12	45.45	42.40	47.83	4.55	10.28	12.05
3. Assam	69.08	63.33	75.67	30.92	29.94	13.31	-	6.73	10.95
4. Bihar	54.55	63.78	52.76	40.90	30.81	38.00	4.55	5.41	9.24
5. Gujarat	-	-	49.11	-	-	41.28	-	-	9.61
6. J&K	-	-	83.67	-	-	8.33	-	-	8.00
7. Kerala	54.13	57.78	51.58	44.98	40.26	45.95	0.89	1.96	2.47
8. Madhya Pradesh	52.17	48.91	43.99	43.48	42.96	44.94	4.35	9.83	11.07
9. Madras	50.00	51.22	46.02	45.01	41.87	44.91	4.99	6.91	9.07
10. Maharashtra	45.83	48.24	42.20	45.84	42.56	47.07	8.33	9.20	10.73
11. Mysore.	47.61	48.40	43.38	47.61	43.38	44.83	4.78	8.22	12.59
12. Orissa.	66.68	57.80	53.82	27.78	34.17	34.88	5.54	8.03	12.10
13. Punjab	75.11	74.69	80.65	18.67	16.09	10.51	6.22	9.22	8.84
14. Rajasthan	57.25	50.96	50.94	38.04	41.94	36.46	4.71	7.10	12.69
15. Uttar Pradesh	84.67	61.03	56.12	14.29	30.78	33.57	1.84	8.19	10.31
16. West Bengal	73.34	82.24	77.10	19.98	14.48	17.38	6.68	3.28	5.52

Note :

- * (a) Assam includes Manipur and Tripura.
 (b) Maharashtra includes Gujarat.
 (c) Punjab includes Haryana, Delhi and Himachal Pradesh.

Source :

Agricultural Labour in India - Report on the Second Enquiry pp. 239 and 259 and 1961 - Census and Agricultural Labour in India - A Compendium of Basic Facts - Page 34.

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TABLE 20: EMPLOYMENT FOR WAGES AND SELF EMPLOYMENT OF
ADULT MALE AND FEMALE AGRICULTURAL LABOUR
(CASUAL) IN 1950-51 AND 1956-57.

(No. of days in the year)

State	1950-51				1956-57			
	Wage Employment		Self Employment		Wage Employment		Self Employment	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. All-India \$	200	134	75	N.A.	197	141	40	27
2. Andhra Pradesh	157	130	76	N.A.	198	149	42	25
3. Assam *	246	152	48	N.A.	261	230	10	12
4. Bihar	198	111	82	N.A.	218	124	28	27
5. Gujarat	181@	132@	47@	N.A.	217@	168@	35@	25@
6. Maharashtra								
7. Kerala %	194	143	46	N.A.	165	130	29	25
8. Madras	178	155	80	N.A.	170	142	33	12
9. Madhya Pradesh	213	124	75	N.A.	187	145	60	33
10. Mysore	155	130	112	N.A.	208	157	39	25
11. Orissa	237	150	75	N.A.	177	91	53	35
12. Punjab %	116	73	94	N.A.	172	158	44	91
13. Rajasthan	156	126	110	N.A.	192	139	36	34
14. Uttar Pradesh	280	143	37	N.A.	178	104	63	41
15. West Bengal	232	179	40	N.A.	227	168	25	28

Note: \$ All-India including Jammu and Kashmir.

* Includes Manipur and Tripura.

@ These figures relate to the old Bombay State as a whole since bifurcation took place only in May, 1960. Hence separate figures for the States of Gujarat and Maharashtra are not available for the years 1950-51 and 1956-57.

% Includes Delhi and Himachal Pradesh.

N.A. Not Available.

Source: Agricultural Labour in India - Report on the Second Enquiry Vol. I - All India, pp. 72 and 89.

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TABLE 21: UNEMPLOYMENT OF ADULT MEN AND WOMEN AGRICULTURAL LABOUR DURING THE YEAR 1950-51 AND 1956-57.

(No. of days in the year)

State	Adult Males				Females
	Attached		Casual		1956-57
	1950-51	1956-57	1950-51	1956-57	
1	2	3	4	5	6
1. All India	19	68	90	128	196
2. Andhra Pradesh	8	12	132	126	191
3. Assam-Manipur-Tripura.	12	67	71	94	123
4. Bihar	21	119	85	120	214
5. Gujarat-Maharashtra	12	38	137	113	171
6. Kerala	138	145	125	170	209
7. Madras	24	68	107	162	210
8. Madhya Pradesh	12	45	77	117	187
9. Mysore	38	79	98	118	183
10. Orissa	7	43	53	135	239
11. Punjab-Delhi-Haryana-Himachal Pradesh	41	32	155	150	117
12. Rajasthan	19	39	99	138	192
13. Uttar Pradesh	11	69	48	124	220
14. West Bengal	17	47	93	113	169

Source: (i) Agricultural Labour in India-Report on the Second enquiry, p. 95-97

(ii) Agricultural Labour in India - A Compendium of Basic Facts-P.56.

TABLE 22. Daily Average Wage of Men and Women for
Agricultural and Non-Agricultural Labour.

(NAYA PAISE)

States	MEN				WOMEN			
	Agricultural Wage		Non-Agricultural Wage		Agricultural Wage		Non-Agricultural Wage	
	1950-51	1956-57	1950-51	1956-57	1950-51	1956-57	1950-51	1956-57
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. All India [@]	109	96	108	107	68	59	61	62
2. Andhra Pradesh	97	87	52	97	63	55	65	67
3. Assam *	190	154	183	168	148	115	110	101
4. Bihar	126	91	110	115	111	74	80	72
5. Gujarat)&	101	87	93	99	66	55	51	60
6. Maharashtra }								
7. Kerala	126	128	117	136	79	70	58	53
8. Madhya Pradesh	79	76	93	90	51	59	54	57
9. Madras	97	84	103	91	59	48	44	48
10. Mysore	90	84	109	112	57	55	57	59
11. Orissa	72	80	76	90	49	55	46	57
12. Punjab **	184	198	182	138	134	122	93	40
13. Rajasthan	123	98	116	125	94	61	81	60
14. Uttar Pradesh	118	92	116	99	105	65	76	59
15. West Bengal	166	143	153	127	104	98	83	90
16. Jammu & Kashmir								

NOTE:-

@ All India including Jammu and Kashmir.

* Includes Manipur and Tripura.

& These figures relate to the old Bombay State as a whole since bifurcation took place only in May, 1960. Hence separate figures for the States of Gujarat and Maharashtra are not available.

** Includes Delhi and Himachal Pradesh.

Source: Agricultural Labour in India, Report on the Second Enquiry, Vol. I-All India. pp.120-121.

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TABLE 23. DAILY WAGE RATES OF CASUAL ADULT MALE WORKERS FOR IMPORTANT AGRICULTURAL OPERATION (NAYA PAISE)

States.	Ploughing.		Weeding.		Transplanting		Harvesting		All Agricultural Operations.	
	1950-51.	1956-57.	1950-51.	1956-57.	1950-51.	1956-57.	1950-51.	1956-57.	1950-51.	1956-57.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
1. All India @	105	100	89	88	116	111	126	93	109	96
2. Andhra Pradesh	112	90	76	82	84	91	95	81	97	87
3. Assam *	174	168	210	144	186	157	193	146	190	154
4. Bihar.	103	94	104	89	130	101	181	92	126	91
5. Gujarat	94	97	80	79	102	112	102	87	101	87
6. Maharashtra										
7. Kerala	111	130	120	--	116	78	144	132	126	128
8. Madhya Pradesh	81	80	56	58	64	68	100	89	79	76
9. Madras	107	91	76	61	73	92	81	81	97	84
10. Mysore	91	88	73	66	83	108	96	77	90	84
11. Orissa	71	63	74	79	73	87	85	81	72	80
12. Punjab **	184	208	169	173	160	134	268	247	184	198
13. Rajasthan	144	108	115	83	112	100	124	110	123	98
14. Uttar Pradesh	107	94	102	76	108	106	158	97	118	92
15. West Bengal	163	143	146	141	171	160	174	135	166	143
16. Jammu & Kashmir										

Note:

@ All India including Jammu & Kashmir.

* Includes Manipur and Tripura.

% These figures relate to the old Bombay State as a whole, since bifurcation took place only in May, 1960. Hence separate figures for the States of Gujarat and Maharashtra are not available.

** Includes Delhi and Himachal Pradesh.

Source: Agricultural Labour in India, Report on the Second Enquiry, Vol. I-All India. Page 117.

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TABLE 24. AVERAGE WAGES OF CASUAL WOMEN AGRICULTURAL WORKERS FOR IMPORTANT OPERATIONS.

States.	(Naya Paise)									
	Sowing		Weeding		Transplantation		Harvesting.		All Agricultural.	
	1950-51.	1956-57	1950-51.	1956-57	1950-51.	1956-57	1950-51.	1956-57	1950-51.	1956-57
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.
1. @ All India	60	82	54	52	72	69	79	58	68	59
2. Andhra Pradesh	64	81	53	50	59	64	69	56	63	55
3. Assam *	155	107	155	107	165	154	163	99	148	115
4. Bihar	103	87	86	61	99	85	183	73	111	74
5. Gujarat. £	54	56	50	51	69	96	77	54	66	55
6. Maharashtra										
7. Kerala	76	108	74	57	69	59	102	72	79	70
8. Madhya Pradesh	57	77	46	55	60	68	74	62	51	59
9. Madras.	52	61	41	45	56	53	66	49	59	48
10. Mysore	57	66	53	47	55	87	68	53	57	55
11. Orissa.	43	62	48	58	47	56	53	58	49	55
12. Punjab **	...	...	123	194	73	100	326	140	134	122
13. Rajasthan	90	38	98	65	70	35	101	67	94	61
14. Uttar Pradesh	88	51	74	63	78	74	142	67	105	65
15. West Bengal	99	115	91	114	112	116	110	68	104	98
16. Jammu & Kashmir.										

Note:

@ All India including Jammu & Kashmir.

* Includes Maipur and Tripura.

£ These figures related to the old Bombay State as whole since bifurcation took place only in May, 1960. Hence separate figures for the States of Gujarat and Maharashtra are not available.

** Includes Delhi and Himachal Pradesh.

Source: Agricultural Labour in India, Report on the Second Enquiry, Vol. I - All India. Pp.118-119

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TABLE 25: PERCENTAGE OF MAN-DAYS WORKED BY CASUAL ADULT WORKERS UNDER DIFFERENT MODES OF WAGE PAYMENT.

STATES	CASH		KIND		CASH AND KIND	
	1950-51	1956-57	1950-51	1956-57	1950-51	1956-57
	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. All India @	56.00	48.7	31.3	40.5	9.0	10.8
2. Andhra Pradesh	59.5	54.5	23.0	38.5	14.4	7.0
3. Assam*	96.5	69.3	0.6	13.7	2.5	17.0
4. Bihar	40.9	27.2	52.3	65.3	3.3	7.5
5. Gujarat	65.9	63.0	23.4	23.7	6.3	11.3
6. Maharashtra						
7. Kerala	64.7	48.6	24.5	28.0	9.5	23.4
8. Madhya Pradesh.	35.5	31.7	49.8	62.3	8.3	6.0
9. Madras	64.4	57.2	21.5	36.0	12.0	6.8
10. Mysore	55.6	54.5	21.4	34.7	19.1	10.8
11. Orissa	40.7	35.7	36.5	57.0	19.9	7.3
12. Punjab **	33.3	53.2	38.7	36.7	25.7	10.1
13. Rajasthan	88.6	61.1	4.9	27.7	3.1	11.2
14. Uttar Pradesh	55.6	41.9	35.1	52.5	8.2	5.6
15. West Bengal	78.1	51.2	15.7	12.4	5.0	36.4

Note: @ All India including Jammu & Kashmir.

* Includes Manipur and Tripura.

\$ These figures relate to the old Bombay State as a whole, since bifurcation took place only in May, 1960, Hence Separate figures for the States of Gujarat and Maharashtra are not available.

** Includes Delhi and Himachal Pradesh. Percentage for 1950-51 do not add up to 100 since the share of children is not included. In each case the balance relates to children.

Source: Agricultural Labour in India, Report on the Second Enquiry. Vol.I - All India. Page 107.

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TABLE 26 : Distribution of Man-Days Worked
According to Wage Slabs (All-India).

Wage Slabs (Naya Paise).	Percentage break-up of man-days worked.	
	1950-51	1956-57 *
1	2	3
Below 62	13.5	21.5
62 to 87	21.1	22.2
87 to 112	27.1	31.0
112 to 137	16.0	9.3
137 to 162	10.1	9.5
162 to 187	4.4	2.3
187 to 212	4.0	2.5
212 and above	3.8	1.2
Mean Wage (Naya Paise)	109	96

* 0.5 per cent of man-days worked was not recorded.

Source: Agricultural Labour in India, Report on the
 Second Enquiry, Vol.I - All India, Page 123.

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TABLE 27: PERCENTAGE OF MAN-DAYS AND AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS WORKED BY MEN AND WOMEN CASUAL WORKERS IN DIFFERENT AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS AND NON-AGRICULTURAL OCCUPATION.

(ALL INDIA)

Operations	Period	Percentage of man-days worked		Average Number of days worked.	
		Men	Women	Men	Women
1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Ploughing	1950-51	12.7	0.2	52.00	28.00
	1956-57	8.5	0.52	26.66	2.08
2. Sowing	1950-51	2.6	1.2	19.00	18.00
	1956-57	1.14	0.94	3.79	3.76
3. Transplanting	1950-51	3.1	4.5	25.00	31.00
	1956-57	2.99	4.10	9.90	16.50
4. Weeding	1950-51	6.00	8.9	31.00	44.00
	1956-57	6.13	7.65	20.31	30.81
5. Harvesting	1950-51	11.2	9.7	40.00	42.00
	1956-57	13.20	11.54	43.68	46.45
6. All agricultural operations.	1950-51	52.3	31.2	167.00	119.00
	1956-57	50.42	31.51	166.95	124.82
7. Non-agricultural occupation	1950-51	10.0	3.7	56.00	41.00
	1956-57	9.03	2.54	29.89	10.23
8. All Labour	1950-51	62.3	34.9	200.00	133.00
	1956-57	59.45	34.05	196.84	137.05

Source: (i) Agricultural Labour in India-Report on the Second Enquiry, P.92.

(ii) Agricultural Labour in India- A compendium of Basic Facts. P.57.

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TABLE 28: AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME PER RURAL LABOUR HOUSEHOLD AND ITS DISTRIBUTION BY SOURCE, SEPARATELY FOR HOUSE-HOLDS WITH LAND AND WITHOUT LAND.

Period of Survey: February 1963-January, 1964

All India

Source of Income	Average Annual Income (Rs. 0.00) per Household		
	With land	Without land	All
1	2	3	4
1. Cultivation of Land	109.41 (109.41)	5.30 (5.29)	46.05 (46.05)
2. Manual Labour:-			
(a) Agricultural (Wages and Perquisites)	519.76 (525.13)	600.06 (607.85)	568.62 (575.47)
(b) Non-Agricultural (Wages and Perquisites)			
3. Others	88.02 (88.05)	75.74 (76.40)	80.55 (80.96)
Total:	717.19 (722.59)	681.10 (689.54)	695.22 (702.48)

Note: Figures given in brackets are those evaluated at retail prices and others at wholesale prices.

Source: The National Sample Survey Draft Report Number 152 - pp.38 and 39.

TABLE 29: AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME PER AGRICULTURAL LABOUR HOUSEHOLDS AND ITS DISTRIBUTION BY SOURCE ACCORDING TO FIRST (1950-51) SECOND (1956-57) AND THIRD (1963-64) AGRICULTURAL LABOUR ENQUIRIES.

All India

Source of Income	Average Annual Income (Rs.0.00) per household		
	1950-51	1956-57	1963-64
1.	2	3	4
1. Cultivation of Land	59.00	30.07	42.54 (42.54)
2. Manual Labour:			
(a) Agricultural (Wages and Perquisites)	286.97	319.55	(544.85
(b) Non-agricultural (Wages and Perquisites)	53.19	34.94	((552.50)
3. Others	46.94	52.91	72.80 (73.26)
Total	447.00	437.47	660.19 (668.30)

Note: (i) In the First Enquiry (1950-51) the evaluation was done at retail prices and in the Second Enquiry (1956-57), the evaluation was done at whole-sale prices only.

(ii) In the Third Enquiry (1963-64), the figures given in brackets are those evaluated at retail prices and the others are those evaluated at whole-sale prices.

Source: (i) Agricultural Labour in India - Report on the Second Enquiry, Vol. I- All-India-pp.140-141.

(ii) The National Sample Survey Draft Report No.152 pp.40 & 41.

(iii) Agricultural Labour in India - A Compendium of Basic Facts - pp.219 & 220.

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ANNUAL
TABLE 30: INCOME AND CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURE OF
AGRICULTURAL LABOUR HOUSEHOLDS BY STATES.

STATE	Income				Consumption Expenditure			
	1950-51		1956-57		1950-51		1956-57	
	Total (in Rs.)	Percentage to Total Income from Manual Labour (Agri-cultural +non-agricultural)	Total (in Rs.)	Percentage to Total Income from Manual Labour (agri-cultural +non-agricultural)	Total (in Rs.)	Percentage Expenditure on Food to total consumption Expenditure	Total (in Rs.)	Percentage Expenditure on Food to Total consumption Expenditure.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. All-India [@]	447	76.1	437	81.03	461	85.3	617	77.3
2. Andhra Pradesh	381	71.6	426	78.90	407	84.2	575	78.1
3. Assam*	609	87.2	755	87.33	622	85.7	1044	74.7
4. Bihar	535	76.3	420		575	89.9	617	81.7
5. Gujarat	415\$	82.2\$	450\$	85.43\$	428\$	86.2\$	620\$	75.1\$
6. Maharashtra								
7. Kerala	486	80.6	437	70.40	487	77.8	595	73.0
8. Madhya Pradesh	391	81.8	336	89.80	395	88.7	549	76.6
9. Madras	371	69.3	375	88.35	373	82.9	488	75.4
10. Mysore	388	67.8	486	76.92	407	79.5	679	74.5
11. Orissa	340	75.3	319	77.98	331	84.9	482	79.6
12. Punjab**	686	75.3	731	85.60	740	84.7	1066	71.3
13. Rajasthan	605	59.7	336	84.82	580	84.7	734	75.0
14. Uttar Pradesh	551	79.1	373	76.97	548	84.7	615	78.9
15. West Bengal	608	80.6	657	71.33	625	85.9	725	78.7
16. Jammu & Kashmir	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.				

@ All India including Jammu & Kashmir.

* Includes Manipur and Tripura.

\$ These figures relate to the old Bombay State as a whole, since bifurcation took place only in May, 1960. Hence separate figures for the State of Gujarat and Maharashtra are not available.

** Includes Delhi and Himachal Pradesh.

N.A. Denotes Not available.

Source: Agricultural Labour in India - Report on the Second Enquiry: pp 138 - 141 & 169.

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TABLE 31 : ^{ANNUAL} CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURE OF RURAL LABOUR AND AGRICULTURAL LABOUR HOUSEHOLDS ACCORDING TO RURAL LABOUR ENQUIRY (1963-64) BY STATES.

State	Consumption Expenditure of Rural Labour Households		Agricultural Labour Households	
	Total (in Rs.)	Percentage Expenditure on food to total consumption expenditure	Total (in Rs.)	Percentage Expenditure on food to total consumption expenditure.
1. All India	1052.81	73.44	1029.63	74.00
2. Andhra Pradesh	863.89	73.98	846.66	74.23
3. Assam*	1578.76	75.58	1636.97	75.95
4. Bihar	1018.11	79.40	1022.55	79.33
5. Gujarat	1122.57	78.36	1092.01	78.90
6. Maharashtra	1059.79	69.43	1032.85	69.63
7. Kerala	1050.11	69.26	988.04	70.66
8. Madhya Pradesh	1058.00	68.25	998.07	71.25
9. Madras	977.84	69.23	941.02	68.86
10. Mysore	1055.33	70.55	1046.80	71.03
11. Orissa	924.87	75.16	921.13	75.07
12. Punjab**	1637.86	70.68	1585.45	72.15
13. Rajasthan	1308.18	71.28	1179.57	74.19
14. Uttar Pradesh	1030.61	73.01	1036.86	72.94
15. West Bengal	998.49	81.60	961.43	83.01
16. Jammu & Kashmir	1494.31	73.33	1459.63	71.37

* Includes Manipur & Tripura

** Includes Delhi & Himachal Pradesh

Source : N.S.S. 18th Round.

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TABLE 32: EXTENT OF INDEBTEDNESS OF AGRICULTURAL LABOUR HOUSEHOLDS.

State	1950-51			1956-57		
	A	B	C	A	B	C
1. All India@	44.5	47	105	63.9	88	138
2. Andhra Pradesh	58.9	59	100	66.2	102	154
3. Assam*	39.2	29	74	29.9	10	35
4. Bihar	41.9	40	95	68.5	97	142
5. Gujarat	49.5)£	49)£	98)£	46.8)£	47)£	101)£
6. Maharashtra))))))
7. Kerala	47.8	21	43	79.1	63	79
8. Madhya Pradesh	45.9	37	79	47.3	51	103
9. Madras	46.0	38	89	72.3	90	124
10. Mysore	61.7	118	191	72.6	120	164
11. Orissa	16.9	9	50	59.1	39	67
12. Punjab**	85.8	285	332	79.0	287	363
13. Rajasthan	64.6	222	343	61.6	218	352
14. Uttar Pradesh	21.9	7	32	71.8	141	197
15. West Bengal	32.9	15	44	69.2	39	56
16. Jammu & Kashmir	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.

Notes:- A stands for 'Percentage of indebted household'.
 B stands for 'Average debt per household (Rupees)'.
 C stands for 'Average debt per indebted household (Rupees)'.

@ All-India - Including Jammu & Kashmir.

* Includes Manipur & Tripura.

** Includes Delhi & Himachal Pradesh.

£ These figures relate to the old Bombay State as a whole since bifurcation took place only in May, 1960. Hence separate figures for the States of Gujarat and Maharashtra are not available.

N.A. Denotes Not Applicable.

Source:- Agricultural Labour in India - Report of the Second Enquiry - pp. 221

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TABLE 33: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RURAL HOUSEHOLDS BY HOUSEHOLD OCCUPATION TOGETHER WITH AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN EACH OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY IN DIFFERENT ZONES AND ALL-INDIA.

Occupation of Household	(In Rupees)											
	Zone 1		Zone 2		Zone 3		Zone 4		Zone 5		All-India	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
Self - employed farmers	67.3	1,839	49.7	1,901	38.6	1,543	47.0	1,668	55.1	1,584	50.0	1,690
Self - empl businessmen	9.0	1,903	9.3	1,536	11.2	1,043	8.4	1,169	11.8	1,336	10.1	1,318
Agricultural - wage earners	11.7	845	27.6	817	36.8	725	29.7	781	22.4	731	27.3	765
Non-agricult wage earners	6.0	1,451	8.1	1,115	9.8	857	10.4	1,080	6.5	951	8.4	1,035
Salary earners	0.9	2,789	2.5	2,087	1.7	1,920	2.3	2,082	0.8	2,142	1.7	2,097
Not gainfully employed	1.6	1,724	2.8	545	1.9	442	2.2	724	3.4	768	2.5	729

(1x)

- Notes:-
- (i) A stands for 'Percent of households'.
 - (ii) B stands for 'Per household income'.
 - (iii) Every household in the sample is assigned one occupation on the basis of the source of income which contributed the maximum amount to the total household income.
 - (iv) Zone 1 - States of Punjab, Rajasthan, Jammu & Kashmir, and the Union Territories of Delhi and Himachal Pradesh.
 Zone 2 - States of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Mysore.
 Zone 3 - States of Kerala, Madras and Andhra Pradesh.
 Zone 4 - States of Orissa, Bihar, West Bengal and Assam and the Union Territories of Manipur & Tripura.
 Zone 5 - States of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

Source:- Table 5 of the (Occasional Paper 17) Rural Income Distribution by Zones, published by the National Council of Applied Economic Research, New Delhi.

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A SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE BASED ON REPLIES
TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND MEMORANDA
PRESENTED TO THE NATIONAL COMMISSION
ON LABOUR

1. Introduction.
2. Problems of Rural Labour.
3. Employment of Rural Labour.
4. Progressive Agriculture and its Impact on Rural Workers.
5. Labour Mobility in Agriculture.
6. Indebtedness Among Agricultural Labour.
7. Land Reforms.
8. Legislative Protection to Rural Workers.
9. Minimum Wages Act.
10. Difficulties in the Implementation of Minimum Wages Act.
11. Implementation Machinery.
12. Tribal and Bonded Labour.
13. Forest Workers.
14. Workers in Fisheries.
15. Contract Labour.

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A SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE BASED ON REPLIES TO
THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND MEMORANDA PRESENTED
TO THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON LABOUR.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The National Commission on Labour issued a comprehensive questionnaire which contains a section entitled 'Rural and unorganised Labour' with seven questions on the subject. Though the response to this section of the questionnaire has not been qualitatively satisfactory, a good number of replies have been received. Another source of information on the subject is formed by memoranda and evidence submitted by State Governments and important organisations/individuals. These bring out specific problems faced by this class of workers and suggestions for ameliorative measures.

2.0 Problems of Rural Labour

2.1 Rural labour faces two inter-related problems which demand urgent solution. One is social, centering round its low social status in the rural hierarchy and the handicaps resulting therefrom; the other is economic resulting from chronic lack of sufficient employment opportunities. Majority of rural labour are drawn from backward and other scheduled castes. Untouchability, though mitigated to a large extent, has not been completely eradicated. In order to improve their economic conditions, it is necessary that their social status is uplifted. Even now they are subject to social oppression at the hands of landlords and the rich, though there has been some improvement in the social status of Harijans. The prejudice against the scheduled castes is being gradually eroded. Formation of gram panchayats and exercise of democratic rights like the right to vote in elections for gram panchayats, reservation of seats for scheduled castes in legislatures and services, spread of education in general and among scheduled castes in particular through free ships and stipends have improved social status of rural labour. In fact, the problem of social handicap is to a large extent economic. Educated and economically well-off sections of rural population of 'lower caste origin' have acquired high social status as compared to their castemen who are not so economically well-off and educated. This indicates the trend towards greater emphasis on economic rather than on caste consideration. Social status has also shown a tendency towards improvement owing to such measures as removal of untouchability by law. However, greater credit should go to the 'winds of change' sweeping the rural society.

2.2 Chronic unemployment or under-employment is the main problem in rural areas, despite developments in various directions. So long as this position remains, mere legislative protection would not serve the purpose. In a disorganised sector like agriculture, it is difficult to give statutory protection to agricultural labour on a large scale. Economic and not moral or legal force will solve the problems confronting agricultural labour. One way in which these workers can be helped is to increase their bargaining power which can be done by providing alternative employment in rural areas at fairly reasonable wages. Providing employment opportunities should have precedence over regulation of wages. Once employment in rural areas is assured, prosperity will begin to flow, and in the process wages will find their level.

2.3 It would be better to give some technical training to these workers so that they may utilise their idle time. The population of agricultural labour and their dependents is fast increasing and unless something concrete is done to improve their social and economic conditions, the gap between them and industrial labour will

be further widened. This will certainly not be conducive to the realisation of the objective of reduction of social inequalities.

2.4 A large number of remedial steps have been taken by Government to solve the problems faced by these workers. But on account of enormous magnitude of the problem, they have not been quite successful. Legislative measures have not brought about the expected change of heart among employers to improve conditions of rural labour. No doubt there have been growth of cottage industries, spread of education, increased availability of irrigation facilities and functioning of Panchayat Raj administration. But all these have done very little to improve social and economic conditions of rural workers. Though State Governments have introduced a number of measures towards improvement of this class of workers, they have not yielded results due to ignorance, poverty, lack of initiative, self-centredness, personal interest and local party and group rivalry among the people.

2.5 Changes in the pattern of agriculture owing to extension of irrigation facilities, establishment of small and cottage industries are evident. These have opened up larger avenues of employment for rural population. But the magnitude of the unemployment continues and causes concern.

3.0 Employment of Rural Labour.

3.1 In the context of vast rural under-employment, special emphasis should be placed on a broad based programme for promotion of productive employment in rural areas by a combination of technical and institutional measures relying, to the extent possible, on the efforts of the people concerned and based on an adequate study of the nature, prevalence and regional distribution of rural unemployment and under-employment.

3.2 With a view to creating incentives and social conditions favourable to fuller and fruitful utilisation of local manpower in rural areas, the International Labour Organisation suggested the following action programmes:-

- (a) Local capital construction projects, more particularly, projects making for a quick increase in agricultural production, namely small and medium irrigation and drainage works, storage facilities and feeder roads;
- (b) Land development and settlement;
- (c) Labour intensive methods of cultivation and animal husbandry;
- (d) Development of other productive activities, such as, forestry and fishing;
- (d) Promotion of social services, such as education, housing and health services;
- (f) Development of viable small scale industries, such as, local processing of agricultural products and manufacture of simple consumers' and producers' goods needed by rural people; and
- (g) Special efforts to develop rural manufacturing activities that are ancillary and complementary to large-scale urban industry, etc.

3.3 All suggestions of the ILO are feasible provided these are appropriately dovetailed into the plan frame-work. The heart of the matter is about formulating a programme of coordinated development of rural areas. Heavy financial outlays will be required. But what is of utmost importance for people is to develop their local initiative and to channelise it in productive activities. This should be done in accordance with a programme of utilisation of rural manpower employed in agriculture and unorganised industries. In order to achieve success in this field it is necessary to provide suitable training for agricultural workers and their children in new skills which would stand them in good stead.

3.4 In order to utilise the rural labour force to the maximum possible extent it is necessary that agriculture should be developed side by side small scale industries. Some action has been initiated in this direction since Independence. Owing to rapid increase in the number of rural workers, there has been no appreciable impact of these programmes as yet. To achieve the desired results, it is necessary to chalk out a programme of productive employment which should aim at diversification of avenues of employment both in agriculture and non-agricultural sectors of rural areas.

3.5 Agricultural labour are generally idle during slack seasons. If they are made to display initiative and work on subsidiary occupations according to their capabilities, resources and surrounding environment, they would be able to better their economic standing. But such subsidiary occupations are not available. Steps should therefore be taken to provide sufficient employment opportunities for rural workers to supplement their earnings through diversification of agriculture, development of diary farming, poultry, bee-keeping, fisheries, etc. and through improvement and modernisation of cottage and household industries based on local resources and intermediate technology. Food processing and packing industry will be an appropriate area of development in rural areas. Proper marketing organisation, preferably through cooperatives will be a great help.

3.6 Other measures which in some states brought about improvement in employment opportunities are village uplift works, formation of cooperatives, small and cottage industries such as handlooms, brick kilns, rope or coir weaving, tanning and other leather manufacturing, construction of village roads, irrigation and drainage works, soil conservation works etc. In addition, double cropping, improved agricultural practices and diversification of agriculture result in more employment. Diversification of the entire rural economy resulting in a shift of population from agricultural to non-agricultural occupation and simultaneous reorganisation of agriculture on more intensive lines will help. In order to employ on a regular basis the labour diverted from agriculture, regular employment in public works and other programmes should be organised. In formulating all these programmes family planning should be given due priority. Rural labour should also be helped in the matter of housing and encouraged to build their own houses.

3.7 Formulation of any broad based programme for promotion of productive employment in rural areas should be preceded by adequate study of the nature and distribution of rural under-employment, the remedial measures already undertaken, technical and institutional development so far achieved and the resources locally available. For this purpose, an Agricultural Inquiry Commission should be appointed to undertake the desired study.

4.0 Progressive agriculture and its impact on rural workers.

4.1 New developments in agriculture have brought to light the fact that production can be stepped up even on small farms, if water for irrigation and other inputs are made available in time to agriculturists. In the coming decade, it is expected that a substantial part of the country will be brought under this new farm strategy and about half of the cultivable land will be under irrigation and supporting programme. These programmes will not only increase production but will also provide more employment.

4.2 In areas where progressive agricultural practices are adopted workers demand not only wages in kind but also claim a share in the produce. Often it is found that they get both. The share of a large crop gives them a better return for their labour. Hence agricultural labour in developing areas are in a much better position. Their wages are higher and their bargaining power better. In such areas small farmers who were formerly underemployed are now able to secure fuller employment. In this context it has also been suggested that such small farmers should be pushed up by providing them with adequate material and technical help to enable them adopt improved agricultural practices, which would keep them fully employed so that they may not compete for outside employment along with the landless labour.

5.0 Labour Mobility in Agriculture.

5.1 As already indicated, more and more opportunities of alternate employment at suitable wage should be provided to agricultural labour to draw them away from agriculture. A little mobility on the part of landless labour can be expected but persons with small uneconomic holdings do not move. It is therefore, considered not advisable to tie down people to small holdings and thus make them immobile.

6.0 Indebtedness among Agricultural Labour.

6.1 Agricultural labour is not able to get loans from cooperative societies because such loans are generally given against land. Similarly they do not get direct loans (taccavi) given by Government. Something should be done to enable them to get such loans.

6.2 A measure to deal with rural indebtedness will be to nationalise the debts of agricultural labour (i.e. the Government should take over the responsibility for their accumulated debts which have reduced them to slavery) and to start separate cooperatives for the landless labour and peasants with small holdings.

7.0 Land Reforms.

7.1 Any attempt to tackle the problem of rural unemployment should include radical land reforms and rapid industrialisation of the countryside. In the past, successive land reform measures tries to give some protection to rural population, but this proved ineffective. The implementation of land-reforms was thwarted by local forces which control the situation at the grass-root level. The man whom we seek to protect is powerless in the hands of these interests.

7.2 The two important aspects of land reforms are that 'sub-tenants' should be given occupancy rights and that land ceiling legislation should be implemented meaningfully and effectively. One suggestion to make ceiling legislation meaningful and effective

was that ceilings on land holdings should be fixed on family and not on individual basis. It has also been suggested that the surplus land resulting from ceiling legislation as well as fallow land available in the countryside should be distributed to the landless labour.

8.0 Legislative Protection to Rural Workers.

8.1 In addition to agricultural labour there is a considerable body of workers largely unorganised and employed in small industries in rural and semi-urban areas who are not covered by protective provisions of the present labour legislation. It is therefore considered necessary to have separate legislation for unorganised labour. It was suggested that minimum standards for conditions of work should be laid down for such type of labour and that minimum wages may also be fixed for such labour. Fixation of a national minimum wage below which no body should be paid would also help in improving their living standards and in combating exploitation of and payment of very low wages to these workers.

8.2 In rural areas there is a good deal of unemployment and under-employment. Owing to the surplus labour in the countryside their bargaining power is weak. According to one school, it is desirable to leave unorganised labour alone till they sufficiently organise themselves to claim their place in the social order. They have their own ways to protect themselves against risks. They are not industrial workers. They attach themselves to land, and their employment outside agriculture which they generally seek is of a subsidiary type. If they seek work or work in non-agricultural sector when they do not find any work on land, this problem is to be treated in a way different from that in organised industry. According to another school, the only way in which improvement can be brought about in regard to employment, wages and working conditions of these workers is by organising them so as to develop their skill and ability at collective bargaining. Firstly, employment opportunities should be sufficiently diversified and workers should be effectively organised. At this stage protective labour legislation may come to their aid.

9.0 Minimum Wages Act.

9.1 One of the characteristics of wages of agricultural and other unorganised workers is their low level. Agricultural wages are considered the most sticky because the impact of rise in agricultural production, prices and incomes appears to be limited on agricultural wages. One reason for this is lack of employment opportunities in rural areas which reduces the bargaining power of these workers. It is for this reason that there should be a provision for and regulation of payment of wages partly in kind and partly in cash.

9.2 The Minimum Wages Act, 1948 provides for statutory regulation of wages in agriculture and other scheduled employments where workers are not sufficiently organised and where sweated labour conditions usually prevail. The Act provides for the fixation and periodic revision of minimum rates of wages and matters like hours of work, overtime payment and weekly day of rest.

9.3 The implementation of the Minimum Wages Act, particularly in the field of agriculture, has been rather slow. The rates fixed long back are low and still continue to be the statutorily fixed minimum wage and these need revision. It has been suggested that while revising the wages, factors like consumer price index numbers, cost of production and prevailing wage rates should be kept in view. To improve the working conditions of agricultural workers, other

statutory provisions relating to daily and weekly hours of work, overtime wages, weekly off, etc., under the Minimum Wages Act need to be made applicable to employments in agriculture. Welfare measures like supply of drinking water, medical facilities and rest sheds as provided under other labour laws should be made available to agricultural workers on big farms employing 50 or more workers.

9.4 It has also been emphasised that fixation of minimum wages for agricultural workers is hardly of any use unless they are assured of regular employment. Further, the minimum wages fixed under the Minimum Wages Act for agricultural labour are unreal. During the slack season wages received by agricultural labour are much lower than the minimum wages fixed under the Act while during busy agricultural seasons they receive much higher wages. Moreover, there is hardly any machinery for implementing the Minimum Wages Act in agriculture.

10.0 Difficulties in the implementation of Minimum Wages Act.

10.1 Vastness of the area and scattered, temporary, casual and seasonal nature of employment in agriculture, illiteracy among employees and lack of education among employers, smallness of the size of undertaking and the practice of getting work done through contractors are some of the difficulties in the implementation of the Minimum Wages Act in favour of rural and unorganised workers. These difficulties are to a great extent real. With the present strength of the Labour Department, it was found not possible to cover the entire group of these workers. Moreover, in the agriculture sector the status of employer and employee is often indistinguishable; the owner of small plot of land is an employer when he needs additional hands on the farm during the peak seasons but he will be an employee when he works on the land of someone else to supplement his income.

10.2 Various systems of local weights and measures in which wages are paid to agricultural workers prevail; these present practical difficulties to the inspectors in verifying the claims of workers and in calculating whether the Minimum rates of wages are being paid to them. As the supply of agricultural labour is generally much above the demand they remain employed in agriculture only for 6-8 months in a year. That being the employment situation, workers often refuse to present themselves in courts in support of their claims petitions for fear of victimisation and replacement. The entire mass of agricultural labour is still unorganised and consciousness is rather slow to dawn. In spite of these handicaps the number of workers claiming benefit under the Minimum Wages Act is generally on the increase.

11.0 Implementation Machinery.

11.1 At present there is no administrative machinery to look to labour welfare in rural areas. An administrative machinery should be organised at the district and sub-division level to ensure proper implementation of the Minimum Wages Act. Such an authority could also be used for implementation of many other enactments pertaining to unorganised labour.

11.2 In some States there is hardly any machinery for the implementation of the Act. One of the State Governments was of the view that what is important is not the provision of statutory measures but their effective enforcement through a powerful machinery. Another view was that there is hardly any need for the Government to step in. Government interference would only spoil the good relations already existing between employers and the employees in the rural areas. There are no chances of exploitation of agricultural labour as the

employers in the agriculture sector are men of more or less of the same intelligence and financial means as that of the workers who are in large number.

11.3 As regards evolving a suitable enforcement machinery in view of the well-known limitations and difficulties in implementation of the Act, different views have been expressed by State Governments/organisations/individuals. One suggestion is that the enforcement of Minimum Wages Act should be entrusted to gram panchayats under the overall control of Block Development Officers. Sarpanchas should be declared the proper authority for settling claims of non-payment of wages. Another view is that the panchayats are incapable of implementing the Minimum Wages Act as most panchayats heads are influenced by vested interests. Moreover, the experiments with implementation of the Shops and Establishments Act by Local Bodies have not been very happy. Therefore, a separate machinery such as that of labour inspectorate should be charged with this responsibility. This will involve financial burden but it was felt that social and economic change which this measure would bring about would more than compensate the expenses involved. While reiterating that the implementation of the Minimum Wages Act should not be entrusted to panchayats, it was also suggested that it should be entrusted to the provincial and district boards officials and representatives of agricultural labour unions or agricultural organisations. The necessity of training the inspectorate for ensuring efficient implementation of Minimum Wages Act was also emphasised. A fourth suggestion was that in view of the need for economy it was not necessary to appoint any separate agency for effective implementation of the Minimum Wages Act for agricultural labour. Effective administration of the Act in rural areas can be achieved by strengthening already existing enforcement machinery of the department. Such a strengthening of the machinery can be achieved by drafting additional hands for each district for the sole purpose of checking up on implementation of Minimum Wages Act.

12.0 Tribal and bonded labour.

12.1 In Bihar Adivasis constitute an important segment of the working population. In all agricultural operations they work with their neighbours helping one another. Some agricultural workers have been displaced from their lands consequent on the starting of big projects like Heavy Engineering Corporation, Bokaro Steel Ltd., etc.

12.2 A queer situation has been created by labour legislation in relation to bonded labour. For all its good intentions, such legislation makes it difficult for the tribal labour to get a fair deal. In tribal and developing areas, a greater supervision of work is called for because such areas have a long history of exploitation. A strong administrative machinery is required to cope with the problem. Unfortunately, this machinery has not been built up. The situation in such areas is still not under control; this is the most difficult part of the problem. Feudal strongholds still persist in the countryside.

12.3 The network of Community Development Panchayati Raj institutions covers the entire country. In 1955, it was recommended that Panchayati Raj should not be introduced in Koraput (Orissa) having regard to special features of the area. It was also suggested that the development programmes should be implemented by the administration. But when it came to taking decision, it was the first area to be handed over to the Panchayati Raj. As a result, the process of development was reversed. Before the

introduction of the Panchayati Raj, loans were given directly to Savaras & Khond tribals and they were quick to repay them. Under Panchayati Raj, even Grain-golas have fallen in heavy arrears. We have, therefore, to distinguish between problem areas and normal areas because conditions vary from one area to another. The failure to identify the requirements peculiar to an area explains the failure of community development programme and Panchayati Raj. Dismantling these institutions will not help in regaining the control over the situation.

12.4 Money spent by the State for welfare in these areas seldom reaches the needy people. Therefore the administration in the tribal areas will have to be specially oriented for this purpose. Even if the system of bonded labour is abolished by legislation, there is the problem of finding alternative employment free from bond in such areas. Some priorities will have to be laid down for providing work and simultaneously the bonds may have to be broken.

13.0 Forest Workers.

13.1 As in agriculture, the work in forest industry is also of a casual nature and the workers in the industry are widely scattered. There are no trade unions or employers' organisations in the forest industry. The level of wages in forestry operations generally compares favourably with the average for the locality in which the workers are employed. In particular it has been stated the wage level in forestry operations has always been better than in agricultural operations.

13.2 In Jammu and Kashmir working conditions of forest labour are far from satisfactory. These workers are taken to far off places and even outside the State. There are no fixed hours of work and they often work from 7 in the morning till sun-set. In between the workers take time off for lunch which does not affect the contractor who employs them as the wages are generally on piece-rate basis. The relationship between the worker and forest lessee is not direct. The lessee takes the contract from the Government. In turn he appoints a sub-contractor to look after the actual delivery of the forest goods. Recruitment of workers is done through a local agent called Mate who is supposed to provide 20-30 workers on a commission basis. The Mate is also responsible for the discipline of the workers supplied by him. The workers who get injured or otherwise disabled are normally turned out of the job without any compensation. At times the workers meet with fatal accidents but their families do not get any compensation as it is not possible for them to pursue compensation cases at the place of the accident. The place of initiating action in case of death of forest labourer should be the worker's normal place of residence and not the place where the accident occurred. Possibilities should be explored to make it obligatory on the part of the contractor to take out an insurance policy on the life of the worker.

13.3 The members of the Commission had the benefit of a discussion with (a well known) social worker of long standing in the forest area of Jamki near Surat in Gujarat. This social worker has been working among the forest labour and his experience for over 20 years has been that there was a significant change in the attitude of workers. They have realised that skilled work pays better and therefore forest workers send their children for training to make them skilled workers. The forest labour cooperative society organised in this area has been successful. The working and

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living conditions of the workers have significantly improved. It has been stated that even some adivasis have taken advantage of technical and other educational facilities provided by the society.

14.0 Workers in Fisheries.

14.1 Development of fisheries on an industry basis is in a very early stage. Mechanisation of fishing boats is being organised. It will develop on an industry basis only with concentrated landings in fishing ports which are now being established. The labour in the fishing industry has not yet been surveyed in an organised manner by any agency. Fishermen can get employment either on fishing boats or on fish curing and processing work or on making and mending of nets or on building of boats.

14.2 The labour employed on the boat building work is well organised and will be covered under the relevant regulations of the Industries and Factories Act. The workers engaged for fishing and fish curing are not organised. The fishermen getting employment on ~~non~~-mechanised fishing vessels are either on regular wage basis or share of the catch basis. If the employment is by the owner of the boat who himself is a fisherman, the difficulty is not about wages. If the owner of the boat is a middleman or a fish trader, all the disadvantages of dealing with a middleman are there. If the wages are paid on the basis of the share of the catch, the cost of fish towards share is reckoned at a price lower than the market price for wholesale fish trade.

14.3 In the case of fishermen who move from one fishing area to another fishing area, amenities extended to them are limited depending on the nature of the new fishing area. There they are completely at the mercy of the fish traders for organisation and handling of fish catches.

14.4 Some of the fishermen operate both mechanised and non-mechanised boats. They move with the fish to about 50-60 miles in certain States like Kerala and Maharashtra, and to about 200 miles in Gujarat. Such a large-scale migration of fishermen during the season calls for an organisation and provision of facilities for camping and advances. It is here the fish traders and others exploit them - linking facilities and advances with the production.

14.5 With regard to inland fisheries, the fishermen face a similar situation. They are moved from one water area to another water area by the contractors for fishing purposes. Such a movement is quite common from reservoir to reservoir in the States of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. During these migrations some of the fishermen are not even provided with normal shelter and other facilities expected from the employer.

14.6 The difficulty in the case of fishermen operating small boats and catamarans along the coast and in inland water areas is that they are not yet sufficiently organised to expect good wages, incentive payments, social security benefits and better conditions of work. In the case of mechanised boats, there is an awareness of the need for an organisation. In some centres they are organised into mechanised fishermen's association and wages are more or less determined in a uniform manner for such operations. The need for safety measures of boats is regulated by the Acts in force. However, even in these cases, the facilities for housing and incentive wages are yet to accrue.

14.7 The facilities available to industrial labour or in villages are not available to fishermen and the villages where they live mainly because the fishermen live on the sea coast, in hamlets separated and isolated from the main village. A survey of the working conditions of labour engaged in fisheries should be organised.

15.0 Contract Labour.

15.1 The main problem facing contract labour is exploitation by intermediaries. In certain items of works in factories, establishments and projects utilisation of contract labour is necessary in view of economy, convenience and practicability. It will be most uneconomical to keep a large permanent labour force to undertake some jobs which are not continuous and which are of an ad hoc nature. In view of these factors, we should not try to do away with the system of contract labour altogether.

15.2 The contract agreement should have a clause that unless minimum wages and specified amenities and certain other privileges such as, leave, overtime, sickness allowance and health services are provided for workers, the contract will automatically terminate. The Labour Officer of the Department should act as Inspection Officer for this purpose. The minimum guaranteed wage should be fixed for contract labour under the system of payment by results.

15.3 In U.P. the Standing Tripartite Committee (Sugar) has decided on items of work in sugar factories which are not to be done by contract labour; it has permitted contract labour to work in some other sections. Thus a great deal of contract labour has been eliminated. Similar tripartite agreements should be extended to in all States and in all industries.

15.4 Road construction and building operations is one of the 'Scheduled Employment' under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948. The Central and several State Governments have fixed the minimum wages for these workers. The minimum rates fixed vary from State to State and even from one district to another within a State. The contractors of CPWD are invariably paying the minimum wage rates and in some cases even more to the labourers employed by them. The contractors invariably employ Jamadars for supervision of labour brought by them. There are two systems of payment. In some cases contractors pay Jamadars' commission generally 25 paise per worker directly. In other cases they include this element of commission in the daily rate of wages which is first paid in full to the worker, and thereafter each worker gives his share of commission at the rate of 25 paise per day to his Jamadar which in effect does not reduce the basic minimum wages actually received by the worker.

15.5 One of the major problems experienced in the construction works is re-deployment of labour from one project which comes to a close thereby rendering a large number of workers surplus to another project which will be coming up. On such occasions Employment Exchanges are set up in the project areas for linking up the phased programme of retrenchment with deployment on projects taking shape. A difficulty arose in case of unskilled workers because the project authorities have perforce to give preference to local people for such employment. Adequate attention is not being paid by most of the project authorities to ascertain in advance the number of workers who desire alternative employment and the areas to which they would like to move for employment.

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15.6 According to the Minimum Wages Act and C.P.W.D. contractors' Labour Regulation, paid weekly off is required to be given to the workers. At Delhi the minimum wage rates fixed per day are inclusive of payment of weekly off day and no separate payment is needed. In some cases the workers worked even on weekly rest days and they were not paid overtime wages i.e. at double the ordinary rate of wages. No entry in respect of such overtime has been recorded in the overtime register.

15.7 So far earth work is concerned it was observed that contractors are generally giving it on piece-rate basis i.e. they pay a rate per 1,000 c.ft. either direct to the head of the family gang or through the Jamadar/petty contractors. In the latter case the rate so fixed includes Jamadar's commission or petty contractor's profit. It may be stated that whereas complaints of non-payment of wages do occur, complaints of lesser payments have been found wanting. For ensuring strict compliance of the Fair Wage clause included in the standard form of agreement in force in C.P.W.D. contracts, the Government of India have now decided to introduce a revised clause in the agreement form providing for the payment of a daily wage notified at the time of calling the tenders to every man, woman or child employed by the contractor or the sub-contractor on a Central P.W.D. contract. This wage will be the fair wage i.e. the wage paid in the locality. As the abolition of the system of contract labour is likely to take long time, adequate attention has to be paid for improving their service conditions. The protection of health and sanitary arrangements at work-sites are regulated in varying degrees on CPWD works. First aid boxes are kept by a few contractors only. Other facilities need improvement. The amenities should include provision of shelter, drinking water, first-aid facilities, rest rooms, canteens, recreation facilities, washing facilities, sanitary arrangements and protective equipment.

15.8 The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Bill, 1967 introduced in the Lok Sabha last year aims at abolition of contract labour and regulation of service conditions of contract labour where abolition of the system is not possible. The bill is a step towards progressive reduction of contract labour and will be helpful in bringing about amelioration of their conditions.

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DIAGNOSTIC STUDY OF CONDITIONS
OF RURAL LABOUR

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Appendices

- (i) Appendix 'A'..... List showing the Names of Villages Surveyed.
- (ii) Appendix 'B'..... Specimen Agreements.
- (iii) Appendix 'C'..... Mode of payment and Wage Rates for Agricultural Operations - State-wise.
- (iv) Appendix 'D' Wage Rates for Various Non-agricultural Occupations - State-wise.
- (v) Appendix 'E' A Note giving some Salient aspects from 'Report of the Minimum Wages Advisory Committee for Employment in Agriculture', Government of Gujarat.

DIAGNOSTIC STUDYOFCONDITIONS OF RURAL LABOUR1.0 Introduction

1.1 The two Agricultural Labour Enquiries (ALE) conducted in 1950-51 and 1956-57 and the Rural Labour Enquiries (RLE) in 1963-64 and 1964-65 are based on all-India coverage of agricultural and rural labour. The National Sample Surveys (N.S.S.) in rural areas also provide data in respect of employment and unemployment of rural workers. These surveys indicate broad dimensions of the problems concerning rural labour. The information from these important studies is mainly quantitative and presented in the form of national or state averages; it does not help in evolving suitable ameliorative measures for improving social and economic conditions of rural labour nor is it suitable for measuring changes of mainly qualitative nature in progress in rural India. It is mainly because of these lacunæ that the Planning Commission suggested, as early as 1964, that the Ministry of Labour & Employment should undertake diagnostic type studies on rural labour in respect of their employment, unemployment, under-employment, etc. The All-India Seminar on Agricultural Labour in August 1965 endorsed the need for such type studies of rural labour. As a result, the Labour Bureau took up diagnostic type studies on rural labour during 1967-68, which are likely to yield comprehensive data relating to rural labour households spread all over the country. This will serve as yet another source of valuable information in respect of rural labour households. As the results of these studies were not likely to be available in time, the Commission decided to undertake on its own, a rapid diagnostic enquiry into conditions of rural labour in a few selected villages in three or four districts of each State. This study has been carried out in all the States except Gujarat. The Commission did not cover Gujarat in view of the fact that the Government of Gujarat appointed a Committee in 1964 to enquire into and advise the State Government on fixation and revision of minimum wages for employment in agriculture and allied occupations in the State and because the report of the Advisory Committee (October 1966) discusses in detail all aspects of rural labour. A note giving some salient aspects from the 'Report of this Advisory Committee' is at Appendix 'E'.

1.2 The impressionistic picture which the Commission sought to build up was based on direct interviews with knowledgeable persons, village officials and such categories of persons, as big cultivators, small cultivators, village artisans, landless labour and tenant cultivators in the village. Discussions were also held with District officials and Block Development Officers. Districts were selected by State Governments. The services of the Education Officers of the Central Board for Workers' Education in various States were utilised for the field work. One Education Officer was placed incharge of a district. It was initially planned to cover 5 villages

in each district selected in consultation with district officials and in consideration of (i) its nearness to any urban industrial centre and (ii) its coverage under developmental activities under rural works, Community Development, I.A.D.P., etc. It was not possible to carry out the studies in all districts recommended by State Governments. It was also not possible to study all five villages in each of the districts selected. Even so about 200 villages from 46 districts were covered by Education Officers. Appendix 'A' gives the names of the villages studied, State and district-wise.

1.3 An important aspect which the study considered was the impact of irrigation facilities on rural employment. Though this did not determine selection of villages, availability or non-availability of irrigation facilities in selected villages has been duly taken into consideration in relation to employment opportunities in rural areas.

2.0 Limitations of the Study:

2.1 It is hardly necessary to emphasize that while interpreting the results of the study, its limitations should be kept in view. First of all, this study does not claim any perfection nor it is based on any systematic statistical sample survey. The study is impressionistic based as it is on discussions in villages and at district headquarters. It is a quick survey, and visits to the selected villages have not been adequate. Selection of districts by State Governments and of villages by the Education Officers with the assistance of the district authorities was 'purposive'. Though some criteria for selection of the villages were laid down, in quite a few cases these could not be adhered to owing to such limitations as accessibility, transport facilities, availability of local officers for guiding the studies etc. The selected villages are not representative and any generalisation based on the observations in the selected villages cannot be made even at the district level. The question of applicability of the generalisation at the State level obviously does not arise.

2.2 Personal observations and discussions in the selected villages and at the district headquarters helped a good deal to understand (i) the impact of development schemes and progressive agricultural practices on employment and wage earnings (ii) the place of cottage and household industries in the rural economy, (iii) to evaluate social and economic changes among rural workers and (iv) to project suitable action programmes to be undertaken for ameliorating conditions of rural labour. The data collected during the study through discussions with rural labour as well as peasants in regard to prevailing patterns and modes of wage payment in agricultural operations and non-agricultural occupations fill an important gap in the wage statistics of rural workers.

We may now turn to a description of salient findings of the study.

3.0 Socio-Economic Structure of Rural Households

3.1 Rural households in an Indian village can be classified on the basis of (i) their possession of non-possession of land, and (ii) their main economic activity.

3.2 The household owning cultivated land belongs to the category of 'Cultivator household'. Among these households there are those with fairly big-size holdings, their working members mainly self-employed; they do not prefer wage-paid employment either in or outside agriculture. Ordinarily, majority of the workers in these households are busy throughout the year and they depend mainly on hired labour during peak agricultural season; they may be employing some permanent farm hands even during slack season. This latter practice depends on the extent of the land held by the household. This class of cultivator households has mainly benefited from development of agriculture during past 10 to 15 years.

3.3 There are other households with small and uneconomic holdings. The size of their holdings being very small, these do not provide enough work opportunities to workers in a family. There is some work during the busy seasons to be locked to, but during slack seasons the members are mostly unemployed. These households cultivate their small holdings with the help of household labour; hiring of additional hands is restricted to only peak season operation of harvesting. In those areas where rural economy is not monetised or where primitive communal traditions of partnerships survive, a cultivator of small holding may call to his aid his brethren or co-villagers of the same socio-economic status to help him in cultivation in return for a communal feast and or his personal labour in return. Some members of these households also go in for wage-paid employment during the peak agricultural season as their small family holding cannot absorb all their working members. The reason for inadequate employment opportunities for workers in these households is not so much the seasonal nature of agriculture as inadequate size of their holdings. In fact a good many of these holdings derive their major share of income from wage paid manual employment.

3.4 Of the households owning no land of their own, agricultural labour households form the most important section. The condition of these households is worse than that of even small peasant households. During busy seasons, workers in these households are able to get wage-paid employment in agriculture; during the rest of the year they suffer on account of inadequate employment opportunities and depend on odd jobs that come their way. The other two classes with no land consist of rural 'artisans and craftsmen', and those who depend on trade, business and other services. The conditions of village artisans and craftsmen are also far from satisfactory; there are some exceptions. Many artisans need additional wage-paid employment to supplement the income from their traditional occupations.

3.5 Of all modes of employment available to rural workers, the one in agriculture namely self-employment on owned land is the most dependable, despite the fact that it is seasonal, irregular and even inadequate, if the holding is small. The return from such self-employment may be uncertain and far from commensurate with the time spent or the work put in. Hence the desire to hold on to the land, howsoever small the holding might be. Those without any land desire to own some land its smallness of size notwithstanding. Next to self-employment in agriculture another dependable source is wage employment in agriculture.

3.6 Agricultural employment either in the form of self-employment or wage employment provides the base of employment opportunities for workers in rural areas. Everyone, whether a small landholder or a landless agricultural worker, tries to secure agricultural employment first and then look out for additional employment either in the non-agricultural sector or in public works in the village or somewhere nearby. This explains the strong preference of rural workers for agricultural employment not far away from the village. These workers are rarely committed to other forms of employment, because the latter course may require giving up their tiny holdings. Any scheme of providing additional employment opportunities, has necessarily to be fitted into this pattern, attitude and value system, obtaining in rural areas. It is worthwhile to recall that these observations corroborate the experience in India as also in other developing countries.

3.7 Land owning households can also be divided into two categories based on non-economic factors. In spite of agricultural progress and increases in productivity of land, one still finds in rural areas some land owning upper castes not directly participating in farm management or manually taking part in agricultural operations involving labour for consideration of prestige. The lands belonging to these upper castes, whatever be their size, are ordinarily cultivated by tenants by traditional methods and with primitive tools. In such holdings agricultural productivity has been poor. These classes value 'land' as a source of production. It is here that considerable scope exists in putting more land under plough and that too more efficiently. This class of 'upper caste land owners' is common in Madras, Kerala, West Bengal, Orissa, Assam, U.P. and Bihar. The only effect of land reforms which gives ownership of land to actual tiller has been that these owners have returned to their villages and resumed some guise personal or direct cultivation for fear of losing their lands.

unearned income, a symbol of prestige and power rather than source of

3.8 As against this class there is in villages the peasant class devoted to land as a source of economic enterprise. These groups supervise and manage their farms and do not display any inhibition in performing manual labour on the land. Though such enterprising peasants are found in most of the villages, they predominate in Punjab, parts of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Madras. The enterprising spirit of these peasantry groups and their economic gain have made some impact on upper caste land owners, and some of the latter have of late started taking interest in direct cultivation.

4.0 Changes in Agricultural Practices:

4.1 Agriculture every-where has undergone significant changes. An interesting development is appearance on the agricultural scene of so-called 'gentlemen farmers' generally drawn from higher castes, retired civil servants, former money-lenders and other mercantile classes. This new development is the result of the newly acquired remunerative nature of agriculture today coupled with low or almost negligible agricultural taxation in most States. A rumour also heard in villages is that agriculture is one way of turning "black money into white". The diagnostic study took note of the existence of such progressive farms in surveyed districts, but it was not possible to make any study of such farms as none fell within the villages studied.

4.2 Almost all States have introduced High Yielding Varieties Programme (HYVP) covering paddy, maize, bajra or jowar depending on suitability of the soil and availability of irrigation facilities. In fact the HYVP almost over-shadowed earlier Intensive Area Development Programme (IADP) in some States, especially in the South. Large farmers as well as some farmers with medium size holdings have adopted progressive methods of cultivation with the result that agricultural productivity has increased. This is unmistakably noticeable in areas enjoying irrigation facilities. Big farmers are gradually adopting mechanical devices, tractors, tube-wells, pumping-sets, etc. thus reducing the demand for hired labour. The indigenous variety of crops has yielded to hybrid varieties. Cultivation of vegetables has become popular, specially among progressive farmers. The government policy has been to aid those who are in a position to make substantial investment in land to raise agricultural production. Tubewells in the North and the filter-points (semi-deep wells and electrified wells) in the South irrigating fields are symbols of the new agriculture. Tractor reduces dependence on animal labour; wells fitted with electric pumps and oil engines make agriculture less dependent on monsoon.

4.3 The Government policy (Community Development, National Extension Service, IAAP and IADP) has been more beneficial to the better off elements in the country-side who are able to take advantage of all the facilities provided under the various programmes thus accentuating social inequalities. This has been the general feeling in the country-side. Moreover, the policy of concentrating on areas with potentialities for rapid development tend to accentuate regional inequalities. This is inevitable because the programme itself is so oriented: IADP and HYVP cannot be introduced in all regions of the State and not even in the entire district within a State owing to differences in location of potentialities. These programmes have necessarily to be concentrated in areas with irrigation facilities, better soil, etc. for rapid development. In view of this psychological impact of these programmes, it has been suggested that development programmes should be so formulated in the areas with potentialities for rapid development that all sections of population are benefited. This means stress on providing more employment opportunities and creating community assets, etc. as a result of these programmes. In other regions which are not so fortunately placed such schemes as soil conservation, minor irrigation, dry farming, rearing and maintenance of livestock etc. should be encouraged.

4.4 Another aspect which has been brought out by the study is the importance of adequate irrigation facilities for both progressive farming and for providing better employment for rural labour. The immediate impact of irrigation is in stimulating resource use and reducing the extent of under-utilisation of physical and human resources. Land use has been undoubtedly increased. This has, however, not affected the farm size. The most significant effect of irrigation is a shift towards cultivation of more cash crops and replacement of inferior variety by better varieties. Irrigation has made

possible cultivation of a wet crop like paddy in semi-arid region and has promoted a system of diversified cropping. With assured water supply, more crops are raised, their total acreage is increased. Earlier, in the absence of irrigation there was greater reliance on one crop, and the extent of crop failure was higher. Irrigation has now helped to increase yield of crops considerably and reduce chances of crop failure. It has induced greater spending on farm inputs, fertilizers, manures, insecticides, besides other overheads. Credit facilities have poured in and credit worthiness of farmers has gone up. Cropping pattern has undergone a change in favour of crops which require more labour and bullock or mechanical power. The wage income of agricultural labour has also increased in so far as wages in kind are concerned; the quantity payable in kind has increased with the increase in overall production, the proportion paid remaining the same.

4.5 Assured water-supply and timely supply of various inputs such as improved seeds, fertilizers, insecticides, etc. hold the key to prosperous agriculture. Agriculture is carried on commercial lines by progressive farmers where irrigation facilities are available. It has also been observed that even a three acre holding provided with sufficient irrigation facilities and necessary inputs etc. could provide employment all the year round apart from producing a fair amount of surplus produce. Prosperous agriculture means more employment opportunities and higher wage-paid income for workers. This is the reason why in almost all districts rural labour in wet areas is relatively better off as compared to his brethren in dry regions.

4.6 The various agricultural development programmes should assist small farmers who are mostly self-employed, managing their small holdings by family labour who therefore are more capable of taking advantage of improved varieties of seeds, fertilizers, etc. supplied under these programmes, because they can afford to give more personal care and attention which is very necessary in the use of improved varieties, fertilizers, etc. But this has not happened, though a few enterprising small farmers here and there did make use of progressive methods of cultivation and showed good results. A reason for this is that small farmers avoid taking risks or are not in a position to afford taking risks, with the new methods of cultivation, their fall-back resources being what they are. Another reason for lack of initiative among them is that they are not credit worthy or able to command sufficient grants on easy and favourable terms to adopt modern agricultural practices. All this underlines the importance of making the present arrangements for credit facilities more flexible in favour of small growers.

4.7 Various programmes for improvement of agriculture will achieve the desired results only if the problems peculiar to each village such as lack of drainage facilities, water logging, inadequate supply of water to tail end lands, lack of feeder roads, etc. are attended to.

5.0 Rearing and Maintenance of Livestock & Poultry:

5.1 Rearing and maintenance of livestock and poultry serve as a secondary resource for most of cultivator families. Most of the households maintain cattle and livestock for agricultural operations and for the production of milk for their household consumption. Rarely has a household taken to this occupation on a commercial basis. However, there is general realisation about the scope for development of livestock and poultry farming. Such a development alone can bring them prosperity. They are reluctant to adopt this on a commercial basis, for the present.

6.0 Land Reforms

6.1 In many cases delay in the enforcement of land reforms and ineffective enforcement have left the social structure of villages unaltered. As a result of various development programmes, land values are rising and there is an apprehension that because of this, land reforms might be impeded further. Land reforms have been legislated but ingenious ways of avoiding them have been found. Defective legislation and the delay in giving effect to land ceiling law enabled the big landlord to keep his holdings almost intact. He is able to distribute his land to relatives each getting a share within the ceiling limit. Even this distribution is only on paper to avoid the ceiling law. It is common to find in the villages the existence of large estates and that too estates which are inefficiently run, side-by-side with smaller farms owned by progressive farmers, run on efficient lines and giving increases in production **not** witnessed earlier. Land reforms have not improved the plight of agricultural labour either. In fact, in some areas eviction of share croppers has been on the increase.

6.2 Some of the suggestions in regard to land reforms for the improvement of conditions of agricultural workers were:-

(i) Ceiling should be imposed on family rather than individual and there should be no exemption under it. This will yield surplus land which may be distributed among either the landless agricultural labour or the small peasants with uneconomic holdings. There are also large amounts of land under the Government control and large number of dried up tanks and these may be suitably distributed. Where irrigation is newly introduced, it should be possible to tell the beneficiaries that, since the irrigated land increases the productivity of **land** significantly, they may surrender a part of their land for the benefit of the landless or small peasants.

(ii) Immediate steps should be taken to stop further eviction of share croppers who do not enjoy any tenancy rights.

- (iii) The 'Homestead Tenancy Act' which provides for the ownership of lands on which the houses of the landless agricultural labour families stand should be enacted in all the States and efficiently implemented, as a large number of landless agricultural labour families do not own land on which their houses are constructed.

This last suggestion acquires a significance because it was noticed that the bargaining capacity of agricultural labour depends on whether his house stands on a "homestead land" or on the land given to him by his employer.

7.0 Cottage and Household Industries:

7.1 Employment in agriculture being seasonal, rural labour faces unemployment during slack agricultural seasons. One way to provide employment is to develop cottage or household industries in the village or within a walking distance from it. These cottage industries should be agro-based and based on locally available raw materials 'so that the peak season in the industry may coincide with the slack season in agriculture'. Some of the village industries suggested are stone crushing, making of coir ropes, mats and mattings and other coir products, pottery, weaving, lock making, dairy products, gur making, rope making, rice milling, fisheries, leather tanning and shoe making.

7.2 Cottage and small-scale industries in the surveyed villages are organised on primitive lines, and as such these are not able to provide enough additional employment opportunities for rural labour. Most of these industries lack proper organisation; in addition these are hampered by inadequate supply of raw material, marketing facilities, lack of funds and technical know-how. Because of these difficulties and the primitive nature of their working, they cannot provide employment either on a regular or even on a temporary basis for rural labour. If the technology of these village and cottage industries is improved, if their organisation is made more efficient, and if marketing facilities and regular supply of raw material are assured, these industries will provide requisite employment.

7.3 In order to bring home the problems faced by cottage and household industries, it is proposed to discuss the coir industry and fisheries, because the study of these industries in Kerala brought out some significant facts. The traditional occupation in some of the villages in Alleppy district of Kerala is weaving of coir yarn (carried on on household occupation basis) and making of coir mats and mattings (carried on on household industry basis). A significant feature of occupation of coir yarn weaving is abnormally low wages that workers usually earn. In many cases daily wage for a whole day's work, specially for women workers, is no more than 70 to 80 paise. Majority of working women are engaged in hand-spinning of coir yarn. During a day's work a woman can produce only a rupee's worth of coir yarn. Out of this, 20 paise is the cost of coconut husk, and the balance of 80 paise her net earning. If the price of the husk goes up, which generally happens during the rainy season, net earnings per day become even less. Still they stick to this occupation because of lack of alternative employment opportunity, and because it provides the badly needed additional

income to their households. This low earning occupation is considered a kind of subsidiary occupation by these households.

7.4 The units which manufacture coir mats and mattings and which are run on cottage industry basis are not covered by any protective labour legislation, except the Minimum Wages Act. Workers do not get even the prescribed minimum wages. Though they are aware of this fact they do not question the employer because there is no chance of getting employment elsewhere if they lose the job. There are self-employed as well as hired labour in this industry. The industry suffers from lack of sufficient capital and proper marketing facilities. Raw material is obtained from the competitive market. Owing to the fact that there are surplus workers in the agricultural sector, these workers do not go in for agricultural work even in peak seasons. Moreover work in the coir industry is continuous and there is no busy or slack season. The industry depends mainly on export market. As the importing countries are unwilling to pay higher prices for the produce of the industry, there is hardly any scope for increasing the selling price of these products. Perhaps the only persons who are making some worthwhile profit in this industry are the suppliers of raw materials, coconut husk. In fact, a worker in one of these establishments was heard sympathising with his employer, the owner of the enterprise. He stated that while he, as a worker, is sure of his wage as per the piece rate fixed earlier, his employer is not sure what price he would get for the product from the exporters and other middlemen.

7.5 Under the present circumstances, the utilisation of the home market appears to be the only possible way to improve the lot of these workers. The Coir Board is conducting some research to widen the scope of utilising the raw material. Sufficient encouragement should be given for further research in the field for evolving new consumer products such as fibre foam, coir brush, etc. Recently workers' cooperatives have been organised, and this has helped the coir industry to some extent by replacing the middlemen who provides the raw material to these workers. But these societies could not eliminate the middlemen who purchase coir yarn from the local market and sell it to the leading traders. So these cooperatives could not improve the wage position of these workers to any significant extent. Unless some kind of restriction regulating the maximum price of husk and the minimum price of finished product is enforced, it would be difficult to increase wages or earnings of these workers, and without increased wages no betterment in their standard of living is possible.

7.6 Fishing is another occupation which deserves mention. It is an important occupation in coastal areas of Kerala.

Madras, Gujarat and Maharashtra. Though modern methods are available, the occupation is carried on old primitive and traditional lines. Generally, boats and nets are taken on hire from middlemen by these workers; they cannot afford to own them. Middlemen who supply boats and nets on hire, charge a price depending upon various considerations, the most important one being the investment made by the owner in purchase or making of boats and nets which are hired out. The hire price of a boat and a net is a tenth of the daily catch. This is generally so in Kerala. In Madras, the fishermen use country boats called Catamarans which can be used by 4 or 5 men at a time. The boats are owned either individually or jointly by fishermen. The owner of the boat either receives a fixed amount per day in cash or in kind or he may accept one share of the total catch just like other fishermen who actually go out into the sea for the catch. In some cases hire charges are paid on monthly basis.

7.7 The economic condition of these fishermen is not satisfactory. A progressive fisherman stated that he was once so indebted like all other fishermen that he could only repay the loans and also purchase a boat and make his own mats etc. by selling the gold ornaments of his household. Now he is better off than other fishermen. While there is some exploitation by middlemen in this field, the occupation itself is not lucrative in view of the uncertainty about the catch, which is mainly due to the old and primitive methods adopted by fishermen.

7.5 One way to improve the conditions of these fishermen is to provide them with boats and nets. Use of mechanised boats for deep sea fishing should also be explored. This is possible only when the occupation is organised on cooperative lines, because mechanised boats would be costly. Marketing of the produce should also be organised on cooperative lines. Facilities should be provided for preservation of the catch so that their marketing may be regulated on more profitable lines. Fishermen should also be associated with processing of the fisheries.

8.0 Development Programmes

8.1 There is an awareness among the villagers that development programmes are responsible for their relative prosperity and for creation of some community assets in their villages. There are some instances of mutual cooperation and communal efforts exhibited by villagers in building community assets such as panchayat halls, community centres, village roads, children's parks, libraries, temples, public urinals, community bath rooms, godowns for grain storage, drinking water and tanks etc. in different parts of the country. The difficulties experienced by the villagers in this respect were inadequacy of skilled manpower, essential building material like cement, zinc sheets, etc. In order to encourage villagers to undertake developmental activities, the difficulties faced by them should be removed. It was generally observed that villagers have not developed self-help and initiative. They look to government for every possible assistance. Unless local leadership takes the initiative and organises self-help, development programmes will not achieve much.

8.2 Another observation made by the villagers was that currently only village level workers contact them off and on, and this has been very useful. But it would be more helpful if Block Development Officials take them into confidence, establish frequent contacts with them and explain to them methods and benefits of the programmes sponsored by the block. Block Development Officers should be delegated powers to re-allocate the funds based on actual requirements of villages. They should not stick to stereo-typed provisions under different heads made at the State headquarters where people have little knowledge of problems of different regions.

9.0 Rural Labour

9.1 General Economic Conditions

In most of the surveyed villages, rural labour is relatively better off today as compared to the conditions a decade ago. Though his living conditions are still far from satisfactory, the level of his aspirations has risen significantly. There has been some noticeable increase in his bargaining power. He is aware that he is not going to starve because there is plenty of work available. He is ready to grasp any opportunity that may bring him income. He is keen to secure new skills.

In this context it should be emphasized that the condition of agricultural workers in (i) outlying and remote areas (ii) the villages not covered by any development programmes and (iii) the villages without sufficient irrigation facilities are far from satisfactory. Their wages are generally very low and their bargaining power poor. They are entirely at the mercy of landlords. But in areas (i) with adequate irrigation facilities (ii) near urban and other industrial centres (iii) which are served by very good communication system and (iv) where the community is sufficiently forward looking, they are better off and they command effective bargaining power. In some cases they are reported to be in strong

bargaining position and they are able to dictate terms to landlords. At the same time the general feeling appears to be that the pace of change and improvement that is noticed in the condition of these workers could have been more rapid.

9.2 Workers' unions and employer-employee relations

A notable feature of rural labour is almost complete absence of any trade union organisation among them. It was learnt that in Andhra Pradesh agriculture labour union has been recently organised. In a village in Haryana efforts of the labour to organise themselves into a union met with stiff resistance from landlords who stopped them from entering their fields or for attending to calls of nature. Ultimately, the labour had to yield and their efforts to organise themselves into a union failed. In one district of Uttar Pradesh, workers tried to organise and entered into collective bargaining with the employers, but this also came to a sad end. The workers were denied access to the fields of employers, they were not allowed to draw water from their wells or cut grass from their fields; so they had to come to terms with the employers. Generally disputes between employers and workers are settled by arbitration. Village panchayats also play a role in settlement of such disputes. But so far such settlements are unsatisfactory because of inadequate representation to labour in the panchayats.

9.3 Employment

During the peak agriculture season almost all available labour in a village is utilised, and the wage rate paid to workers during the harvesting season in some areas compares favourably with industrial wage rates. During the slack seasons, many of them are forced to seek odd jobs here and there. This latter appears to be the position in almost every village. The study has prominently brought out the fact that employment opportunities have increased to a great extent in the areas where various development programmes such as IADP, IAAP, HYVP and Rural Works have been undertaken. Despite this, a good number of rural workers are not fully employed. In fact, workers are found to be on the look out for jobs and anxious to take advantage of every employment opportunity. Only there are no adequate jobs. Though the workers desire higher wages they would be prepared to work even at lower wage rates during slack seasons when they do not have any work. At the same time, in rural works projects in certain areas, shortages of skilled workers have been experienced.

Rural works programmes did provide some employment opportunities during the period of their construction, but once the construction is over employment opportunities cease to exist. Such projects should be taken up as would provide continuous employment. It was therefore suggested that a list of permanent development schemes like improvement of existing irrigation schemes, construction of field channels, installation of lift irrigation, land reclamation, soil conservation, construction of roads, buildings, etc. should be drawn up by the Block Development Office. Further their implementation should be organised in a phased manner so that they could provide continuous employment to the agricultural labour during the slack season.

9.4 Wages(i) General Characteristics

Except in a few areas where wages are still low, there has been an increase in agricultural as well as non-agricultural wage rate. This is the result of urban influence, higher cost of living and impact of higher wages in the nearby industries. Agricultural wages are fairly comparable to non-agricultural wages and are generally higher than the statutorily fixed minimum wage in agriculture particularly during peak agricultural seasons. On an average, the daily wages of Rs.6 to 7 are paid for these operations. In some cases the average daily earnings even go up as high as Rs.10. Kind wages (generally paid as a proportion of grain harvested) is yet another attraction in these days of high cereal prices. It is because of these, agriculture is able to draw workers from other occupations. During slack seasons many of them are forced to seek odd jobs here and there. This appears to be the position in almost every village. Many were, however, of the view that ever rising prices have neutralised the rise in wages. To offset this, a suggestion was made that some proportion of wages should be paid in kind so that the purchasing power of agricultural labour is not adversely affected.

Caste considerations do not play any role in fixation of wages. Even job security appears to have no effect on wage rates. Wages are generally fixed taking into account the price level and fluctuations in demand and supply. Wage rates for women are lower than those for men.

The practice of advancing loans to workers is common throughout the country. In West Bengal and some districts of U.P. such advances impair the bargaining capacity of labour. In fact advances are given to ensure services of labour. Workers, on the other hand, are grateful for the help in times of need and do not feel that they are being exploited. The practice of taking advance in money or kind compels the workers to stick to their employers. They pay interest on loans and advances taken by them, which is exorbitant. If the advance is taken in kind, they have to return 50 per cent more than the quantity borrowed. In some of the villages of Madhya Pradesh, half of the loan taken by the workers is interest-free, while they have to pay interest on the other half. In Assam, advance is taken in the slack season while it has to be repaid in the peak season when demand for labour is more. Once an advance is taken, workers are forced to work on wages lower than those prevalent in villages and their neighbourhood. In some villages of Maharashtra, workers take advance wage for the day in the morning, cook and eat their meals and then go in for the day's work in employer's field. This gives a measure of the bad plight of these workers. It has been reported from a village in Haryana that such advance loans have actually strengthened the bargaining capacity of labour: he is able to get more wages because the lender can hope to recover the advances only by continuously employing him! In his anxiety to recover the loan the employer is prepared to pay a little more than the prevailing rates of wages. It is possible that unless the advance is paid the person is not available for work.

Important operations in agriculture are ploughing, sowing, harvesting, transplanting, weeding, hoeing, irrigation, etc. There is no demarcation or specialisation of skills in regard to different agricultural operations. The same worker performs almost all of the jobs when called upon to do so. In certain operations, such as ploughing women are not employed, while in certain others such as transplanting they are preferred. In some States like Haryana and Punjab workers enter into written agreements with their employers. Copies of specimen agreements are at Appendix 'B'.

One of the objectives of the diagnostic study was to find out the extent to which wage rates of rural labour have gone up during the last decade. No firm data in regard to the prevailing wage rates 10 years ago were available. The data which were furnished were subject to much recall lapse errors; as such it was not possible to state in quantitative terms the extent of rise in wage rates. Even so, it was noticed that there has been some increase in wage rates of almost all categories of workers; in some cases even significant increases have been reported.

(ii) Pattern and Mode of Wage Payment

Wages of agricultural labour are paid in a variety of ways - both in kind and cash and also on a piece-rate basis. Wages are paid on annual, monthly or daily basis. In case of daily paid workers wage rates differ from operation to operation and also from region to region in the same operation. In some areas permanent and annual workers are not allowed to engage themselves in wage paid employment even though they may have no work with their employers, while in other areas such workers are allowed to take wage paid employment if there is no work with their employers.

Wage paid to agricultural worker is dependent on the fact whether or not the land on which the house of the agricultural worker stands is owned by the household. If the land is owned by the household, the wages paid are higher, and the worker is in a better bargaining position. Sometimes these workers get even 50 per cent higher wage rate as compared to workers whose house stands on the land belonging to the employer or the landlord.

(iii) Wage Rates

As already indicated, detailed wage data for various agricultural operations and non-agricultural occupations have been collected. Statements at Appendices 'C' and 'D' give details of wage rates for agricultural and non-agricultural occupations respectively.

9.5 Legislation

The Minimum Wages Act remains a dead letter specially in IADP areas because wages fixed about 8 or 10 years ago have not been revised. Ruling wages are higher than the statutory wages. The rural labour is mostly ignorant of the Minimum Wages Act in agriculture and its provisions. While generally wage rates for peak seasonal operations are higher as compared to statutorily fixed minimum wage, the slack season wage rates in many cases require to be raised. There is hardly any machinery for effective implementation of the Minimum Wages Act in agriculture. It has there-

fore been suggested that some officers may be posted at the sub-divisional or block level to enforce this legislation. A suitable machinery for the enforcement of Minimum Wages Act would be Village Panchayat which is directly elected and has agricultural labour represented on it, but at present there is some hesitation in accepting it because the vested interests have come on top in Panchayats.

10.0 Attitude of rural labour to work and migration

10.1 Migration in search of better employment and prospects is common and popular in villages. This is more so in cases of persons who have no land or who have no attachment to land. Young and the educated workers who have acquired new skills are anxious to exploit their skills in new and more remunerative ways. Cities and towns offer them greater scope and possibilities for doing so. Ordinarily, rural workers are willing to migrate to urban and industrial areas if they are assured of continuous employment opportunities, but they would prefer to work in their own villages if work could be made available. Even small land owners are reluctant to give up their land and migrate to urban areas for better work opportunities and prospects. They are attached to land. The farmers having irrigated lands are very much devoted to land however small their holdings may be. They utilise their small savings for improvement of land, purchase of inputs and agricultural implements. When the attention of small cultivators was drawn to inadequate work opportunities that their small holdings provide, they replied that alternative opportunities were not available. Moreover, during these days of high cereal prices, it was advantageous to possess some land however small its size may be and to supplement the income of the land from other sources available to them.

10.2 It is difficult to draw any firm conclusion with regard to the sense of time or the special efforts the rural workers make to avail themselves of every work opportunity for bettering their living standards. However, it is worthwhile recording that a young adivasi farmer of Ranchi district asked the Block Development Officer during the discussions: "Why is he being detained when he has so much work to do on the land". This attitude to work was also observed in many villages of Maharashtra. In villages of Assam, the urge for improving one's lot is not noticeable among the workers. They would not like to work or even seek work till their earnings of the previous day are not used up.

10.3 In the district of Ranchi (Bihar) labour migrate to Assam Tea Plantations or Jute Mills of West Bengal during the off season; but this migration had declined of late. The workers residing in the villages near Ranchi City now go for work to factories in Ranchi. In other villages of the district, migration of workers has been held in check because of fast development of vegetable cultivation.

10.4 In the Raipur district (Madhya Pradesh) workers are a contented lot, but conservative in their outlook. Their attitude to migration is reflected in the epithet: " 'Basi' (stale rice) at home is better than 'good dish' in the city." In spite of rich forest resources like 'tendu' leaves for manufacturing bidi in another district there has not been any significant exploitation of this resource.

10.5 Workers of districts in the neighbourhood of a ~~metropolitan~~ area migrate to the metropolis, where they are employed as unskilled but rarely as semi-skilled workers in the industry, but maintain their contact with their relatives in villages and remit some money to them regularly. This is a common pattern with all metropolitan cities. In some other areas, workers prefer work in their own village. They demand that household and cottage industries should be developed there. They are willing to learn new skills and equip themselves with proper training and knowledge for working in non-agricultural occupations. Migration is not restricted to the metropolitan area alone but in some places it extends even to a group of smaller towns where industry is thriving or is expected to thrive.

11.0 Economic Changes

11.1 Villages are undergoing rapid changes. A show of affluence appears to be on the rural scene. This is symbolised by taxis plying on village roads, use of fancy goods, construction of pacca houses and the like. None of these is unfamiliar now. This affluence however is restricted only to persons who have their own farms. In contrast to big and progressive farmers, small peasants have suffered but even among them there will be those who have taken to remunerative crops. Most of these small peasants find it hard to get sufficient hired labour during the busy season to attend to their farming operations. The only relieving feature is that compromises do take place on rates to be paid and the crops get harvested or sowings are not unduly delayed. These farmers are also not able to provide sufficient resources to enable them to take advantage of the available facilities. At the same time the studies are unanimous in highlighting the point that though lower classes in the village, specially landless labour have improved their lot, the disparities between the haves and have-nots have widened. Benefits of development programmes have not flown equitably to different classes in rural areas. Returns to land and capital are significantly higher than return to labour in farming operations. Land reforms have not solved the problem of landless agricultural labour though there has been some distribution of land among them.

11.2 The farmers, who at one time were of the view that application of fertilizers and insecticides would amount to injecting poison into the crops have now come to realise that inorganic manure is a must for the land. They have taken to improved methods of agricultural practices because of perceptible effects of these programmes on production. About 7-8 years ago the gramsevaks had to

carry the fertilizer bags on cycles to popularise them in the villages. Now the situation is different and villagers literally run after fertilizers.

11.3 Another measure of improvement in living conditions is change in consumption pattern. People who formerly used coarse grains have now switched over to finer and superior varieties. In northern wheat areas, more of wheat and less of barley and millets constitute the menu; in the south finer quality of rice in place of coarse grains is becoming popular. Consumption of tea and sugar is common all over the country. In Madras, rice products replace earlier preparations made of Ragi and maize. In Kerala, in spite of the scarcity of rice villagers do not like to consume wheat and prefer tapioca which has become popular even among middle class. In Punjab the old habit of taking pure ghee and milk is giving way to consumption of tea and cold drinks; guests are now offered tea instead of the traditional glass of milk. Use of vegetables is on the increase. People have more clothes to wear; a touch of modernity is noticeable in their choice of dresses. Clothes made of synthetic fibre are becoming popular among younger generation. The bush-shirt and the pant uniform are trend-setters. In Madras where formerly common people went about in loin cloth, they now wear dhotis and shirts. In other parts of the country the pyjama has replaced the dhoti. Use of footwear has become common in north Indian villages; it is also gradually becoming popular among the younger generation in the south. While the use of soap is common, use of tooth paste is not so common yet. Traditional earthen lamp is being replaced by hurricane lanterns, and in some places by electricity. Earthen pots have given way to aluminium or brass vessels. Use of bicycles, radios, transistors and other electrical appliances is popular among fairly well-to-do families in villages. In Punjab the use of bicycles is quite common. The availability of electricity has put up demand for electric lights and to a less extent radios.

11.4 There is not much of saving in rural labour households. The general opinion appears to be that rural workers can hardly save anything out of their meagre income. The saving, if any, made by the cultivators is generally utilised for improving their land.

11.5 Facilities for drinking water are far from satisfactory in most villages. Sanitation in the villages requires to be improved considerably. Communications within the village as well as from the village to the main road are not satisfactory and require considerable improvement, particularly in villages of north India. In Kerala and Madras, there is a fairly satisfactory communication system and villages seem to be well-connected.

12.1 The rural population have started taking interest in the events, political and social, taking place in the country as well as outside. Radios and newspapers have brought them a sense of change and direction. In a village of Ranchi and almost in every place in Kerala the youngsters assemble at a place in evening and discuss problems of the village and ways and means of improving its conditions. However, changes in attitude and reaction to problems differ from person to person and from region to region. This is but natural. Establishment of Gaon Sabhas and Panchayats etc. has generated rivalry and groupism dominated by caste feeling. In some parts the Panchayat elections and also elections to the executive committees of cooperatives are fought on the same scale as elections to State Legislatures in terms of moneys spent.

12.2 Joint family system is gradually breaking down. Spiritual and traditional values are giving place to a more 'realistic outlook'. The young generation is anxious to develop modern outlook on all aspects - social and economic; the older generation sees in this craze for modernisation among the youth a tendency towards disintegration.

12.3 Rural worker is more enlightened today. Scheduled castes and backward classes appreciate the need for education of their children. Compulsory primary education is responsible for this spread of consciousness. But there are economic pressures in the family. Education has acquired social prestige. The provision for stipend to children of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes is an additional incentive. It is not unusual to find sons and daughters of small peasants going in for higher studies either in schools or colleges in nearby towns.

12.4 In addition to traditional folk dances, dramas and music, cinema has become most popular medium for entertainment. Rural people walk miles to nearby town to enjoy pictures. Listening to radio for both news and entertainment is becoming popular.

12.5 There has not been any significant change in marriage customs though it is reported that the practice of child marriage is dying out. The ages 18 and 16 are considered suitable for marriage for boys and girls respectively. There is general awareness that boys should not marry unless they become economically independent. Though the amount spent on ~~marriage~~ marriage is still a measure of social prestige and economic status, there has been significant change in the kind of articles given away or accepted in dowry. 'Modern' articles such as furniture, dresses, sewing machines, transistors, radios and other things, which are of daily use, are replacing the earlier items including costly ornaments etc. In Madras, religious rites are given less importance, and of late there are marriages without Purohits. In Kerala younger generation considers it 'below status' to bargain for dowry, even though the system exists. In Andhra Pradesh there has been an increase in inter-caste marriages.

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12.6 Changes in and diversification of occupational structure have contributed to weakening of caste consciousness. Children of all castes mix with one another in schools and drink from a common source of drinking water. Scheduled Castes are becoming conscious of their legal rights. One finds some rigidities of caste system in evidence in the south, though this is not so in the north. In Uttar Pradesh, untouchability was being observed in many villages, though it is on the decline. In West Bengal untouchability prevails among women, though it is non-existent among men and women of the younger generation. Punjab and Harayana are even more progressive in this regard. Milk trade, and milk means much to the peasants in the area, is in the hands of Harijans in many villages sweet meat shops in villages find it convenient to engage Harijan boys as servants.

12.7 Liquor is consumed by rural workers. There is still a belief in rural areas that drinking is necessary to make men to do hard manual labour. In Punjab, liquor consumption has assumed great importance at ceremonial occasions and as offering to guests. Though hukka is still popular, there has been an increase in consumption of bidis and cigarettes, particularly among the young. In Kerala, an old worker admitted that he used to drink a lot previously, but now he does not because of his consideration for his educated children. Villagers of Midnapur District of West Bengal were against prohibition; to them drinking was essential for their physical well-being after a day's hard work in the field. Villagers of Darrang in Assam consume country liquor in large quantity every day and this, according to them, is necessary for keeping good health. Incidence of drinking country-liquor is on the increase in the villages of Bijapur (Mysore); even female members have taken to drinks.

12.8 There is an awareness of family planning programme and of the advantages of having a limited family. In some areas communities among which family planning is a taboo have realised the importance of smaller family. At the same time there are distressing instances of some groups preaching against family limitation for political reasons or for reasons of one community or the other getting an upper hand in the long run if their members are reduced. These are some of the more dominant difficulties which require to be straightened out.

(i)

A P P E N D I X ' A '

List showing the names of villages surveyed for diagnostic studies of conditions of Rural Labour (State-wise).

S.No.	State	District	Name of villages surveyed
1.	Andhra Pradesh 9	1. Nellore 4	Jagadevipeta, Chejerla, Ponnalur, Chundi.
		2. Mahabood-Nagar 5	Rampur, Amisthapur, Aloor, Ajjakolu, Vellatur.
2.	Assam 18	1. Cachar 5	Chandipur, Brahmashram, Saidpur, Kaystagram, Mazigram
		2. Darrang 4	Bhojkhowa Chapri, Puthi Khati Chapaguri, Molangan
		3. Nowgong 4	Bhotai, Senchowa, Lanka, Kapakhari.
		4. Goalpora 5	Hatipota, Chap Garh, Tiyanmari, Ada Bari, Arrear Jhar.
3.	Bihar 2	1. Ranchi 2	Boriya, Patratu
4.	Jammu & Kashmir 10	1. Baramula 5	Achabal, Doabgah, Singhpore Kalan, Ferozepore, Kanahama
		2. Doda 5	Ghath, Matta, Shewa, Bhandarkot, Palmar
5.	Kerala 9	1. Alleppey 3	Aryad North, Arattupuzha, Champakulan
		2. Kottiyam 3	Kuruvilangad, Neezoor, Kadanad
		3. Palghat 3	Akethethara, Punnayur, Alankode
6.	Madhya Pradesh 15	1. Raipur 5	Kumhari, Dharampura, Bhatagaon, Pawani, Bherwa
		2. Chhatarpur 5	Malahara, Alipura, Gaurihar, Raipura, Nahdora
		3. Morena 5	Kalarna, Navli Baragaon, Chhaira, Sujarna, Gauspur
7.	Madras. 13	1. Thanjavur 3	Kandiyur, Ulur, Sithampur

S.No.	State	District	Name of villages surveyed
		2. Ramonatha- puram 5	Nedungulum, Kunnur, Vadamalai- kurichi, Chetti Kurichi, Mitravayal
		3. Kanyak- umari 5	Midalam, Agastheswaram, Arumana, Ponmanai-Aruvikarai, Killiyur.
8.	Maharashtra 26	1. Parbhani 3	Kumbha Karnam, Ashti, Sangaon
		2. Ahmed Nagar 4	Arangaon, Dashmi Gavan, Vankunte Rajapur.
		3. Kolaba 5	Borli, Nate, Chirner, Apta, Khopoli.
		4. Bhandara 4	Pahela, Dawadipar, Mulla, Sangam,
		5. Nasik 5	Dabhadi, Deopur, Talwade, Kone, Adagaon.
		6. Poona 5	Lohogaon, Khangaon Tek, Kelawade, Garade, Akola.
9.	Mysore 18	1. Bidar 5	Baogi, Tajlapur, Bagdal, Hudugi, Hulsur.
		2. Mysore 3	Siddhalingapura, Kadakola, Maddur Kallahally.
		3. Chickmagalur/ 5	Mateghatta, Kelasapura, Gomibeed, Asagodu, Mallemdur.
		4. Bi japur 5	Thoravi, Kaladagi, Sunag, Chimmada, Katageri.
10.	Orissa 5	1. Cuttack 2	Chintamanipur, Singarpur, Bahanda,
		2. Sambalpur 3	Thankarpalli, Sarsara.
11.	Haryana 6	1. Mahendragarh/ 3	Badopur, Sanjarwas Nangal Sarohi.
		2. Karnal 3	Dadupert, Manas, Ram Nagar.
12.	Punjab 13	1. Jullundur 3	Alwalpur, Kandola, Domunda.
		2. Sangrur 5	Badrukhan, Handaiya, Channo, Kohrian, Shafipur Khurd.
		3. Ferozepur 5	Babal, Megha Rai, Tendeke, Khuhi Khara, Kokri Kalan.
13.	Rajasthan 9	1. Kota 4	Arjunpura, Kaithoon, Chhenod Deolada.
		2. Ganganagar 5	Netewala, Khyaliwala, 58 G.B., Ghanurwali, Tibi.
14.	Uttar Pradesh 20	1. Basti 5	Parjudih, Khajuha, Khorakhar, Mahadeva, Tirlokpur.
		2. Aligarh 5	Lalpur, Mahawa, Siarol, Jawan, Siarsol.
		3. Allahabad 5	Korai, Tatehra, Bhadri, Baidwan, Nainuna Salempur.

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S.No.	State	District	Names of villages surveyed
		4. Tehri Garhwai 5	Kutha, Ningarh, Tapovan, Sour, Danglu.
15.	West Bengal 24	1. Burdwan 5 2. Midnapur 4 3. Nadia 5 4. Bankura 5 5. West Dinajpur 5	Dhenua, Hatkhanda, Jabui, Bajari, Majherpara. Barakura, Nohari, Korui Ghosh Khira. Dharmmapur, Asan Nagar, Karimpur, Narayanpur, Audia. Purunia, Popurda, Nolungram, Badorboni, Panchai. Taraganj, Chopra, Patiram, Itahar, Baul.

Total: 197

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APPENDIX - B

Agreement No. 1 (Haryana State)

I son ofresident..... district..... have contracted to work as agricultural worker in village..... Tehsil under Shri..... on this date..... for a year.

1. I hereby agree that during employment I will not absent myself. In case of absence I will pay Rs.4/- per day. I will take my pay every month.
2. During this service period, I will not take up any other service.
3. I will look after the material, animals and other implements which may be entrusted to my care for cultivation during service by the employer and will return the same when leaving service. I will be a trustee of the said articles.
4. I will look after the crops, buildings, well and animals during the service and protect them from loss.
5. If I do not follow any of the aforesaid terms, I am liable to be prosecuted in a court of law for any loss and will be responsible for the expenses of court.

Witnesses 1.
2.

Sd/- Labour.

Agreement No. 2 (Haryana State)

I son of caste..... am resident ofTehsil.....District..... do hereby agree to work as an agricultural employee of Shri..... son of Shrion Rs.800/- per annum on his fields. I have taken a loan of Rs. from the aforesaid Shri..... and executed a pronote. I have obtained all the loan amount in cash from the employer. I do hereby agree that I will plough, work hard on the fields and well of the said employer for the above noted period. I will protect the crops day and night, look after cattle and implements with responsibility and will discharge any other work entrusted to me by the said employer. During the period of contract I will not take up employment anywhere else. I will not in any way put the employer to loss nor will leave the work in the middle. If I go then I will pay Rs. as daily wages loss. If I work satisfactorily for the contracted period, the loan taken on pronote will be adjusted against my annual wages. In case of breach of contract, the employer has full rights to obtain any compensation from me and my property from a court of law. This bond has been executed as a testimony.

Witnesses 1.
2.

Sd/- Labour.

Agreement No. 3 (Punjab)

I.....s/o resident of village..... of.....Tehsil, District..... hereby enter into agreement with Sardar..... that I shall be his partner in cultivation for kharif and rabi crops during.....conditions of the agreement. (i) I will receive rupees..... as interest free loan to run my household, (ii) I shall be entitled to..... of the yield plus food and green fodder from a plot of one Kanal, (iii) During the year I shall get ten days leave. If I remain absent after availing myself of ten days leave then I shall pay the wages to the substitute labour engaged on the prevailing rates in the village and (iv) I shall take my share of the crops of kharif and rabi only after having refunded the amount paid to me as advance.

Witness
Witness

Thumb impression.

APPENDIX - CMODE OF PAYMENT AND WAGE-RATES FOR AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS - STATE-WISE.1. ASSAM(i) Annual/permanent worker:

Advances are generally made to retain the hold on workers. Paid both in cash and kind. Cash wages vary from Rs. 200-500 per annum plus food and clothing (2 lungis and dhotis, 2 gunjies, 2 towels, etc.). In some cases even lodgings; beddings, hair cut and medical facilities are provided. In some cases wages are higher and then a worker gets Rs. 600 per annum plus daily food, lodging, bidis, matches, clothing, hair-cut and soap. Generally an annual worker costs the farmer about Rs. 700 to Rs. 800 per annum. The yearly paid workers are paid on instalment basis as per their requirements. Previously they used to sign agreements but now this practice is disappearing. A worker paid on monthly basis generally gets Rs. 20 to Rs. 30 plus 3 meals daily, clothing, bidi, etc. If paid in cash, he gets Rs. 60 to Rs. 80 per month only without any food and clothing. In some cases wages range from Rs. 90 to Rs. 100 per month plus some perquisites valuing Rs. 50 approx. for the whole year. The children, if employed, on yearly basis are paid Rs. 100 to Rs. 150 per year.

(ii) Ploughing:

Male worker is paid Rs. 3.50 per day. The system of hiring a plough is also in vogue.

(iii) Harvesting:

Piece rates are fixed in terms of per bigha harvested which are generally Rs. 6 per bigha of paddy harvested. Wages in harvesting are a bit higher as it involves strenuous labour. Wages are paid both in cash & kind.

(iv) Other operations:

For different agricultural operations wages vary from Rs. 2 to Rs. 4 per day in case of a male worker. If in addition to the cash wages, food, tiffin, tea, pan, bidi, etc. are offered, the cash wages are generally lower. A female and child worker get Rs. 1.50 to Rs. 2 and Re. 1 to Rs. 2 respectively and other perquisites like any other male worker. In exceptional

(ii)

APPENDIX -C (Contd.)

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circumstances the wages of male workers go upto Rs.7 per day and in addition meals are also provided. But in general the total wages - both cash and kind come to about Rs.4.50 to Rs.5 per day. There is also the practice of employing labour for single crop year for which a labourer earns from 20 to 25 maunds of paddy - this is paid in two instalments. In some cases a male worker gets 10 maunds of paddy plus 2 meals daily while a female worker gets 7½ maunds of paddy plus tiffin daily for three months when they are employed for a single crop season (generally in shali paddy). The practice of employing workers on seasonal basis is also in vogue. Their monthly wage rate varies from Rs.40 to Rs.60 without perquisites. When the working classes receive advances from the big cultivators wages go down to almost half of the prevailing rates. Some big cultivators give 1-2 bighas of their land to the workers on "Adhi" basis (the yield is divided equally between the master and the worker). Share cropping is also prevalent. By this practice a tiller gets 50 per cent of the crop when he does not get seeds from the land owner but when he receives help from the land owner by way of bullocks and seeds, the tiller gets one-third of the crop.

Hoeing - General wage rate of Rs. 5 plus some perquisites valued approximately 0.55 paise per day are paid for sugarcane crop.

2. ANDHRA PRADESH

- (i) Annual/permanent worker: Paid both in cash and kind. Cash wages vary from Rs. 300-600 per annum plus 2 or 3 meals daily plus perquisites (2 pairs of dresses (yearly), Betel leaves, Bidis and Tobacco (daily). If paid in kind 17 quintals of paddy (cash value Rs. 800/-) plus a meal (only during 45 days of harvesting); In some cases even house sites are provided to them. One of the annual/permanent workers is appointed headman for coordinating the work for which he gets something extra. This is the case with big farmers.
- (ii) Ploughing: This operation is carried on only by males. Casual worker gets Rs. 2 or 4 to 5 seers of paddy per day plus 2 meals a day if he comes at 6 A.M. and one meal if he comes at 9 A.M. Besides this kind of payment, there is also a contract system of labour for ploughing. A ploughman is paid the usual rates - Rs. 30 and Rs. 40 for ploughing dry and wet land per acre respectively, whereas the contractor who supplies labour is paid Re. 1/- for his service of supplying the requisite number of labour. The contractor is also paid separately for the work done by him.
- (iii) Harvesting: Male worker gets Rs. 2 to 3 plus two meals a day whereas a female worker gets Rs. 1.50 to Rs. 2.00 plus one meal a day. Kind wages amounting to 3 kg. to 5 kg. per day are prevalent in some areas (equivalent to Rs. 1.50 to Rs. 3/- on an average) plus one meal.
- (iv) Transplanting: Generally done by females. Wages vary between Rs. 1.50 and Rs. 3 per day. In case of lower cash wages, 2 meals are also provided. In contract system of payment a group of workers is paid Rs. 25 to Rs. 30 per acre.
- (v) Other operations: Weeding - Rs. 1.50 to Rs. 2/-. At certain places 4-5 seers of paddy per day (cash equivalent Rs. 1.65 to Rs. 2/-).
Threshing - Generally done by males. Payment made on contract basis: generally 18 to 20 seers of paddy for a crop of $\frac{1}{2}$ an acre of land (cash equivalent Rs. 6 to Rs. 7).

3. BIHAR(i) Annual/permanent worker:

Paid both in cash and kind. Cash wages vary from Rs. 300-Rs. 400 per annum plus 2 meals daily and 3 dresses in a year. Meals and dresses roughly cost about Rs. 200 per annum. If the wages are on higher side, a worker gets some perquisites but no meals. 15 days leave is also given in a year but the worker cannot take up paid employment elsewhere even though there is no work with the employer. Labour who own homestead land consisting of 3 to 4 kathas or one-tenth of an acre get higher wages as compared to those whose homes stand on the land of employer. A new and somewhat more liberal mode of payment of wages has developed in respect of new high yielding crops such as taichung, larwa, etc. The labour who had their own land and houses got one maund out of 10 maunds at the harvest and wages ranging from Re. 1/- to Rs. 1.50 in addition to a day's meal. At some places the labourers complained that they were getting a wage of Re. 1/- and one day's meal. It was felt that there are written agreements between the employers and workers but neither the owners nor the workers showed any copy of such agreements most probably because of some fear.

(ii) Ploughing:

Ranging between Rs. 2.50 to Rs. 3 per day & sometimes between Rs. 1.50 and Rs. 2 plus light break-fast.

(iii) Harvesting:

A worker gets Rs. 1.50 plus $\frac{1}{4}$ seer of foodgrains for breakfast & $\frac{1}{2}$ seer of rice for lunch per day for harvesting. There is also another mode of payment (piece basis) prevailing for this operation. He/She is paid one bundle out of seven bundles harvested. Wage rates paid to the attached labour range from 0.50 paise to Rs. 1.50 plus certain other benefits. Casual labour are paid higher wages. Unlike tribal agricultural labour non-tribal agricultural labour get only Rs. 1.50 per day without food as the non-tribals have a sense of pollution.

(v)

APPENDIX - C (Contd.)(iv) Other operations:

Sowing - A worker gets Rs.1.50 plus $\frac{1}{4}$ seer of foodgrains for breakfast and $\frac{1}{2}$ seer of rice for lunch per day. Wages of daily paid workers are slightly higher than the permanent workers. A male worker gets Rs. 1.50 to Rs.2.50 whereas a female worker is paid Rs. 1.25 to Rs. 1.75 and the child worker gets Re. 1.00 per day plus some light breakfast. In busy seasons, wages go up by 50 paise. A daily wage worker also gets 2 or 3 dresses in a year if he works with the same employer.

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(vi)

APPENDIX - C (Contd.)4. HARYANA

- (i) Annual/permanent worker: A piece of land may also be given to the labourer for self-cultivation as a kind of incentive but no obligation. In share cropping a worker is paid $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{5}$ of the crop yield after deducting the expenses of cultivation. Annual workers get Rs. 900 - Rs. 1000 per annum but the worker has to bring his own bullocks for ploughing. The workers also enter into written agreements with their employers.
- (ii) Ploughing: System of contract ploughing prevails in some villages. Rs. 20/- per acre are paid for ploughing with labourer's own bullocks. On an average a worker earns Rs. 7 per day under this contract system. Daily wages of a worker employed for ploughing are Rs. 3 per day plus two meals or Rs. without meals.
- (iii) Harvesting: Daily rates vary between Rs. 2.50 and Rs. 4/-.
- (iv) Transplanting: Rs. 12/- to Rs. 15/- per acre for transplantation of paddy.
- (v) Other operations: The general wage (daily) rate is Rs. 2.50 plus two meals or Rs. 4/- without meals for males. For different operations female labour get Rs. 1.75 to Rs. 3 per day with no perquisites for any operation.

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APPENDIX - C (Contd.)5. JAMMU & KASHMIR(i) Annual/permanent worker:

Annual wages are generally paid in kind - 10 to 12 kharwaras equivalent to 8 to $9\frac{1}{2}$ quintals money value of which comes to about Rs. 400 to Rs. 600 per annum plus food and clothing.

(i) when paid in cash, the payment is made monthly ranging between Rs. 45 & Rs. 60 per month plus food & clothing, (ii) yield sharing basis - half of the yield.

The permanent workers are allowed to engage themselves in their own cultivation when there is no work on their masters' lands. They use their employers equipment and cattle for cultivation of their own lands. Their annual earnings from all sources vary between Rs. 750 and Rs. 900 per year.

(ii) Other Operations:

The cash wages for all agricultural operations range from Rs. 20 to Rs. 60 per month. In addition to the cash wages food and clothing are also provided. In some cases the workers are allowed to collect fodder from the employers' land. If engaged on daily wages, a worker gets about Rs. 2.00 to Rs. 2.50 for performing all agricultural operations. In apple pruning wages between Rs. 2.00 and Rs. 2.50 plus tea and snacks are given but in apple plucking $\frac{1}{2}$ kilo of apples are also given in addition. In grading and plucking of apples, wages ranging from Rs. 4 to Rs. 5 plus tea, snacks and $\frac{1}{2}$ kilo of apples are given per day. Sometimes women & children are also engaged in this operation and women are paid 75 paise less than males whereas children get $\frac{1}{2}$ of the wages of adults.

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6. KERALA

- (i) Annual/permanent worker: The wages of annual workers are calculated both on annual and daily basis & they vary from Rs.2.50 plus some perquisites like tea valued at 50 paise without bullocks to Rs.6 or Rs.7 plus some perquisites per day with bullocks. In some cases coconut leaves valued at Rs.50 once in a year for thatching their huts are also given in the form of perquisites. Some amount of cash for marriages & death ceremonies (Rs.25 each on both heads) is also given to the annual worker. The wages of these rural workers are generally a little less than the existing wage rates. These workers are free to work as per their choice. They can also not be evicted because of Agrarian Relations Act which gives protection to them just like Kudikidappukaru. The regular workers stay on someone else's land without paying rent and are obliged to look after the land of the owner even if it is uncultivated. Such workers get 10-15 litres paddy, cloth, meals, etc. on festival days. The perquisites are nominal these days.
- (ii) Ploughing: The wage rates for ploughing with bullocks vary from Rs.5 to Rs.10 per day. In some cases perquisites valued at Re.1 per day are also given. In contract or piece rate system a worker gets Rs.3 to Rs.5.25 for ploughing one para (one acre = 7 paras) thrice with bullocks. This operation can be completed by him in a day.
- (iii) Harvesting:- Payment is in kind and varies from $1/11$ to $1/8$ of the crop harvested. In terms of cash a worker earns between Rs.5 and Rs.8 per day. Different wage rates for different operations for coconut cultivation. Daily wages for tilling and manuring are about Rs.5, for plucking piece rates amounting to Rs.5 plus 10 coconuts per 100 trees climbed or Rs.8 and one coconut per 100 trees climbed. A person can climb 80 trees in a day. When paid in kind it is $1/10$ th of the total coconuts plucked. On an average a worker gets Rs.150 a month but on an average a worker gets work for 22 days in a month. Sometimes a coconut climber is able to earn Rs.6 to Rs.10 per day. In Arecanuts plucking, a worker gets about Rs.5 for every 100 bunches plucked. In Rubber plucking, which is similar to harvesting operation, wages vary from Re. 1 to Rs.1.25 for every 100 trees tapped. A worker in Rubber plucking is able to earn from Rs.3 to Rs.5 per day.
- (iv) Transplanting: Done by females. Cash wages vary from Rs.2 to Rs.4 per day. Sometimes kind wages are also given which are 1 and $1/3$ litres of rice approximately valued at Rs.2.25 per day. In some cases even $1\frac{1}{2}$ litres of rice is given. Male workers get Rs.3 in cash plus two meals and black coffee valued at Rs.2/-.

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APPENDIX - C (Contd.)

(v) Other Operations. Weeding: Done by females on daily basis getting between Rs.1.12 to Rs.3 per day and in some cases tea worth about 25 paise is also provided.

Sowing: Both piece rate and daily rate are prevalent. Piece rates vary from Rs.4 to Rs.4.50 per acre (completed in a day) and daily rates vary from Rs.2.50 to Rs.5 per day. In some cases a mid-day meal or tea is also provided. A male agricultural worker gets Rs.3/- with or without meal to Rs.5/- without meal per day, whereas a female labourer gets from Rs.1.75 with meal to Rs.2.50 without meal per day. Sometimes kind wages in the form of rice and tea are also give.

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7. MADHYA PRADESH(i) Annual/permanent worker:

Permanent workers known as "Sounjia", Habia, Harwaha are employed in some districts. A Sounjia gets $\frac{1}{4}$ of the yield minus the seeds and cost of fertilizers, whereas Habia is paid daily on fixed rate basis. Once Habia is employed by the cultivator his wife is also required to work either at the residence or in the field of the employer at half the wage rate paid to her husband. The moment the entire family is employed the family head receives 20-25 khandi (i.e. 16 quintals) of rice and Rs.60 in cash during the whole year and the women workers get Rs. 1 per day. The wages are paid according to the convenience of the land owner and the needs of the workers. These workers have the privilege to use the idle agricultural implements of their employer if needed. A Harwaha gets about Rs. 300 to Rs. 360 per annum in cash or in kind and a morning meal daily. In addition he gets a cotton blanket (called 'Dhussa'), a pair of shoes, medical facilities, bidis, etc. The monthly wage ranges from Rs. 30 to Rs. 40 and in one particular village it ranged from Rs. 60 to Rs. 70 per month. He is also entitled to get interest free loan between Rs. 200 to Rs. 1000 but in case where the loan varies from Rs. 200 to Rs. 300 half of it is interest free and the remaining half of the loan over Rs. 150 carries interest at the rate of 2%. In some cases a Harwaha is partly paid and partly a share cropper. He gets about Rs.8 to Rs. 11 per month plus 12 maunds of produce per annum plus perquisites like other Harwahas. In the third system prevailing among Harwahas, he gets 3 to 4 acres of land for his own cultivation. He cultivates the land on a partnership basis and gets $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of the produce and no other facilities. In case the Harwaha provides the bullocks the produce is shared with the employer on 50 : 50 basis. The practice of employing permanent agricultural assistants for the whole year is also in vogue. Their wage rate is Rs. 2/- per day multiplied by the number of days worked during the year. In addition he enjoys perquisites like blanket, umbrella and shoes. Their families are given shelter under the same roof free of cost by their employers. The wages of these workers thus come to Rs. 500 to Rs. 600 per annum besides sarees to women and blankets to men. Sometimes a Hali or ploughman is employed on annual basis. In such cases lumpsum amounting to Rs. 40 is paid in the beginning at the time of accepting the contract and thereafter Rs. 40 per month besides two meals a day.

(ii) Ploughing:

Rs. 1.50 to Rs. 3 per day or about $4\frac{1}{2}$ kgs. of paddy equivalent to Rs. 2.50.

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APPENDIX - C (Contd.)

- (iii) Harvesting:- Rs. 1.50 to Rs. 2.50 for male and Re. 1 to Rs. 1.50 for female. At certain places wages are paid in kind - $4\frac{1}{2}$ kgs. of paddy valued Rs. 2.50
- (iv) Transplanting:- Rs. 1.50 to Rs. 3 per day or about $4\frac{1}{2}$ kgs. of paddy equivalent to Rs. 2.50.
- (v) Other Operations: Weeding : Rs. 1.50 and Re. 1 per day for male & female workers respectively.

Sowing: $4\frac{1}{2}$ kgs. of paddy valuing Rs. 2.50.

Hoeing: Ranging between Rs. 1.50 to Rs. 2.50 per day for male and Re. 1 for female workers. In kind - 3 kgs.

Irrigation:- The wages (both in cash and kind) are on the higher side. They range between Rs. 1.50 to Rs. 3.50. The wage rate for male agricultural labour (performing all operations) varies from Rs. 1.50 to Rs. 3.50 and for a female worker from Re. 1 to Rs. 2 per day. In some cases kind wages in the form of $4\frac{1}{2}$ kgs. of paddy for a male and 3 kgs. of paddy for a female are given per day. Child labour gets Re. 1 per day. A herdsman is paid on piece rate basis and gets Rs. 3 to Rs. 4 for a buffalo, Rs. 2 to Rs. 2.50 for a cow and 0.50 paise for a goat per month.

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APPENDIX - C. (Contd.)8. MAHARASHTRA.

- (i) Annual/permanent worker: Annual workers known as "Saldars" are paid according to requirements in instalments. In all a 'Saldar' earns Rs. 6 to Rs.8 per day plus 3 meals, tea, bidis, etc. Annually he gets between Rs. 100 and Rs. 400 besides getting daily food, shelter, clothing shoes, medical treatment. In some cases expenses on self-marriage are also given. At certain places the workers employed on yearly basis are required to work for 13 months and get nearly Rs.400 to Rs. 500 per annum either in instalments or at the end of the year without any perquisites. In case an annual worker does not get daily food, he gets 6 quintals of jowar per annum given at the rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ quintal every month. In some cases even drinks twice a month and in some cases fare for seeing the 'Mela' are provided. In many cases he is treated as a family member. In case the annual worker takes only cash wages, he gets between Rs. 600 to Rs. 900 per annum. No wage paid employment even though free from the work of the master is allowed. A monthly paid worker gets Rs. 30 to Rs. 35 plus $\frac{1}{2}$ quintal of jowar per month or Rs.50 to Rs. 60 per month in cash only. The income of an agricultural labourer sometimes comes to Rs. 55 to Rs. 65 per month for a period of 8 months of the year.
- (ii) Ploughing:- Rs. 3 per day. For ploughing with bullocks a worker is generally paid between Rs.6 and Rs. 9 and sometimes Rs.6 per day plus one or two meals, tea, tobacco, grass for bullocks etc.
- (iii) Harvesting: Both cash and kind wages. Cash wages for males and females are about Rs.4 and Rs.3 per day respectively. In some cases food is also given in addition to cash but the rates are lower in such cases. Cotton picking is done on piece rate basis and the rate ranges between 75 paise to Re.1 for every 12 kilos of cotton picked. For plucking coconuts a worker is paid 25 paise per tree. For cleaning a coconut tree he is paid 50 paise per tree. For harvesting of Arecanut the worker is paid 10 paise per tree. One worker can pluck 40-50 trees during the day and can earn Rs.4 to Rs. 5 per day. He is also given one coconut as perquisite.
- (iv) Transplanting: Male worker gets Rs.2 to Rs.4 and female worker Re.1 to Rs.2 per day. Generally, this operation is done by females, who get one meal in addition to cash wages.

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APPENDIX - C (Contd.)(v) Other Operations:-Weeding: Rs. 1.25 per day for female workers.

Irrigation: In working at the well, a male gets Rs. 3.25 per day while for watering in the field a male and a female get Rs.2 and Rs. 1.25 respectively. Male casual labour engaged for different agricultural operations gets Rs. 1.50 to Rs.3 per day while a female labourer gets 75 paise to Rs.2 per day plus one meal in some cases. A second meal is also given if he works late in the evening. Children normally below 15 years of age are paid Re.1 per day and some perquisites. Cow boys engaged on monthly basis get between Rs. 15 to 25 per month. For grazing cattle the cow-boy is paid Rs.4/- per cow and Rs.5/- per buffalo per month. This rate includes wages for cleaning, bathing the animals, but at certain places the wages are as low as .75 paise per animal per month.

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APPENDIX-C (Contd.)9. MADRAS.(i) Annual/permanent worker:

Annual/permanent workers are known as "Pannaiyals". Both cash and kind wages are paid. A pannaiyal gets $12\frac{1}{2}$ kgs of paddy valuing approximately Rs. 350 at the end of the year plus one meal and 30 paise as perquisites daily besides 2 dhotis, 2 towels and one Sari at Diwali. In some cases he gets in addition 19 kgs. of paddy per week in big estates and sometimes he gets also one bag of paddy for every 2 acres of paddy harvested which is generally divided among all the annual workers. A boy pannaiyal (14 to 18 years of age) gets six bags of paddy valuing Rs. 145 at the end of the year besides Rs. 3 monthly plus one meal and perquisites worth about 12 paise every day. On important festivals, he gets some gift also. Some annual workers are paid monthly wages of Rs. 60 plus a rent-free tiled house as the only perquisite. Some of the annual workers take the entire wage in advance while others take only 50 per cent and balance is paid when asked for. Generally, the annual worker gets Rs. 300-400 per annum. Cash wages of Rs. 400 are given without meals. Other perquisites include clothes, oil, soap, shaving expenses, etc.

(ii) Ploughing:

With bullocks a worker gets Rs. 4 to 7 per day. One rupee extra is paid for bunding operation. The rate without bullocks is Rs. 2 to Rs. 3 per day. There is some discrimination between the good and inefficient workers as instead of meals twice in a day Narikuravas (Nomadic tribe whose traditional occupation is not agriculture at all) are served karji or gruel as they are considered to be inferior workers.

(iii) Harvesting:

Daily cash wages range between Rs. 1.25 & Rs. 4. In groundnut digging a worker may get $\frac{1}{20}$ of the yield. On an average he gets about 4 to 8 litres of groundnuts valued at Rs. 1.20 to Rs. 2.40 at current prices. Some discrimination is made in payment of wages to Narikurawas. Instead of food they are given Karji or gruel once in a day. Casual workers are paid Rs. 2.75 in cash or 5 kgs. for every 30 kgs. of paddy harvested, threshed and transported. For paddy harvesting the worker is given 5-12 litres of paddy (Rs. 2.50 to Rs. 6). For milletts two Madras Measures (Rs. 1.50). For picking cotton the women workers are paid Rs. 1.25 per day in cash.

(xv)

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- (iv) Transplanting: Done by females. Wages vary from Rs.1 plus one meal to Rs.2.50 in cash only. A local worker gets 5 kgs. of paddy (approx. Rs.2/-) as against Rs. 1.37 paid to an outside worker.
- (v) Other operations: Irrigation: A worker is paid 1/8 of the total yield or 1 bag of rice per acre for opening and closing the bund and keeping watch on land till harvest. Pulling of seedlings is done on piece rate or contract system. Generally 50 paise per 100 bundles is given as wages and a worker earns Rs. 3 to Rs.4 daily on average. Also Rs. 12 acre are paid for pulling, bundling and transporting to the field where seedlings are to be transplanted. This is done by males and a worker earns Rs. 2.75 per day.

10. Mysore.

- (i) Annual/permanent worker: Annual/permanent workers are known as "Jeetham". Wages vary from Rs. 100-Rs.500 per annum, depending upon the age, experience etc. of the worker, plus daily food or Rs. 500 to Rs.700 per annum without food. In addition an annual worker gets a 'kambal' (blanket), a pair of chappals, 3 shirts and one turban in a year.
A boy "Jeetham" gets Rs. 50 per annum plus other perquisites as in the case of adult "Jeetham". Sometimes a piece of land measuring 25 cents in area is also given to the "Jeetham" (hereditary labour) for which he pays no rent. In some cases Rs. 500-Rs. 700 are fixed for the whole year (half of the wage paid in the beginning) with no perquisites or other extra benefits. Sometimes permanent labourers are paid between Rs.25 and Rs.40 per month plus 3 meals, 1 coffee, 2 pairs of clothes, bidi and free medical treatment. Under Jeetham system the workers are given loans by their employers on executing bonds and the interest is adjusted against the wages. They are required to work till the loans are cleared.
- (ii) Ploughing: Rs. 3 to Rs.8 daily for ploughing with bullocks and if the worker provides the implements also, he gets Rs. 12 per day, otherwise daily wages are Rs. 1.50 plus 2 meals (total value Rs. 4/-).
- (iii) Harvesting: Rs. 20 per acre; a male worker gets Rs. 2.50 and a female worker is paid Re. 1 or in kind 4 kgs. of grains to the male & 2 kgs. to the female per day. Sometimes harvesting is undertaken on contract basis and the worker gets 100 kgs. of Jowar for 4 acres of land harvested (approx. 5 to 8 kgs. per day for males and between 3 & 4 kgs. grains for females). For plucking coconuts a worker gets 2 coconuts for every 100 coconuts plucked.
- (iv) Transplanting: Both cash and kind wages are paid. Cash wages for male and female worker are Rs.2 and Re.1 per day respectively. In some cases female worker gets 50 paise for transplanting 50 bundles on piece rate basis. On contract basis the wages are Rs.17/- per acre without food or Re.1 per day with food.
- (v) Other Operations: Weeding: For male worker 3 seers of paddy or Rs. 1.50 to Rs. 2 cash wages and for a female worker between Re.1 and Rs. 1.50 per day.
Threshing:- Daily wage rate is 5 seers and 4 seers of jowar for male and female workers respectively or 2 seers of ragi plus one meal daily (equivalent to Rs. 2.10 including food value).

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Hoeing: With bullocks Rs. 6/- per day going upto Rs.8 during busy seasons.

Irrigation: Male worker is paid Rs.2/- whereas female worker gets Rs.1.50 per day. A casual male and female labourer are paid Rs. 1.50 to Rs.3 and 0.60 paise to Rs.1.50 per day respectively. Sometimes a meal and snacks are also provided but in such cases cash wages go down. In kind male and female workers get 4 seers and 2 seers of grain per day respectively. For cutting and threshing the contract rate is one Palla (72 kgs.) per acre. When wages are contracted for a season, the wage is 1/8th of the produce without any other benefits. Child labour engaged in tending cattle get between Rs.50 and Rs. 150 per annum.

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APPENDIX-C (Contd.)11. ORISSA

- (i) Annual/permanent worker. Paid both in cash and kind. Cash wages vary from Rs.300 to Rs.600 per annum plus 2 meals daily. In addition some clothing is also provided. The money value of the perquisites is roughly Rs.300 to Rs.400 per annum. They also get holidays on festivals. In some cases food for worker and for their families is given on festivals. If paid in kind, 18 maunds of paddy at the end of the year or $1\frac{1}{2}$ maunds of paddy monthly and one meal daily. The total value of kind wages comes to about Rs.600 to Rs.700 per annum. Sometimes 50 cents of land is given for self/cultivation. In some cases leave is also given. At present the tendency is to pay cash wages rather than kind wages unless otherwise demanded. Sometimes a permanent worker gets a hut from the owner to live with his family within the compound of the owner.
- (ii) Ploughing Practice of employing ploughmen with bullocks is common. A worker gets about Rs.5 per day if he provides bullocks otherwise wages are between Rs.2 and Rs.4 per day plus two meals or sometimes one meal at certain places.
- (iii) Harvesting Rs.3 to Rs.4 plus two meals a day (money value of one meal is about 50 to 75 paise) or Rs.4 to Rs.5 per day without any perquisites. Worker earns about Rs.5/- per day in seasonal coconut plucking operation.
- (iv) Transplanting Rs.2 to Rs.2.50 per day for males and Rs.1.50 to Rs.2 for females. At certain places a meal is also given.
- (v) Other Operations
- Weeding: Rs.2 to Rs.3 per day for male and Rs.1.50 for females and sometimes one meal also.
- Sowing: A male worker gets Rs. 2 and one meal whereas a female worker gets Rs.1.50 and a meal.
- Hoeing: A male worker gets Rs.2 and one meal whereas a female worker gets Rs.1.50 and a meal.
- Irrigation: Rs.2 plus 2 meals (meals costing about Re.1 to Rs.1.50). Male worker engaged on different agricultural operations gets Rs.1.50 to Rs.2.50 per day. In most of the cases meals are given in addition to wages. In some cases a male and a female worker get Rs.3 to Rs.3.50 and Rs.2 to Rs.2.50 per day respectively.
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APPENDIX-C (Contd.)12. PUNJAB(i) Annual/permanent worker :

Annual wages vary from Rs.450 to Rs.1000 plus one maund of grain per month or daily food and interest free loan, fodder, fuel, etc. Permanent worker when paid on daily wages gets Rs.3 per day plus fodder, fuel and some portion of yield or Rs.45 to Rs.60 monthly plus one maund of maize or wheat. They also get cloth, food and some cash on occasions like marriage in the family of their employed. A monthly paid worker may also get meals and fodder. Some permanent workers like supervisors and tractor drivers employed on yearly basis are paid monthly at the rate of Rs.250/- and Rs.100 to Rs.125 per month respectively. In addition they enjoy certain other perquisites and some quantity of grains. In some cases permanent monthly worker gets Rs.25 to Rs.50 per month plus shelter, daily free food, tea, etc. besides 15 days leave in a year and Railway fare (to and from his native place to the place of work). In "Seeri System," a permanent worker takes land of the employer on crop sharing basis and gets 1/5 to 1/10 of the yield plus (one maund of grain per month or food plus an interest free loan (Rs.300 to Rs.700) adjusted at the end of the crop or termination of the contract.) In addition he gets green fodder for cattle & fuel. A "Seeri" worker in all earns Rs.2,000 to Rs.3,000 per annum including the value of all perquisites. On the whole Seeri system runs smoothly but there are instances where the seeris have infringed the contract. On the other hand seeri labour complain that the employers obtain their signatures on plain paper and try to keep them under surveillance.

(ii) Ploughing:

Male workers get Rs.3/- per day.

(iii) Harvesting:

System of paying cash wages and a share of the produce are prevalent. 1/10 to 1/20 of wheat crop is given as wages (yield 8 to 12 kgs. of wheat) plus chaff valuing about Rs.2/- per day. In total the wages come to Rs.9.50 to Rs.11.50 per day. Cash wages for male and female vary from Rs.3 to Rs.10 and Rs.2 to Rs.5 per day respectively. In addition to cash wages food and tea are also given during the day which cost Re.1 to Rs.2 to the employer per day per labour. Piece rates for cotton/picking are 2 kgs of cotton for picking 37 kgs. of cotton or ranging between 1/10 to 1/20 of the yield (money value Rs.3.50 to Rs.5/-). Chillies picking is mostly done by female workers and get 1/15 of the Chillies

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picked. On an average 2-3 kgs. of chillies (valuing Rs.2.50 to Rs.3.50) without food etc. is given.

(iv) Transplanting

On contract basis Rs.12 to Rs.15 per acre plus one meal and tea. On cash payment male and female worker get Rs.3 and Rs.2 per day respectively.

(v) Other Operations

Weeding: Wages for male and female vary from Rs.3 to Rs.5 and Rs.2 to Rs.3.50 per day respectively. Generally food and tea are also provided with cash wages.

Sowing: Male worker get Rs.3 per day whereas female workers are paid Rs.1.50 to Rs.2 per day.

Hoeing: Wages for male and female vary from Rs.3 to Rs.5 and Rs.2 to Rs.3.50 per day respectively. Generally food and tea are also provided with cash wages. Sometimes fodder is also provided in addition.

Casual male and female workers get Rs.3 to Rs.4 and Rs.1.50 to Rs.3 per day respectively. Sometimes meals and tea are also provided.

Child worker gets 75 paise per day. Male worker employed on monthly basis gets Rs.45 to Rs.75 besides other perquisites.

The cattle rearer commonly known as palli worker is paid on an annual basis and his wages vary from Rs.300 to Rs.500 per year plus food. The children employed for grazing cattle are paid Rs.125 to Rs.400 per annum plus food and tea. Labour employed on general nature duties is paid Rs.75 per month plus food or 40 kgs. of grains per month.

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13. RAJASTHAN

- (i) Annual/permanent worker: Wages vary from Rs. 300 to Rs. 800 per annum plus 12 maunds of grain (totalling about Rs. 1,000), 12 days leave and food on festivals. Sometimes a shirt, a turban and a piece of land for self-cultivation are also given to the worker. In some cases wages are only Rs. 200 to Rs. 300 per annum in addition to other perquisites as above. Sometimes especially during peak seasons the wage rates go as high as Rs. 9/- to Rs. 10/- per day but the practice of taking advance payments in cash or foodgrains has adversely affected their bargaining power. Under the Seeri System which is fast disappearing these days, a labourer is engaged for one agricultural year and is allowed $\frac{1}{6}$ to $\frac{1}{8}$ of the total agricultural production after contributing his share of investment in the form of seeds, fertilizers, etc. without enjoying any perquisites.
- (ii) Ploughing: Rs. 2.50 to Rs. 4 per day.
- (iii) Harvestings: System of cash wages plus some grain or a fixed proportion of grains alone. Difference between male and female worker is only in cash wages but grain payment is equal in both cases. Male & female worker get Rs. 5 to Rs. 6 and Rs. 3 to Rs. 4 per day respectively plus grain varying between 4 and 7 kg. per bigha. At piece rates the workers get 15 to 20 kgs. per bigha in case of wheat and 1 to 1.5 kg. of rice for every 40 kgs. of paddy harvested. In both the cases on an average the worker earns about Rs. 3.50 per day. In some cases cash wages for male and female worker vary from Rs. 1.50 to Rs. 2.50 and Rs. 1 to Rs. 1.50 per day respectively. Sometimes male worker gets 2 meals in addition to cash wages i.e. more wages for male worker. In case of paddy, both male and female worker get $4\frac{1}{2}$ kgs. of paddy per day.
- (iv) Transplanting: Mainly by females. Female worker gets Rs. 1.50 to Rs. 2.50 per day whereas male and child worker get Rs. 3 to Rs. 4 and 0.75/- per day respectively. paisa
- (v) Other operations Weeding & Hoe-ing: Sometimes done on contract. Wages being Rs. 10/- to Rs. 15/- for paddy and Rs. 6/- to Rs. 7/- for wheat

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per bigha. Female workers are paid Rs. 1.50 to Rs. 1.75 per day.

Rs. 2.75 to Rs. 3 per day.

Irrigation : / Daily wage rates for different agricultural operations are almost similar. Monthly paid workers generally employed for crop seasons get Rs. 65 to Rs. 75 per month plus 2 meals daily (costing approximately Rs. 30/- per month).

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APPENDIX - C (Contd.)14. UTTAR PRADESH(i) Annual/permanent worker:

The lowest wage rate for permanent worker varies from Rs.8 to Rs.10 per month plus breakfast (costing 75 paise) and one acre of land for self-cultivation. In certain cases they are paid monthly wages from Rs.10/- to Rs.20 per month with one meal and one breakfast valuing Rs.2.50 per day. They are also given land measuring $\frac{1}{3}$ acre for self-cultivation. Those who do not take cash wages are given $\frac{3}{4}$ acres of land and 20 seers of grain at the end of the year. On higher side, wages vary from Rs.75 to Rs.80 per month plus 6 yards of cloth annually and $1\frac{1}{2}$ maunds of grain at harvest. In some cases, wages range from Rs.75 to Rs.80 per month plus grain twice a year at harvests, 6 yards of cloth, meals on certain festivals and sometimes Rs.50/- in cash for dresses on occasions like Holi and Diwali and help towards marriage and funeral. In some cases fodder is also provided. If a permanent worker (Bandhor) goes on leave, wages are deducted. In some cases, perquisites such as morning breakfast has been withdrawn with the rise in money wages. In still certain other cases persons employed on permanent basis are given 10 per cent of the produce besides root heads of the crops and $1\frac{1}{2}$ kgs. of paddy alongwith 200 grams of Nashta daily. At certain places wages are as low as Re.1 per day or Rs.30 per month with perquisites valuing Rs.30 per month.. Such workers are also given 1 bigha of land for self-cultivation. At certain places sometimes land is let out to the cultivators on 50 per cent share basis without any cash payment. In such cases all the expenses on seeds etc. are borne by the lessee. A permanent worker or the one when employed on contract basis from year to year is also paid on daily basis. The daily wages of such workers range between Rs.2.50 and Rs.3.00 per day plus some perquisites differing from place to place.

(ii) Ploughing:

Contract system of ploughing and sowing prevails in some places. Rs.5 to Rs.7 are paid for $\frac{1}{3}$ acre of land and generally cash wages are paid. In some cases cash wages ranging between Rs.2 to Rs.3 or 2 seers of grains per day are given.

APPENDIX - C (Contd.)(iii) Harvesting:

Done both on share basis as well as on daily basis. On share basis, it varies from $1/16$ in case of paddy to $1/25$ in case of wheat. On daily basis payments are made in kind which vary from 2 to 6 kgs. of grain harvested or some coarse grain. In some cases lunch & breakfast valuing approximately Rs.2 are also given in addition to the kind wages - 4 kg. of grain or Rs.2 to Rs.2.50 in cash in addition to the perquisites like breakfast and lunch. No distinction between male and female workers in respect of payment of wages is made.

(iv) Other operations:

Hoing - Re.1 to Rs.2.50 per day or 1-2 seers of grain for male workers and Re.1 to 2 for females.
Irrigation - Rs.2 to Rs.3 per day or 1-2 seers of grains for males and Rs.2 to Rs.2.50 per day for females. Daily workers performing all operations like weeding, hoeing, sowing, transplanting and irrigation get both cash and kind wages. Male and female workers get Rs.2 to 3.50 and Rs.1.50 to Rs.2.50 per day respectively plus some breakfast or "chabena" (parched or boiled grain). In kind wages, generally no distinction is made between male & female workers and both get the same kind wages i.e. 1 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ kgs. of foodgrain per day. In some cases they get meal while in others they get only breakfast. Cow-boy gets Re:1 per animal per month generally. Workers employed for a single crop season are paid Rs.2/- per day and breakfast or Rs.10 per month plus one breakfast valuing 75 paise and $\frac{1}{2}$ acre of land for self-cultivation.

APPENDIX -C (Contd.)15. WEST BENGAL(i) Annual/permanent workers:

The wage structure is not uniform. It varies according to the prospects of production and permanency of job. Generally permanent worker gets between Rs.200 and Rs.500 per annum plus 3 meals daily plus some clothes (consisting of 2 dhotis, 2 shirts, 2 towels, 2 gunjies) plus some perquisites consisting of fuel, vegetables, mustard oil, salt, bidis, etc. In some cases he is also provided a cotton wrapper, medical treatment & leave facilities. In case of monthly payment, he may get Rs.15 to Rs.30 per month plus 2 meals daily or $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 maunds of paddy per month. In case no meals are provided, wages may range from Rs.75 to Rs.80 per month plus some refreshment. In certain places there are whole time agricultural labourers who are paid Rs.75 to Rs.80 per month and tiffin daily valuing 30 paise. If engaged on kind wages, he gets 2 kgs. of paddy per day plus one meal and tiffin valuing in all about Rs.4 per day. At harvest he also gets 10 maunds of paddy. Clothing and other perquisites are the same as provided in case of cash wage permanent worker. In certain places when the worker is employed for one agricultural year at a time he is paid in kind i.e. 6.66 quintals of paddy at the end of the year. During his annual tenure he enjoys certain perquisites like 2 dhoties, 2 shirts, 2 towels and 2 banyans. In terms of money his annual wages come to Rs.667 and a fixed cash of Rs.450 (totalling Rs.1,117) and ranging between Rs.1,117 to Rs.1,185/- with a provision of getting advances. They are also free to engage themselves outside on wage payment basis while there is no work on their master's land. The practice of taking advances in money or in paddy compels them to stick to their jobs. In some cases a ploughman is engaged on yearly basis and gets Rs.180 per annum plus two munds of paddy per month and clothing. The head labourer gets an yearly wage of Rs.240 plus two munds of paddy per month plus produce of one bigha of land at the time of harvest. At certain places child labour is engaged on permanent basis and is paid Rs.80 per year besides certain perquisites.

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- (ii) Ploughing: Daily paid ploughman gets Rs.4. to Rs.6 provided he brings his own bullocks and plough. In addition to daily wage he may also get one meal and tiffin. Generally daily wages are from Rs.1.50 to Rs.3.50 per day for paddy and rabi crop cultivation whereas for jute cultivation the wage rate ranges between Rs.2.50 to Rs.4.00 per day.
- (iii) Harvesting: Generally wages vary from Rs.2.50 to Rs.4.50 per day in case of male & Rs.2 per day in case of female worker. In addition sometimes 2 meals or tiffin are also provided. In contract system, the worker gets 3 measures of paddy for every 20 measures of paddy given to the owner but the worker has not only to cut paddy but to thresh it & transport it to the godown. In some cases, he also gets yield of two rows of paddy on each side of the field in addition to the wages and perquisites which are 4 kgs and 3 kgs. of paddy for males and females respectively plus 2 meals. In Jute cutting wages vary from Rs.2 to Rs.10 per 100 bundles depending upon the size of bundles. In jute washing, labour is engaged on daily as well as piece rate basis & wages vary from place to place. Wages vary from Rs.2 for 100 bundles to Rs.10 for 100 bundles. At certain places cash wages vary between Rs.4 to Rs.4.50 per day. A female labour gets Rs.1.50 plus some tiffin per day.
- (iv) Transplanting: On contract basis - Rs.12 to Rs.15 per bigha. In case of cash wages male gets between Rs.1.50 and Rs.4 and female Rs.1 only per day. In case of kind wages, a worker gets $1\frac{1}{4}$ kgs. of rice per day.
- (v) Other operations: Weeding - Rs.2 to Rs.4 per day.
Sowing & Irrigation - Generally a male worker gets Rs.2 per day and 3 meals a day and female worker gets Rs.1.50 and two meals a day. Sometimes their cash wages vary between Rs.1.50 and Rs.3 per day without any perquisites.
Hoing - Ranging between Rs.2 to Rs.4.00 per day. Both cash & kind wages for males and females engaged on casual labour. For a male worker wages vary from Rs.6 to Rs.7 per day depending upon the season including some perquisites. The kind payment is generally 2 to 4 kgs. of paddy for a male and 3 kgs. for a female plus 2 meals a day. The money value of kind wages goes as high as Rs.6 for

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APPENDIX - C (Contd.)

a male and Rs.4.75 for a female per day. If paid in cash, wages generally vary from Rs.2 to Rs.3 for a male & Rs.1.50 to 2.50 for a female per day besides, sometimes, meal, tiffin and other perquisites. Workers are also employed for a single crop season. The wages paid to such workers during kharif crop season are Rs.3 per day plus 1 kg. of rice valuing Rs.1.60 besides other perquisites like tea, mustard oil & spices all valuing Rs.1/- (all totalling Rs.5.60 per day). In rabi season the worker is paid partly in cash & partly in kind which comes to about Rs.4.10 per day. The system of crop sharing (Bargadars) to carry out entire agricultural operations with their own cattle, plough & incurring all other expenses by the Bargadars is also prevalent. At the end of the cropping season the Bargadar gets 50% of the produce. In some cases, in peak agricultural season, and attached labour is paid Rs.1.50 to Rs.2 per day & 1½ seers of rice in kind with the complement of vegetables, fuel, oil, etc. A cowboy gets Rs.40/- per month plus 3 meals daily.

(i)

APPENDIX - D.WAGE RATES FOR VARIOUS NON-AGRICULTURAL OCCUPATIONS - STATE-WISE1. ASSAM

- (i) Mason: Skilled gets Rs.4/- to Rs.5/- per day generally. In some cases, a Raj Histry (Head Brick-layer) gets Rs.5/- to Rs.6/- per day without any perquisites. Semi-skilled gets Rs.3.50 to Rs.4/- per day.
- (ii) Carpenter: Works on daily wages and on contract basis for the construction of houses. On daily wages he gets between Rs.3/- and Rs.7/- per day, depending on the skill of the worker and his reputation in the locality. In a few instances he is offered meals but in such cases the cash wages are on the lower side. On contract basis, for construction of wooden houses, he generally earns Rs.6/- to Rs.7/- per day.
- (iii) Blacksmith: Wages are same as for Carpenter.
- (iv) Unskilled Labour: Persons engaged in house-building such as bamboo cottage making get Rs.3/- to Rs.4/- per day. A general labourer gets between Rs.2/- and Rs.5/- per day without perquisites. Sometimes he is provided with some perquisites but in such cases the wages are on the lower side.
- (v) Other Occupations: In stone and firewood cuttings, earth work, and plantation work the wages vary from Rs.3/- to Rs.5/- per day without any perquisites. Husking of paddy is mostly a female occupation in which the wages vary from Rs.1.50 to Rs.3/- per day. Sometimes tea is also offered. The kind wages for husking one maund of paddy is 1/4 of paddy husked. In cattle grazing, children are engaged and they get about Rs.15/- to Rs.20/- per month. In orchards and vegetable gardens, the workers earn about Rs.3.50 per day. In some areas, all the members of the household above 12 years of age work in the pottery and the average earnings of a family consisting of 5 workers come to Rs.300/- to Rs.350/- per month.

(ii)

APPENDIX - D (Contd.)2. ANDHRA PRADESH

- (i) Mason: Skilled works on contract system getting Rs.4/- for an arm length of construction.
- (ii) Carpenter: Earns about 25 quintals of grain approx. priced at Rs.1000/- per annum. Cash wages range from Rs.5/- to Rs.8 per day.
- (iii) Blacksmith: Gets Rs.5/- to Rs.8/- per day.
- (iv) Unskilled Labour: Different wages for males and females. Wages of male and female workers range from Re.1/- to Rs.2.50 and 50 paise to Rs.1.25 per day respectively.
- (v) Other Occupations: Weaver is paid on piece rate basis getting Rs.5/- or 14 seers of paddy for a sari of 16 cubits. A hammarman (semi-skilled) and a blower (unskilled) get Rs.5/- and Rs.2/- per day respectively. Sheep grazers engaged on annual basis get about Rs.100/- to Rs.250/- per annum plus 3 meals daily depending upon the number of sheep and efficiency of the worker. On an average a Potter earns Re.1/- per day.

(iv)

APPENDIX - D (Contd.)4. HARYANA

- (i) Mason: Skilled - earns from Rs.5/- to Rs.7/- per day.
- (ii) Carpenter: Earns Rs.6/- to Rs.7/- per day.
- (iii) Blacksmith: Earns Rs.6/- to Rs.7/- per day.
- (iv) Unskilled Labour: Male and female labourer earn from Rs.2.50 to Rs.3.50 and Rs.1.75 to Rs.2.75 per day respectively. Child labour engaged sometimes in construction activities earn from Re.1/- to Rs.2/- per day. An adult male and female labourer engaged in Famine Relief Operations get Rs.2.25 and Rs.2/- per day respectively.
- (v) Other Occupations: One or two persons employed casually by the village shop-keepers get Rs.60 P.M. The payment is made in cash and may be paid in advance. A chowkidar in some places is paid Rs.40/- per month.

(v)

APPENDIX - D (Contd.)5. JAMMU & KASHMIR

- (i) Mason: Skilled - gets from Rs.5/- to Rs.8/- per day. In addition he sometimes gets a loaf of bread plus tea or snacks. In some cases he gets Rs.5/- to Rs.6/- per day plus a meal and tea.
- (ii) Carpenter: Is engaged on daily wages and wages vary from Rs.5/- to Rs.7/- per day plus tea and snacks. If the wages are on the lower side, he is given food, tea and snacks in addition to daily wage.
- (iii) Blacksmith: Under "Sepi" system, he gets generally one maund of grain per plough per crop. His earnings normally come to Rs.900/- to Rs.1000/- per year.
- (iv) Unskilled Labour: Wages vary from Rs.2/- to Rs.2.50 per day. In some cases, a labourer is also provided food and tea or a loaf of bread in addition to daily wages. The Govt. rate is Rs.2.50 to Rs.3/- per day.
- (v) Other Occupations: Weaver - Is self-employed and earns Rs.2/- to Rs.3.00 per day. Water Mill Operator works on piece-rate basis and gets 1/3 of the earnings of the mill owner plus Rs.10/- to Rs.15/- per month when the mill works. The duration of this operation lasts only about 2 months in a year. Workers engaged in Mahan Operations (which means lumbering operations) flow logs down the rivers and their earnings vary from Rs.3/- to Rs.4/- per day on piece rate basis. The saw-mill workers get Rs.2.50 to Rs.3/- per day. Brick-makers are paid at the rate of Rs.10/- per thousand bricks made. Potters (self-employed) earn Rs.3/- to Rs.4/- per day. Shoe-makers (self-employed) earn Rs.2.50 to Rs.3/- per day.

(vi)

APPENDIX - D (Contd.)

6. KERALA

- (i) Mason: Skilled may get Rs.7/- to Rs.10/- per day.
- (ii) Carpenter: Gets Rs.7/- plus a meal in the noon per day when engaged on daily wages. In some cases they are self-employed and get on an average only 22 days work in a month and earns Rs.8/- per day.
- (iii) Blacksmith: Is self-employed generally and he earns about Rs.7/- to Rs.10/- per day.
- (iv) Unskilled Labour: Male and female labourer get Rs.4/- to Rs.6/- and Rs.2.50 to Rs.4/- per day respectively. Male and female helpers to Mason get Rs.5/- to Rs.6/- and Rs.2.50 to Rs.4/- per day respectively. A male and female head load worker get Rs.5/- to Rs.6/- and Rs.4/- per day respectively.
- (v) Other Occupations: A pottery maker, workers engaged in khadi spinning and weaving, are self-employed and generally earn from Rs.2/- to Rs.5/- per day. A female worker in khadi spinning work earns only about Rs.2/- per day. A stone cutter and fire-wood cutter are engaged on daily wage basis and earn Rs.4/- to Rs.5.50 per day without perquisites. Collection of Shell is done on contract basis and a worker is able to earn upto Rs.4/- per day. Ferry workers run their trade on piece rate basis and earn about Rs.4/- per day. In coconut plucking a worker is paid 10 paise per tree. One worker can pluck coconuts from 80 to 100 trees in a day. In that case his wage bill comes to Rs.8/- to Rs.10/- per day. In addition, he is given one coconut the price of which comes to 50 paise. But the workers will not get the employment in this operation throughout the year. Piece-rate system is in existence for tapping the Rubber Trees. A worker gets Rs.1.25 for 100 trees tapped. A worker can tap 400 trees in a day. These workers will be getting work throughout the year. In bamboo mat making, the average earnings per worker work out to Rs.2.25 per day. In arecanut plucking, the wages paid are Rs.5/- for plucking 100 bunches.

(vii)

APPENDIX - D (Contd.)7. MADHYA PRADESH

- (i) Mason: Skilled - Cash wages vary from Rs.4.50 to Rs.5/- per day.
- (ii) Carpenter: Gets wages varying between Rs.4/- and Rs.5/- per day. On an annual basis he gets from the farmers, on the basis of the number of ploughs owned by them, generally 20 to 30 kgs. of grains per plough. In some cases, a carpenter gets Rs.125/- for making one cart wheel.
- (iii) Blacksmith: Gets wages varying between Rs.4/- and Rs.5/- per day. On an annual basis he gets from the farmers, on the basis of the number of ploughs owned by them, generally 20 to 30 kgs. of grains per plough.
- (iv) Unskilled Labour: A male labourer gets from Re.1/- to Rs.2/- per day without perquisites. In some areas, the wage rate for the unskilled jobs varies from Rs.1.50 to Rs.2.50 per day.
- (v) Other Occupations: A skilled Stone Cutter may get upto Rs.5/- per day. A Cowboy is paid between Rs.1.25 and Rs.1.50 per cattle per month. In some cases the wage rates for grazing are Rs.3/- to Rs.4/- per month per head of buffalo, Rs.2/- to Rs.2.50 per month for a cow and 50 paise to Re.1/- per month per sheep or goat. Persons engaged in poultry, fishery, etc. are self-employed and generally earn Rs.4/- per day. Dhobis, Chamars and Barbers are paid the customary wages in grain which vary from 20 to 30 kgs. in a year plus some money (Rs.5/- to Rs.10/-) at the time of marriages. In some areas, the wage rates for workers in poultry, fishery and shoe-making are Rs.4/- per day with meals. In case of unsatisfactory work done by the workers, deductions in the wage bills to the extent mutually agreed upon are made.

(viii)

APPENDIX - D (Contd.)8. MAHARASHTRA

- (i) Mason: Skilled gets between Rs.8/- and Rs.10/- per day.
- (ii) Carpenter: Skilled gets between Rs.8/- and Rs.10/- per day differing from place to place. In some places a semi-skilled carpenter gets Rs.4/- per day.
- (iii) Blacksmith: Earns between Rs.3.50 and Rs.4/- per day.
- (iv) Unskilled Labour: Wages of a male and female worker are Rs.2/- & Rs.1.50 per day respectively. The wages of male worker varies between Rs.2/- and Rs.3/- and that of a female worker varies from Re.1/- to Rs.2.00 per day. Male and female firewood breakers (labourers) get Rs.2/- and Rs.1.50 per day respectively. In Govt. construction work, a male and female worker get Rs.3/- & Rs.2.50 per day respectively. In Railway works male & female worker get Rs.2.25 and Rs.1.50 per day respectively. In industrial establishments a male & female worker earn Rs.2.50 and Rs.1.50 per day respectively.
- (v) Other Occupations: Tractor Mechanics get Rs.5/- to Rs.6/- per day. Tractor Drivers are engaged on Rs.150/- per month. There is no difference between the wages of workers in flour and saw-mills, lumbering, stone-cutting where they get Rs.1.50 per day. In stone crushing, the wages are a bit higher and a male and female worker get Rs.3/- and Rs.1.50 per day respectively. A Handloom worker is a self-employed person. In this operation the earnings of male and female worker come to Rs.2/- and Rs.1.50 per day respectively. In Bidi-making, the wages are on piece rate basis and Rs.2.50 are paid for 1000 bidis rolled. On an average a worker is able to roll 1500 bidis per day and thereby earns Rs.3.75 per day. In Government construction work, a male and female worker get Rs.3.50 and Rs.2.50 per day respectively. In traditional Broom-making in a particular area, the workers get 2 kg. of grain from each family per annum. Generally 75 paise to Re.1/- is given per month per animal to cattle-grazers. In some cases, the cattle-grazers get Rs.4/- for a cow and Rs.5/- for a buffalo per month. For plucking coconuts a worker is paid 25 paise per tree. For cleaning a coconut tree, he is paid 50 paise per tree. For harvesting of Arecanut, a worker is paid 10 paise per tree. One worker can pluck 40 to 50 trees in a day. In that case his wages will come to Rs.4/- to Rs.5/- per day plus one coconut as perquisite. In lumbering, a male and female worker get Rs.1.50 and Re.1/- per day respectively. In some cases children cut grass and timber and sell bundle of sticks at the rate of 75 paise per bundle. In some places, chowkidars, cooks, Aayas, Sweepers, Barbers and coolies are earning Rs.150/- to Rs.200/- P.M.

(ix)

APPENDIX - D (Contd.)9. MADRAS

- (i) Mason: Skilled - Rs.3/- to Rs.6/- per day. In addition, sometimes, one meal and coffee are also given. In such cases the cash wages are lower.
- (ii) Carpenter: Rs.3/- to Rs.6/- per day. Sometimes a meal is also offered but in such cases cash wages are lower. If paid in kind, he will get 6 to 16 measures of paddy, for mending a plough, depending upon the yield.
- (iii) Blacksmith: Rs.3/- to Rs.6/- per day. Sometimes a meal is also offered but in such cases cash wages are lower. If paid in kind, he will get 6 to 16 measures of paddy, for mending a plough, depending upon the yield.
- (iv) Unskilled Labour: Male, female & child labour get from Rs.2/- to Rs.3/-, Re.1/- to Rs.2.50 & 0.75 paise to Re.1/- per day respectively. Meals are generally not given to such labourers.
- (v) Other Occupations: Weaver - Sari weaver gets Rs.35/- per sari and earns about Rs.60/- to Rs.65/- per month. Coconut/weavers work on contract basis, the rate being Rs.2.50 for 100 thatches. His average wage for the day amounts to Rs.2/- only. In stone cutting, male and female worker get equal wages i.e. Rs.2/- to Rs.3/- per day and a child worker gets Rs.1.50 per day. A stone cutter in some cases may get Rs.4/- per day. In tea-shops, workers get Re.1/- per day plus 2 meals. A well digger (a male worker) gets Rs.5/- per day. Potters earn Rs.2/- per day. In khadi-spinning, a worker (both male and female) gets Re.1/- per day. Mat-weavers get Rs.2/- per day irrespective of their sex. Children in mat weaving get Re.1/- per day. A worker engaged in snacks making earns Rs.2/- per day. In Palm-Gur Industry, a tapper is able to earn about Rs.2.50 per day.

(x)

APPENDIX - D (Contd.)10. MYSORE

- (i) Mason: Skilled Mason gets Rs.4/- to Rs.5/- per day. Piece rates also enable the Masons to earn similar amounts. Semi-skilled Mason gets Rs.2/- to Rs.3/- per day.
- (ii) Carpenter: Generally gets 50 kgs. of jowar for one plough. In some areas, he normally charges Rs.5/- for the repair of a plough. In some cases all implements required for one plough are prepared and supplied for 40 kg. of jowar, 3 kg. pulses and 3 kg. cotton. In a year he can work for 20 ploughs.
- (iii) Blacksmith: Is able to earn about Rs.400/- per annum. In some cases all implements required for one plough are prepared and supplied for 40 kg. of jowar, 3 kg. pulses and 3 kg. cotton. In a year he can work for 20 ploughs.
- (iv) Unskilled Labour: Engaged on daily basis a male labourer gets Rs.1.50 to Rs.3/- per day. If given food also, he gets only Re.1/-/- A female labourer gets 0.60 paise plus food to Rs.1.50 per day.
/per day.
- (v) Other Occupations: Weaver gets Rs.2/- to Rs.2.60 per sari in general. Other workers connected with weaving work get Re.1/- to Rs.1.50 per day. Wood-cutter gets piece rates at the rate of 50 paise to 75 paise per bundle and generally he is able to cut 2 bundles in a day. In quarrying, piece rate wage system is generally followed. The wages are Re.1/- for filling 3 boxes of 3 cubic feet each. In coconut shelling and plucking, wages are 2 coconuts for every 100 coconuts plucked and shelled. For manuring coconut trees - Re.1/- and 75 paise per day for males and females respectively. In peeling arecanuts, the wages are Re.1/- per day plus one seer of rice. Piece rates are given to workers who do border work on mats at the rate of 10 paise per mat. In stone cutting also piece rates system prevails and a male and female worker earn. Rs.2/- to Rs.3/- and Re.1/- to Rs.1.50 per day respectively. In arecanut plantations male and female worker get Rs.2.25 and Rs.2/- respectively per day.

Generally, children engaged on cattle grazing earn about Rs.50/- to Rs.60/- per annum plus clothing and daily food. The wages of children may also be fixed on the basis of per cattle per annum which is generally one palla i.e. 100 seers of grain. Hotel workers get Rs.5/- to Rs.25/- per month plus food; coolies are paid at the rate of Rs.2/- per day.

(xi)

APPENDIX - D (Contd.)

11. ORISSA

- (i) Mason: Skilled - Common wage for a mason ranges from Rs.5/- to Rs.7/-.
Semi-skilled - Helpers to a mason get sometimes a wage as high as Rs.5/- per day. A male & female helper to mason get Rs.2.50 & Rs.2/- per day respectively.
- (ii) Carpenter: Wages vary from Rs.4/- to Rs.6/- per day.
- (iii) Blacksmith: When engaged on daily basis he gets generally Rs.6/- plus a meal per day. But mostly he is self-employed and earns from Rs.5/- to Rs.7/- per day.
- (iv) Unskilled Labour: Male & female labourer generally get from Rs.1.50 to Rs.3.50 and Rs.1.50 to Rs.2.50 per day respectively.
- (v) Other Occupations: A fire-wood cutter gets Rs.2/- plus a meal or Rs.4/- per day. Wages of domestic servants are reported to be Re.1/- plus 2 meals per day. Helper to goldsmith gets Rs.3/- per day. Coconut pluckers are paid at piece rates viz. one coconut for plucking two trees. A coconut plucker on an average earns Rs.5/- a day. A male and female stone-cutter get Rs.2.50 and Rs.2/- per day respectively.

(xii)

APPENDIX - D (Contd.)12. PUNJAB

- (i) Mason: Skilled - Gets Rs.6/- to Rs.8/- per day. The cash wages are generally lower, if two meals and tea are provided in addition to wages. Semi-skilled - Gets Rs.4/- to Rs.7/- per day depending upon the skill of the worker.
- (ii) Carpenter: Works both on cash wages as well as grain payment basis at the time of harvest. If engaged on daily basis he gets from Rs.6/- to Rs.8/- per day and sometimes a meal when the wages are on the lower side. In grain payment basis (sepi-system) customarily 2 maunds of grain per plough per year are given. Generally he earns between Rs.1000/- and Rs.2500/- per annum depending upon the number of cultivators he serves.
- (iii) Blacksmith: Gets Rs.4/- to Rs.8/- per day. The cash wages are generally lower if meals and tea are provided in addition to wages.
- (iv) Unskilled Labour: A worker engaged in house construction generally gets Rs.3.50 and a meal per day. A male unskilled labourer gets Rs.3/- to Rs.4/- per day and sometimes a meal and tea also. An unskilled female labourer gets Rs.2/- to Rs.2.50 and a meal plus tea a day. A labourer engaged on monthly basis gets Rs.75/- per month and daily food or 40 kgs. of grain in lieu thereof. daily In terms of money value, in general, total/wage rates come to Rs.4.50 for male and Rs.3.50 for female unskilled workers.
- (v) Other Occupations: Weaver - A male weaver (semi-skilled) is able to earn Rs.4/- to Rs.7/- per day. In Gur-making, a worker gets 3 kgs. of Gur for preparing 37 kgs. of Gur. A chakki operator gets from Rs.100/- to Rs.150/- per month in addition he is provided one maund of flour every month. In Brick-making a worker is generally engaged on a piece rate basis and he gets Rs.4/- to Rs.6/- per thousand of bricks made. In this case the wages generally come to Rs.4/- to Rs.5/- per day. In cattle-grazing generally children are engaged and their wages range from Rs.125/- to Rs.500/- per annum plus/food. Khadi weavers and rope makers, who are self-employed earn generally Rs.4/- to Rs.6/- per day. A worker in shoe-making earns Rs.2/- to Rs.3/- per day in some areas. For making a pair of shoes the wages of a worker range from Rs.2/- to Rs.2.50. In some areas, the wage rate of semi-skilled categories is Rs.4/- to Rs.7/- per day for the male. A semi-skilled worker in hoisery work earns Rs.3/- per day.

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(xiii)

APPENDIX - D (Contd.)

13. RAJASTHAN

- (i) Mason: Skilled - Gets Rs.5/- per day.
Semi-skilled - Gets between Rs.3/- and Rs.4/- per day.
- (ii) Carpenter: Is self-employed and gets his wages at the time of harvest. He is able to earn foodgrains worth about Rs.600/- to Rs.700/- per annum.
- (iii) Blacksmith: Normally gets Rs.5/- per day.
- (iv) Unskilled Labour: The general wage rate for a male labourer varies from Rs.3/- to Rs.4/- per day.
- (v) Other Occupations: Weavers are self-employed and earn about Rs.3.50 to Rs.5.00 per day. On contract basis a weaver is paid according to results. A weaver having a family of 7-8 persons and assisting him in the weaving operation finishes the manufacture of 60 yards of saree in 4-5 days and gets Rs.25/- to Rs.30/-. Thus in this way the weaver is able to earn from Rs.3.50 to Rs.5/- per day. In case he is able to procure orders for at least 5-6 sarees of 60 yards length each he is able to earn Rs.100/- to Rs.150/- per month which keeps him hardly at the subsistence level. Shoe-makers are able to earn Rs.3/- to Rs.4/- per day. Semi-skilled workers engaged in flour mills get Rs.85/- per month.

(xiv)

APPENDIX - D (Contd.)14. UTTAR PRADESH

- (i) Mason: Skilled - A skilled mason gets Rs.7/- per day. In some cases wages vary from Rs.5/- to Rs.7/- plus a meal or Rs.8/- in cash only per day.
Semi-skilled - A semi-skilled mason gets from Rs.3/- to Rs.7/- per day. Generally, the cash wages are on the lower side if he gets two meals or some grain for breakfast daily.
- (ii) Carpenter: Gets the usual payment on per plough or on acreage basis at the time of harvest. He may get between 15 to 20 seers of grains for a plough at the harvest twice a year. On daily wages he gets Rs.3.50 plus 2 meals daily.
- (iii) Blacksmith: Gets the usual payment on per plough or on acreage basis at the time of harvest. He may get between 15 to 20 seers of grains for a plough at harvest twice a year. In an area, a blacksmith gets Rs.7/- per day.
- (iv) Unskilled Labour: Wages of male & female labourer vary from Rs.1.50 to Rs.3/- and Re.1/- to Rs.2.50 per day respectively. When the wages are lower, generally 2 meals and a breakfast are also provided. In some areas the wages are between Rs.3/- and Rs.5/- per day for male labourers engaged in jungles & mines. Generally, a male and female get from Rs.1.50 to Rs.3/- and Re.1/- to Rs.2.50 per day respectively. A child labour generally gets Re.1/- per day.
- (v) Other Occupations: A tile roof maker gets Rs.3/- to Rs.5/- per day. In addition one breakfast and one or two meals are also given to him which cost Rs.2/- to Rs.2.50 per day approximately. In Bidi-making, the prevailing wage rate is Rs.1.87 for preparing 1000 Bidis. Sweepers get annual or crop to crop perquisites and one bread daily from every household they serve. Generally the whole family of the sweepers work for the farmers. In addition the sweepers get some fodder for their cattle & some grains at crop season, the quantity of which differs from farmer to farmer.

(xv)

APPENDIX - D15. WEST BENGAL

- (i) Mason: Skilled - His wages vary from Rs.4/- to Rs.5/- per day depending upon his skill. Semi-skilled - A Mistry (semi-skilled) in tile industry gets from Rs.3/- to Rs.4/- per day.
- (ii) Carpenter: A skilled carpenter gets Rs.4.50 per day while an unskilled carpenter may get Rs.3/- to Rs.3.50 per day.
- (iii) Blacksmith: Gets normally Rs.4.50 to Rs.5/- per day.
- (iv) Unskilled Labour: A male labourer gets from Rs.1.75 to Rs.3/- per day. When offered a meal, tea and fried rice, his cash wages are on the lower side. In some cases a daily labourer is engaged on Rs.1.25 to Rs.1.50 per day without any perquisites.
- (v) Other Occupations: Weaver - The weaver families are mostly paid wages at piece rate varying from 0.81 P to Re.1/- per cloth and the average daily earning of a semi-skilled weaver is Rs.3/- and that of a skilled weaver is Rs.4/-. Workers are engaged on a monthly basis on husking machines, oil and saw mills. A skilled worker on a husking machine gets Rs.70/- per month plus 2 meals a day, while an unskilled worker gets Rs.40/- per month plus 2 meals a day. The wages in oil mills vary from Rs.55/- to Rs.120/- per month depending upon the skill of the worker. Sometimes the unskilled worker is also provided 2 meals. In saw mills the workers get between Rs.2.50 and Rs.3/- per day. In some cases, household servants, porters/ herdsman are paid in kind namely one square meal plus $\frac{1}{4}$ litre of tea plus 150 grams of fried rice, the money value of which at present market rates comes to Rs.1.75 per day. A semi-skilled worker in poultry industry gets Rs.2/- to Rs.2.50 per day.

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A Note

Giving some Salient Aspects From:
'Report of the Minimum Wages Advisory Committee
for Employment in Agriculture', Education &
Labour Department, Government of Gujarat.

1. Introduction:

The Government of Gujarat appointed a Committee on 19th August, 1964 to inquire into and advise the State Government on fixation and revision of minimum rates of wages for employment in agriculture and allied occupations in Gujarat.

2. Agrarian Scene:

Like all other regions of the country, Gujarat agriculture carries both favourable and unfavourable features. It has a variety of climate and rainfall conditions providing for both stable and vulnerable farming. The land use pattern suggests essentially extensive agriculture only redeemed by the cash crop economy and relatively favourable productivity in some respects. Forest wealth is inadequate, but the minerals are fairly rewarding. It has a degree of industrialisation only next to Maharashtra and Bengal. The industries and urban sector have a balancing influence on agriculture and through provision of opportunities outside farming tends to strengthen the employer-employee relations in agriculture and the bargaining counter of farm labour. All these, however, do not appear to be reflected in the prevailing conditions of farm labour. Probably, they would in due course.

3. Land-holdings:

Size of holding is relevant; on this would depend the quantum of labour absorption, both family and hired. A diminutive size also hampers progressive cultivation. The following statement gives an idea of the structure of holdings in Gujarat:-

TABLE II-17(of the Report)
 Land holdings in Gujarat, 1962.

Size group (in acres)	Number of holders	Percentage to total	Area (acres)	Percentage of area to total
I 1-5	10,58,519	47.20	24,46,522	10.16
II 5-10	4,26,753	19.00	31,38,383	13.03
III 10-25	5,18,945	23.20	83,19,004	34.50
IV 25-56	1,98,412	8.90	71,07,533	29.48
V 56 & above	38,768	1.70	30,93,598	12.83
Total	22,41,397	100.00	241,05,040	100.00

The average size of holding in the State works out at 10.75 acres. It would, however, have limited significance in the context of the spread the above table shows. About 66 per cent of the cultivators own about 23 per cent of the land with holdings upto 10 acres. About 89 per cent of the cultivators with holdings upto 25 acres command 58 per cent of the cultivated area. Farmers with more than 25 acres of land and who are 11 per cent of the cultivators work about 42 per cent of the cultivated land. This is broadly in conformity with the all-India picture of concentration of land ownership.

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4. Population and work force:

The population of Gujarat is 2.06 crores, which is 4.7% of the country's population. In the last six decades, the population increased by 127 per cent as against the increase of 84 per cent for the country as a whole. The growth rate of population in the last decade 1951-61 yields a rate of 2.7% per annum for Gujarat as against 2.2 per cent for the entire country.

According to the 1961 census of the State's population of 206.33 lakhs, 84.75 lakh persons or 41.1% of the State's population have been classified as workers and 121 lakh persons or 58.9% as non-workers. 68% of the total work force is engaged in agriculture. The corresponding figure for the country as a whole is 69.52. Looking at working population it will be found that 78% of the male workers and 87% of female workers in Gujarat are engaged in agriculture both as cultivators and agricultural labour. The corresponding figure for the country as a whole are 77% and 84% respectively. It would also be interesting to examine the proportion of work force in agriculture and its component with reference to cultivators and agricultural labour. The analysis of data at the various census show a gradual increase in the proportion of persons working/cultivators and a corresponding decline in that of agricultural labour. The main reason for this development might be ascribed to the implementation of land reforms including legislation regulating tenancy cultivation.

Rural manpower surveys in some blocks in the State indicate that a large part of unemployment is confined to the months from January to May every year. It also needs to be pointed out that in economically backward rural areas, if unemployment levels disclosed by surveys is low (less than 2.5%) it may partly be due to the imperfections in the techniques of measuring unemployment and partly due to the respondent's unwillingness to work. There is also no urge to seek outside work when work is not available on one's own farm.

The study of population in relation to agriculture and those engaged in it give clues to numerous vital questions. The difficult agricultural conditions promote effort and point to higher work participation. Fertile land, heavy crops and relatively stable climatic and rainfall conditions mean more employment of hired workers and lower work participation by members of the farmers' families. The social fabrication leading to supervisory cultivation and the existence of large tribal population further intensify the trends. But what tends to accentuate the problems is the high population density in favourable agricultural areas and a higher proportion of employment of hired workers. The socio-economic conflicts that ensue make the understanding and solution of the question of rural proletariat rather intractable.

5. Farm Labour:

Farm labour in Gujarat, according to 1961 census, forms 15% of the total work force in agriculture. On the basis of cultivated area active farm labour population works out at 5 per 100 acres. Similar data for the country are 17% of labourers among farm workers and 10 farm workers per 100 acres of land. Thus Gujarat stands a little favourably in relation to the all-India picture. There is, however, no uniformity.

in this pattern over the entire State. Conditions vary from region to region. Where land is poor, the incidence works out very unfavourably since it is land which provides the most important source of employment and livelihood to the agricultural labour

The average area under cultivation per farm household is 12 acres. The employment of hired labour is significant with farm exceeding 12.4 acres. Employment of outside labour, however, is preponderant with farms of 50 acres and above. The outside labour component mounts with the expansion in the size of farms. Table IV-2 on page 35 (of the Report) attempts a relationship between land and farm families, including the landless. An examination of the proportion of family workers and hired labourers in different size groups of holdings would be further enlightening. The Table IV-4 on page 37 (of the Report) provides information of a sample of cultivating households covered by the Census of 1961.

About 3 per cent of households engaged in cultivation possess less than 1 acre of land. About 35 per cent of the households possess less than 5 acres in rural and urban areas. If the analysis is extended to 10 acres, 60 per cent of the households in the rural areas and 56 per cent in the urban areas would fall in the category.

The proportion of hired workers to family labour is higher in urban areas than in the rural areas. From the total workers engaged in cultivation 9 per cent were hired workers in urban areas and about 3 per cent in rural areas. If we examine the proportion of hired workers to family workers by size groups of holdings, it would be found that the percentage of hired workers to total workers varied from 0.4 to 1.8 per cent upto 10 acres. Thereafter, the proportion of hired workers rises with the increase in the size. The hired labour component is about 10 per cent in respect of size group 'above 50 acres'. The hired workers predominate to a greater extent in urban areas and are 26 per cent in the case of holdings of 50 acres and above. Thus trends in hired labour components both in rural and urban areas are upward with expansion in holdings. It should be remembered, however, that employment in agriculture in urban areas is only marginal. Because of urban employment opportunities to a greater extent the wage rates are also relatively favourable.

6. Supply of Labour:

For the efficacy of reforms measures intended for labour their supply situation is crucial. With the increase in population there is a progressive increase in the pressure on land in Gujarat and elsewhere which adds to the number of both family and hired workers. There would be scarcity of labour at peak periods or busy agricultural seasons. The employment opportunities outside agriculture are also being steadily augmented. Rising attractive employment opportunities outside agriculture would be welcome as strengthening the bargaining power of rural labour.

7. Casual Labour:

The casual labour employment is common in most parts of the State. It is assuming greater significance with time. This is a welcome trend as providing background for regulation. The period of employment ranges from 3 months to 9 months in the year. Some of the studies show that about two-thirds of the casual labour force is employed for about 180-200 days in a year. The period of employment varies also by sex and age. Female and child labour is drafted during busy seasons. Operations such as ploughing and digging are ordinarily performed by males and the lighter tasks like weeding performed by women and children. In grass-cutting, trans-planting, etc. both men and women as well as children join in the work. Ordinarily, it is the type of agricultural operations that determines the wage more than sex or age. Payment of perquisites is not common in casual employment.

8. Wage payment:

In Gujarat the levels of wage vary from season to season, tract to tract and from operation to operation. Variations in wage payments often obtain as between individual employees. The wages paid are in kind as well as in cash. Ordinarily the wage of female labour is lower than that of a male worker. It is also note-worthy that both the very efficient farmer and one least devoted to the occupation of farming pay comparatively better wages. Similarly efficient labour is always in demand at a favourable wage. Normally efficient employers and labour would tend to coexist.

9. Consumption pattern:

According to the NSS 18th round 1963-64 average per capita monthly expenditure of an agricultural labour household was Rs.16.9 and the average household size was 5. This would mean average annual household expenditure of Rs.1014. Expenditure on food works out to 80 percent.

10. Indebtedness:

The nature and period of employment for the agricultural labour is such that they provide him with meagre and irregular income. It is natural that agricultural labour would subsist in poverty and misery. Separate data on indebtedness of agricultural labour are not available.

11. Non-farm employment:

This would cover all off-farm employment available in rural areas. They both supplement employment and incomes of labour. With limited scope of employment that exists in agriculture, the role of non-farm work is considerable. No precise information could be obtained about the nature and extent of non-farm employment in the countryside.

12. Migratory character:

In the whole of Gujarat there is significant population migration. There has been now both an inflow of off farm labour and some outflow of farm labour from Gujarat. There is also considerable within migration of labour which was a thin flow till almost recently.

WAGES AND WAGE ZONES:

13. The pattern

There is a complex pattern of employment and wages in agriculture in India and Gujarat in no exception to it. The terms and conditions of employment and, therefore, of wage payments appear to present a weird pattern capable of being cast into no measure of uniformity for understanding, analysis and use for the purposes of policy formulation. The employment and wages appear to differ not merely from area to area, crop to crop or season to season, but also from place to place, village to village and even from cultivator to cultivator. Occasions would not be wanting where wages might be found to be varying from labour to labour. These complexities are heightened by the prevalence of casual labour employment on daily wages with the system of attached labour under varying shades of bondage.

14. Modes of Payment.

These features are further complicated by modes of payment of wages, which in themselves are often dovetailed into one another. Some time back cash wages were either a rarity or prevailed only in limited way in certain regions into monetized agriculture or in villages that experienced urban influence. Since then, with growing urbanization and market orientation of agriculture cash wage payments and employment of casual labour are getting more and more in vogue. This cash wage, often, is associated with a perquisite or two. But in other areas, and specially in the remoter parts, payment of wages in kind still holds sway. Ordinarily, this arrangement should loosen with progress and be replaced by cash wage, but the practice seems to get more entrenched as time passes. Scarcity of foodgrains in the country, which is getting chronic, is one major contributory factor. The difficulty of combating this situation with adequate supplies at reasonable prices through the public distribution system fans this practice. The high and ever mounting foodgrains prices is another major contribution to strengthening the system of wage payment in kind.

The situation is further complicated where both the systems of payment are combined or the payment in kind is further supplemented by provision of perquisites. A cash wage also sometimes carries along with it provision of certain perquisites. The payment in kind similarly is combined with prerequisites of food, tea, tobacco etc. For the problem of wage fixation which can be only in cash these permutations and combinations present a formidable task of imputation to arrive at the cash equivalent of the aggregate wage in kind-cum-cash-cum-perquisites. Where payment of perquisites partakes of consideration for overtime, the task of computation gets further complicated.

15. Hali and Bhagva:

These systems of bonded labour largely in vogue in Surat and Bulsar and Panch Mahals and to some extent in North Gujarat are described at pp. 47-49 of Chapter-V.

16. Regional Character:

A difficulty still lingers in evolving a successfully workable and reasonably effective wage policy. There cannot be a single daily cash wage for the whole State. Socio-economic conditions vary from place to place significantly. The conditions of agriculture and, therefore, of labour requirements are diverse. Just as it is not correct to proceed to consider wage policy on the assumption of uniform conditions over the entire stretch of the terrain, it would be extremely impracticable to think of a uniform wage fixation process at all levels. The area of a common wage policy or wage level has to be manageable and such as would provide ingredients and base for common operation and effectiveness. It is with this end in view that the Committee went out in search of a basis which would be fairly satisfactory and on which they could without any serious difficulty or lapse proceed to construct a policy and a level of minimum wage.

17. Agriculture and Industry.

The categories of jobs and skills necessary for them and fixation of employees in different categories according to needs and equipments are also clear and precise in industry. Un-skilled work predominates in agriculture. Labour in farming again inter-changes as between jobs and operations. The farm labour thus has omnibus farm functions without necessarily fixed hours of work and timings for it. On account of these and several other features regulation of wage which is easy and feasible in industry can only broadly and strategically be attempted in agriculture. Over time the policy may grow more precise and the wages can be evaluated more on the basis of output, efficiency and needs in suitable combination. But to evolve an effective operationally feasible policy, the wage structure and employment pattern have to be simplified and made to revolve round a system of casual labour employment based on daily cash wage. This has been the experience and evolution and wage determination in the advanced countries of the world. It will not come about soon in our country, but their experience could help us to understand and proceed on right lines.

18. Labour scarcity:

Whereas statistics point to an abundant work force in agriculture there are complaints by farmers of scarcities of requisite field labour. Probably it is the supervisory cultivator and particularly the one in the villages in the vicinity of towns and cities who is found to be experiencing labour scarcity for his agricultural operations. The self-cultivator, as far as the knowledge of the Committee goes, does not experience such a difficulty. It is hard to reconcile a statistical phenomena of abundance of rural work force and the scarcity of rural labour as experienced by a section of the agriculturists. Perhaps such a scarcity which is experienced by the supervisory cultivator is seasonal and sporadic. The Committee is, therefore, inclined not to give undue credence to this phenomenon but treat it as a sporadic or a pocket of phenomenon.

19. Self cultivation and supervisory farming:

While discussing the supply or availability of rural labour and the demand for it in agriculture a note should be taken of

an important feature of agriculture in the State in particular and the country in general. Over 85% of requirements of field labour is provided by the family labour. This proportion of family labour rises to as high as 95% in the case of tribal, backward and farmers belonging to intermediate class and with small holdings or extensive farming. Only in regard to supervisory cultivators outside labour meets the total labour requirements. The problem, therefore, both to regulate wages and ensure optimum employment relates to a small proportion of the total labour component in cultivation. It is in this context that one should proceed to consider the question of minimum wage fixation.

There are in Gujarat a substantial number of upper class cultivators who are by and large supervisory farmers. The major communities to which these supervisory farmers belong are the Patidars, Anavils and to a lesser extent Rajputs, Baraiyas, Baniyas and others. It is very probable that these supervisory cultivators mainly fall into the higher tiers of holdings. But there is the other probability that quite a substantial proportion of supervisory cultivation is located in the middle tiers also. Wherever they are and whatever their size of holdings they are exclusively dependent upon outside labour for cultivation. The major sources of return to these supervisory cultivators is from efficient supervision and management and risk bearing in the agricultural enterprise. In spite of the process of decadence that seems to have set in it could be reasonably assumed that these supervisory farmers are still the innovators. They initiate and demonstrate change in agriculture. It might thus be surmised that both the scope and impact of wage fixation would precisely be on supervisory cultivation. An additional assumption of an exploitative situation in these pockets can be treated as a reasonable probability.

Along with this, the future and the fate of supervisory cultivation in the foreseeable future has also to be evaluated before too much faith and attraction for ameliorative measures of the working class in this region is attempted and a millenium is presumed to emerge over a certain time span. In all our agrarian laws our definition of the tiller of the land plays down the supervisory cultivator. A study of our land reforms would show that a deliberate attempt is being made to deprive supervisory cultivation of its social status and dignity. The abolition of tenancy cultivation, the ceiling on land holdings and the stipulation that a supervisory cultivator to be treated as an agriculturist has to be within reasonable distance of his farm all tend to place supervisory cultivation at a disadvantage. There is an exodus from among the rural upper classes who constitute the core of supervisory cultivation. Those who still continue may follow their predecessor out of exasperation even though they find it not quite to their liking. Besides labour troubles the social policy seems to regard supervisory cultivation as an anachronism. A substantial section of supervisory farmers have grown indolent and indifferent to the otherwise lofty occupation of cultivation. In the Indian Social scheme of things agriculture occupies a status much lower in the hierarchy than even office clerks

and other middle class lowly paid salary groups in the cities and towns. This is unfortunate but true and anybody who has been observing the rural human psychology and social current will be able to bear this out. The purpose in detailing the analysis is to suggest that though bulk of the employment to the landless labour is to be found over supervisory cultivation at present, the system is likely to change under the impact of the philosophy of land reforms. May be a decade hence it might be possible to witness the change. The rural labour policy but more particularly that of fixing and enforcing a minimum wage in agriculture should, therefore, not concentrate permanently on supervisory cultivation as a major area where to frame and enforce it successfully. The minimum has to have a universal context though its major arena for some time to come may be the supervisory farmer.

20. Conditions of farming:

There are a few other factors about agricultural occupation in the country and in Gujarat which may be mentioned in passing. It is often contended that, with a few exceptions, the middle farmer who is a self-cultivator is far more prosperous than the big farmer and the small cultivator in the lower tiers. It would be interesting to examine whether this is so. The agricultural technology, efficiency and yields may not necessarily be higher on the self-cultivated farms than their counterparts in the other tiers. The prices and the marketing system are common to all the sections of the farming community. The real difference may be located in the intensive use of family labour and the particular attention devoted to keep the cost of outside labour to the minimum. One of the major components of cost in agriculture is labour. The other costs in agriculture assume the character of overheads, especially under uncertainty of weather and the likelihood of partial or total crop failures. In such a situation, the farmers, especially those who are self-cultivators, tend to manoeuvre to reduce the loss by keeping the employment of outside labour to the minimum. Besides, as already pointed out earlier the self-cultivator is an employer of outside labour on the margin. A substantial proportion of this marginal labour needs are met through mutual help, so that when the labour costs substantially rise it would be his endeavour to keep outside paid employment to the minimum and rely to a greater and greater degree on mutual self-help to meet the needs of labour which cannot be provided by the family during certain peak requirements.

21. Wage structure and minimum wage:

The rural wage structure is highly complex. The rates and levels of wages in agriculture considerably vary. The wages are different for men and women. Children are also employed in agriculture and they draw a distinct set of wages. Wages again are different for different agricultural operations. Then, there are the piece wages for quantum of work but they obtain where such computations are convenient. There are also consolidated wages for groups of labourers. Further, there are the wages for contract labour carrying different degrees of bondage from region to region or for various categories of employers and labour. Wages are different in busy and slack seasons. Superimposed on the wages are numerous perquisites that are paid

to men and women labour. Some times these perquisites are in lieu of longer hours of work and at other in consideration of better work. On certain occasions they camouflage exploitation through lower cash or kind wages or periodic or annual wage paid to the contract, attached or bonded labour. There are then the bhagia labourer who is removed from a share cropper. In quite a few situations contract of periodic employment or for specific work the payment is partly in cash, partly in kind like food and other estables and partly in clothing. The payments to the attached labour might appear low in comparison. But that has to be equated with longer or unstipulated hours of work and assured employment, food and shelter. Obviously, it is not possible to fix the minima under all heads and categories.

22. Minimum wage and employment:

It should be made clear that the minima that would be arrived at would be paid to those labour that the farmers would employ. The arrangement would not mean that all those offering themselves for employment as labour in farming would be employed by the farmers and paid at the rates stipulated as minima. There may not be much need for the labour that has come forward for employment. The farmers even might choose to discriminate and employ at the minimum wages only those who they feel are efficient or would be in a position to work in their best interests. In brief, the minimum wage fixation is one thing and finding employment for all at that wage is quite a different matter. The two should be kept distinct and treated as separate issues. The minimum wage would seek to ensure a fair return to the labour for his work. The provision of adequate employment is a distinct social policy issue. It would be a happy day when we find agriculture in such a position and the man-land ratio so straightened out to expect the minimum wage as part of the package of assured employment. For the time being to make minimum wage effective without the hostility of the employer it is desirable to leave the choice of the employee at that wage to the employer. It is likely that some unfair discrimination is practised. That may be regarded as a price that is paid to the employer for not being able to extract a certain quantum of work in terms of output for the minimum wage that the State would expect him to pay. The utmost that the Committee can suggest is a minimum wage for nine hours attendance, but it would not ensure to the employer an output from the labour which would be consistent with the wage that is paid to it. It might be argued that the minimum wage fixation might lead to an increase in unemployment. The Committee would concede that that probably might be an outcome of the policy. Today probably the farmer would be a little liberal with the use of labour because it is relatively cheap to him. With the increase in the cost of labour to him there is every likelihood that he would rationalize its use and effect economy in employing it. This is perfectly legitimate and healthy both for the economy and the work force employed in the sector.

23. Wage revision:

A minimum wage fixed at a point of time would soon become out of date in such a dynamic situation. The hardships of labour would continue in spite of a minimum wage if it is allowed to remain unrelated to the prices

and cost of living. Agriculture, in the meantime, would also progress under the programme of developmental planning. The crash programme that is being launched from this year, especially to swiftly augment food production is very likely to add to farm productivities and incomes significantly. The returns to labour and the farmers who employ them would soon become out of tune if such a rapid change occurs. The gains in productivities and returns to agriculture would then not be shared by the agricultural labour and the farmers equitably. Some sort of linkage has to be inevitably worked out.

24. Wage machinery.

This machinery could be a small group of sub-committee for each homogeneous wage zone. It will be constituted by the Government and will comprise of the representatives of the farmers and the labour and presided over by either the chairman of one of the taluka panchayats, the taluka development officer or the mamlatdar. The sub-committee may be helped in statistical-cum-economic computation work by the district statistical officer by arranging to attach some one competent in this work in his office to the sub-committee. Once the minimum daily wage is announced for the zone, the questions or issues emanating from the decision would be referred to this sub-committee. These would include such questions as evolving an integrated wage structure of all types and at all levels based on the minimum announced as well as to examine the need and the feasibility of finding and deciding a different level or levels of minimum daily wage or wages for pockets which might presumably carry peculiar characteristic or conditions. The other vital question of linking the minimum to the rising cost of living and improving incomes in agriculture through an appropriate linkage technique or factor will have to be thought of by this sub-committee, either through an expert body or expert assistance in statistics and statistical methods and economics. Disputes about employment and payments would arise between the farmers and the labourers. Indebtedness of the labourers through advances from the farmers against wage might have to be arbitrated and where the sub-committees might be called upon to render very valuable assistance. Though it might not necessarily carry judicial function, it would have to use its good offices to iron out numerous issues and even disputes. The sub-committee would also be in overall charge of enforcement and making the minimum wage recommended and the other integrated wage structure evolved by it effective and universally applicable.

25. Wage fixation:

In chapter VII the Committee spelt out the issues that are involved, the difficulties and the approach to wage fixation in some detail. Some salient points made are brought out below:-

- (i) It is true that if the wage costs to the employer farmer becomes heavy it would be high tendency to rationalise and effect an economy in the use of labour. To such a move to rationalise he is perfectly entitled to. In this respect he should be treated slightly differently from the large and medium industries in our country. The farmer would stand comparison in this regard with the small and home industries which are exempted from the application of labour laws. Given the technology and the limited resources to rapidly improve it, a quantum of employment of outside labour would, however, remain inescapable. The threat that fixation of minimum wage in agriculture would lead to a sudden and large scale drop in employment opportunities for the landless labour need not, therefore, be over-emphasized. To whatever extent employment falls through genuine measures of economy either through a greater use of family labour or through the application of superior technology has to be accepted and contended with through other measures of creating employment opportunities for the landless.
- (ii) The basis of wage fixation in agriculture is extremely difficult. No previous experience exists on which to proceed to do this. The structure of agriculture and wages is such that it is extremely difficult to derive satisfactory data from them for this task. A minimum wage, besides, cannot be based, merely on the minimum needs of labour and his family. It has also to be related to the capacity of agriculture and the employer-farmer to pay it. In any case without the availability of norms on the subject a large element of arbitrariness is bound to enter decision making on the issues based on minimum needs. Such an exercise would make the decision highly controversial.
- (iii) The role of acting as leaders in policy formulation on agricultural wages as well as to ensure their effectiveness can precisely be attempted by the Government and Semi-Government bodies through the payment of adequate wages to labour they employ on their works. The minima that the Committee has suggested for various zones should be adopted forthwith by all public and semi-public sectors of non-farm activities in the rural areas. That would have a profound influence

on wage payments in agriculture. The cultivators will have to fall in line with the non-farm wage if they want to employ agricultural labour in their fields. The Dantiwada and the Bhadar dam projects and the O.N.G.C. programmes in the country-side in Gujarat indicate the profound impact employment by them carry to agricultural occupation and wages.

- (iv) Comprehensive statements on wages are appended at the end of the chapter. The statements give wages that prevailed three years ago. They also give the highest and the lowest that obtained during the year 1965-66. The lowest would prevail in the slack and the highest during periods of peak agricultural work. An attempt has been made to work out the most frequent wages that were in vogue in the various zones. They are also not likely to be fully representative as they were called out from the replies to the questionnaire and subsequently made fuller through interviews and personal visits of observations to the various parts of all the districts of the State. In any case they would point to the broad state of affairs in the field or prevalent agriculture wages. The non-farm wages similarly give an idea of the returns to labour and the quantum of employment outside agriculture in the villages. The statement carries the minimum wages for different zones that the committee recommends to the Government.
- (v) Wages that have remained depressed for years can only be upgraded to a level satisfactory to the workers at one stroke with serious distortions and mal-adjustments in the employer-employee relations and the economy. In the backward areas of low wage pockets it would be prudent to give effect to the minima recommended by stages. Thus the minima can be reached over a two year span and through adjustments in wages upwards twice over the period. This would mitigate against the problem of their effectiveness. The other weapon of making the minima operationally feasible is to give the recommendations about them very wide publicity down to the levels of villages.
- (vi) In the tribal areas of the Dangs and parts of Bulsar, Surat, Broach, Baroda and the Panch Mahals and a few others, there is a distinct circumstance which has to be borne in mind while talking of minimum wages in agriculture. Both agriculture and the agriculturists are tribal. Almost the whole of agricultural work is performed by the family labour. Outside employment in agriculture is next to insignificant. The problem in these areas is of poverty and rank unemployment and under-employment. It is not a problem of low wages in agriculture so much and hence the need to fix the minima would be less efficacious.
- (vii) The minima recommended will have to be continuously looked into and adjusted by permanent bodies or authorities such as the zonal committees who are very vital and who would constitute important link in the whole process. The changes and improvements effected will be in mutual consultations of farmers and labour.

26. Labour efficiency: The labour, it is argued, are inclined to work for fewer and fewer hours and put in inferior and slipshod output. The farmer-employee probably rightly feels that their employment even at the existing level of wages is a losing proposition. The Committee is inclined to put a good deal

of weight on this complaint not so much because the farmers make it or that the Committee wants to escape the decision on the fixation of minimum wage but because the minimum wage when determined could be only on the basis of a certain minimum number of hours of work and the quality and quantum of output during that period. The Committee feels that the problem of inefficiency and slipshod approach to work by labour would gradually disappear once the factors contributing to them are eliminated. A progressive agriculture and a continuously improving level of wages are positive countervailing forces to it.

Another valid ground of inefficiency of labour in work arises from poor health and vitality. This is contributed as much by poor income and diet as illicit distillation and drinking illicit liquor which were found to be virtually universal among labour in some areas.

27. Ameliorative measures:

There are a few aspects which are not quite relevant to the minimum wage fixation in agriculture but which are vitally connected with the living and health of the landless labourers. On these questions depend the relative contentment of the labour which in its turn would be reflected in better and efficient agricultural work. The Committee, therefore, take this opportunity to delve into them and offer suggestions to the Government for consideration and adopting suitable measures if found feasible for the good of a section of the population for whom the State should carry a major and special responsibility.

The substantial section of rural labour live in dire poverty and wretchedness. Their abodes are extremely unhealthy and offer scanty protection against the weather. The huts are thatched with straw just prior to the monsoon through the good offices of the farmer employers or other compassionate people in the villages. Especially, the plight of the tribal and backward classes defies description. These classes live in squalor and are frustrated. They do not see even a ray of hope in the future. They constitute a potential danger politically and yet are the most fruitful field for constructive and ameliorative work. The responsibility for their rehabilitation cannot be cast on the employers who themselves need to be uplifted in a large measure. There are no social agencies with enough resources to look into these stupendous questions. Cooperation is also of no avail to the labourers. They have nothing to pool except their poverty. They have no resources and initiative to pursue useful activities jointly on their own. The initiative and leadership for purposeful activities among the landless labour have of necessity to lie with the social workers and the Government. Therefore, this work will have to be sooner or later taken up by the State as rehabilitational and resettlement programmes for them. It would be possible for the State Government to approach with suitable programmes of rehabilitation of the tribals and the backward people to the Government of India for assistance and the Committee have no doubt that such request would receive a sympathetic consideration. It is in this context and with this background that the Committee venture to make some suggestions to the State Government for the well-being and amelioration of the tribals and backward classes from which the bulk of the landless labour force is drawn.

One of the foremost work that can be undertaken among labour is education, both among the adults and the young. In the past, this work gained momentum but later languished for want of enthusiasm and understanding among the working class. It is likely that in the overall gigantic programmes of social and economic development spread of primary education among the landless might not have received that pointed attention that it constantly needs. A programme of persuasion and publicity by the State to send as many of the children of the landless to primary schools should be allowed to escape the important social change. Similarly, the bulk of the landless population today does not by and large receive medical care in the event of need. Even a cursory observation among the landless would bring to light numerous diseases from which they suffer. In the event of both ordinary and serious illness the medical care they get today is what their employers could provide them on compassionate grounds. Arrangements should be made to make community medical facilities automatically available to these economically highly depressed sectors.

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But the most important question that needs the urgent attention of the Government is of housing for the landless. The landless in South Gujarat are abjectly dependent on the farmer-employers for site and material for building, huts for them and for their family. In a few parts the landless have both building site and fairly satisfactory houses. Elsewhere in some places they have land but poor structures. All these should be attended to and a uniformity attempted in the facility for the suspended farm labour

There is another aspect which is equally relevant and which needs urgent attention from the Government. Most of the landless are without clothing, let alone it being adequate. They do not have adequate resources to buy clothes. They either depend on the employers to provide clothing to them either by buying some or passing on their own old clothes to the labour and their families.

The other way of improving the economy of the landless is through promotion of non-farm occupations to help them supplement their income. These are such subsidiaries as poultry, fruits and vegetables cultivation and cottage industries. The poultry programme would be the cheapest, easiest and the most remunerative. The landless have some traditions of the occupation, though it is pursued in the most unorganised and sporadic manner. Both poultry and cultivation of vegetables can conveniently be pursued by labour on the basis of the homesteads that could be provided to them. The programme of cottage industries can be organised and executed through the Khadi and Village Industries Commission who will find a limitless field for their activities among labour. It is doubtless an uphill task. The necessary enthusiasm, discipline and ability to pursue them steadfastly have yet to be instilled among the labour. Illiteracy and an extreme measure of frustration among them are serious bottlenecks. The official and non-official social agencies operating in the rural areas either among the landless or in the rural population generally can devote special attention to these questions and help clear the ground for an intensive and comprehensive programme of amelioration in the countryside. These efforts would pay dividends by augmenting employment potential, lighting the burden and dependence on agriculture for work, and otherwise broad-basing and stabilising the social structure and Government of the country.

The Committee has earlier expressed pessimism about the scope of co-operative activity among the landless. The situation which appears hopeless in this regard today might change for the better in due course once the ameliorative measures envisaged above get under way. The subsidiaries like poultry and little cultivation and the numerous products of cottage industries based on local skill and raw materials will open out scope for co-operative endeavour. They can help the landless to market their products and earn better returns from their systematic sales. These institutions can also instil in the landless habits of thrift and self-help and emerge over time as centres or pillars of an overall uplift for these vulnerable sections. Here again a beginning can be made by the Government by lending a helping hand.

There is an additional measure of development which would have a bearing on the employment and income of rural labour. This relates to the organisation of decentralised rural industrial estates for groups of villages or talukas according to convenience, need and feasibility. It is possible to divert a part of rural labour to part time or full time employment on such estates to ease pressure on agriculture and to initiate a process of improving wages and living conditions of those who remain in agriculture. A programme of decentralised non-farm activity with better wages and working conditions would carry a demonstration effect and lend an impact and improve farm wages.

The rural labour lacks discipline and ability and consciousness to work according to time. They are prone to heavy unpredictable absenteeism which is a bane and a difficulty in any process of industrialization. They lack precision, exactness and earnestness which will have to be imparted to them by a process of education and social change. They might also need training in skills necessary for industrial work. It is true that a higher degree of proficiency would come through long and intensive work, but a measure of preliminary training would be a sine-qua-non for diverting landless from the fields to the small factories in the rural industrial estates. Small training institutes in the villages or in small industrial undertakings in the nearby towns and cities might achieve these results. Care, however, will have to be exercised to see that the training programme does not involve shifting of labour too far away from the villages as such large scale movements for a fairly long period of training might give rise to certain other social problems.

28. Conclusions and Recommendations:

The Committee's approach to the task set to it by the Government was to send sets of detailed schedules to the different parties, both officials and non-officials to elicit information and opinions on the vital questions relating to employment levels of wages and the possible minima. Select lists of cultivators, labourers and their representatives, public workers, managers and organisers of State, seed and cooperative farms, taluka and district panchayat presidents and their officials etc. were prepared in consultation with district panchayat offices and the schedules were canvassed among them. Subsequently, the Committee visited all the district headquarters and toured the rural areas to meet people and hear their views.

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Record of discussion on agricultural
labour with Acharya Vinoba Bhave at
Ranipatra (Purnea) on 10.4.1968 &
16.4.1968.

The Acharya said that he had gone through the points for discussion raised on behalf of the Commission. He would make some observations which would cover some of the points raised but there will be no attempt to discuss each question.

2. It is a matter of regret that there is nobody to look after agricultural workers and no agency to represent them. The scope of the National Commission on Labour is wide and rural and unorganised labour has been specifically mentioned. It should not happen, however, that in the midst of the more vocal element of labour, agricultural labour, gets neglected by the Commission. The Commission may have to go out of its way to understand the problem.
3. As the industrial workers are concentrated in certain areas it is easy to exploit and organise them. Rural labour being scattered over lakhs of villages, nobody takes pains to organise them; and without organisation it would be difficult to secure any improvement.
4. Rural labour has no voice in the economic development of the country or its social reconstruction. At the same time in view of its size, a solution of its problems is fundamental; it holds the key to India's prosperity.
5. If production is to be increased, incentives for the workers responsible for the production is absolutely necessary. Today this is not to be found.
6. For improvement in the present position there could be a three pronged approach which could be described as (i) Jada Samyog; (ii) Duddhi Samyog; and (iii) Chotan Samyog. (i) consists of material inputs for improving production. Government help at the District and State level may be necessary for this. (ii) Once (i) is available people in the village have to get together and see how best these inputs could be used; if necessary by seeking technical advice from the village level. Planning through Gram Sabha is a must. In (iii) the individual has to come in. He has to be enthused for production. One may have to think in terms of incentives for this.
7. As specific but illustrative instances (i) would cover tube wells, minor irrigation projects, provision of chemical fertilisers and technical know how. (ii) will bring in organisation of organic manure, crop planning, equitable distribution etc. and in (iii) could be covered a fair wage, a fair share in produce, a place to live in without fear of eviction.
8. Pandit Ji was in favour of big projects. He thought big and wanted the country to grow in a big way. This was understandable but unless the small man was enthused to think likewise this would be ineffective. In addition to the big projects if it was possible to give a tube well for every 10 acres it could achieve miracles.
9. Cooperatives can have a big future but the image which they

have built up now is of organisations which are efficient in exploitation. This character of the movement must change. Their exploitation is efficient because it is decentralised.

10. Defective legislation for giving effect to land reforms and land ceiling and the time it takes to implement permits the moneyed man with large holding in rural areas to evade the effect of legislation, e.g. a person with three hundred acres of land easily distributes it in bits of land within the ceiling but this distribution is only on paper.

11. The land-lord group also adds one or two members who are outsiders and forms a 'Cooperative Farming Society'. Formation of such a society enables him to get a double advantage; (i) he can retain land much beyond the ceiling and (ii) he can obtain every kind of assistance from the Government because he parades under the garb of a cooperative, some of whom are real farmers. Others are absentee landlords.

12. Though legislation is well intentioned its outcome is always strange and this may be true of industrial legislation and social legislation also. Cooperative of orange growers (in Nagpur) have enriched its members only. The cooperatives beat the small growers in the price at which they have to sell their produce and all this to the advantage of bigger landlords.

13. Small man does not get easy loans which again are cornered by the bigger man.

14. Gramdan villages are also deprived of cooperative loans because there are no "owners of land" in such villages, who can offer sureties in terms of the Cooperative Act. In this process there was a danger that landless may become the slaves of the cooperative in due course. Exploitation will continue under a more sophisticated name.

15. An Indian worker is generally lazy but intelligent. He has no enthusiasm for the work because of low wages paid to him. He does not do more than four hours of work, and has limited wants. He is not enthusiastic about his work. Rural workers are able to survive with such low wages because they get abundant sunshine and fresh open air.* If they are not lazy, they will not be able to enjoy these privileges free.

16. A worker should have some land which can call his own. This should be supplemented by some wage-paid-employment.

17. Wages should be paid both in cash and kind. Between 1929 and now the workers are being paid the 'same quantity' in kind but money wages have gone up significantly. This does mean that there is some improvement but in relative terms as between the farmer and landless labour disparities have certainly widened.

18. Urban workers should also be paid in kind. This is the only way to check rise in prices and inflationary tendencies.

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* This point was graphically illustrated by the Acharya by the difference in rent for the same accommodation in metropolitan areas - one with windows which bring fresh air and the other without enough of them.

19. There is wide disparity in per capita availability of land. When the per capita availability of land is low, planning models of affluent countries will not work in India.
20. For agricultural development the model for us should be China. (Two relevant books mentioned by the Acharya in this context were (i) by King - Farmers of 40 countries - who described Chinese agriculture and (ii) by Charan Singh who discussed the efficiency of small farms).
21. As in the case of cooperative on the organisational side, the benefit on material side has also gone to the big men. When a village is provided with electricity its advantage is taken by the big man to become bigger. The small man rarely gets power for commercial use. The situation is also the same in regard to small industries.
22. Bhoodan movement has not succeeded to the extent it should mainly because parties in power are not interested in the success of the movement.
23. Large projects were referred to by Pandit Ji as modern Temples. In giving this analogy he was somewhat hasty and did not go further with the analogy. Such projects can really be temples if the benefits go to all irrespective of their status or wealth. A temple usually has no such discrimination.
24. To make holdings which receive such benefits more equitable it should be possible to tell the beneficiaries that since the irrigated land can produce double or three times the production before irrigation of a land levy could be imposed. A person with 10 acres of land which gets the benefit of an irrigation project should be satisfied with seven or eight acres and the balance should be available for distribution among the landless.
25. While these measures would go a long way to improve production, this by itself will not provide the workers employment all the year round; industry alone can give fuller employment to the ever increasing population in urban and rural areas.
26. In this connection processing of raw materials produced in every village should be the privilege of the village. One could even work on the basis of village self sufficiency.
27. Butter produced in the village should be utilised for the nutrition of the village children. It is wrong to convert it into money by selling the same in the urban areas which in turn exploit the rural masses. Rural producers should be sufficiently organised in such a way that they sell only that quantity which is in excess of their own requirements. Sale should also be at equitable prices.
28. The villagers want money for buying cloth, oil and other requirements. If they can produce these in the village itself, their need for money becomes less.

29. There is a huge wastage as a result of polishing of rice. In fact the rice polishing industry can be called the 'protein stripping industry' as in the process of polishing, nutrition values and also weight are lost. According to a writer who made a world wide survey 'peptic ulser' is related to use of polished rice; even insects would not prefer the polished rice as it lacks nutrition.

30. Machinery could be used in the development of the rural areas, but its ownership should belong to the village community. Even automation must be permissible if it means ownership of person who agree to lose their jobs in the process.

31. If the villages do not prosper, how can towns do so? Hence the emphasis on increasing purchasing power in the rural areas. Created money will not do the trick. There should be real production on the basis of strong incentives for hard and sustained effort.

32. The Bhoodan and Gramdan movements would distribute lands among landless agricultural labour and provide security. Land is the gift of God and he alone is the master of it. Agriculture labour should be paid in both cash and kind. The payment in kind will provide a cushion against rise in prices. Even Government servants should be paid part of their salary in kind. Small farmers are ideally suited for Indian conditions and the people should be trained to get maximum production out of them. But land alone cannot provide sustenance. Village industries should be encouraged and organised. The guiding principle in such an organisation of village industries should be : locate raw materials in the village and manufacture articles out of them.

33. In the course of the discussion with the Chairman and Members of the National Commission on 16.4.68 the Acharya endorsed the suggestion that agriculture should be organised like industry and that industrial laws should apply to agricultural labour.

SA/-

APPENDIXPoints for discussion with Acharya Vinoba Bhave

Loss of sense of purpose and ethos seem to have overtaken all sections of life in India, including agricultural and Industrial. What in your view is the cause of this depressing phenomenon? What remedies would you suggest for arresting this dangerous trend?

2. Agricultural labour is the most backward section of the population both socially and economically. It has been so in the past and has continued to hold that position even now. In your wide and varied experience, has there been a change in the way of life of this section of the working class? Is agricultural labour somewhat better economically now? Is it more accepted socially?
3. The Bhoodan movement originated in the need for distribution of land among the landless of whom agricultural labour constitutes a majority. The Bhoodan movement has developed into the philosophy and programme of action of Gramdan and Sarvodaya. Its gains have been impressive. Lakhs of acres of land have been distributed among the landless under the movement. Yet it is pointed out that there have been no follow-up action and no consolidation of economic/social gains achieved through the movement. What is the balance-sheet of gains and losses so far as agricultural labour is concerned?
4. Land reforms have not solved the problems of landless agricultural labour though there has been some distribution of land among them. If land distribution is beneficial what should be done to accelerate the process and to ensure inalienability and security of land tenure in favour of landless labour?
5. A large section of agricultural labour in tribal and developing areas is tied to archaic forms of agricultural serfdom or a system of bonded labour. This may be a result of a large incidence of money advances made to agricultural labour from time to time. What should be the respective roles of the State and social organisation to remove such serfdom or at least to mitigate its rigours?
6. There is a shortage of labour in districts which have been brought under intensive agricultural development programmes and where agricultural operations have become sophisticated. You have spoken of "Shrama Shakti." What should be done to tap it in such areas?
7. It is often said that the conditions of these workers cannot be considered in isolation, their problems being essentially a part of the overall problem of agricultural economy. A faster development of agriculture would improve their condition automatically. Despite increasing purchasing power of peasant farmers in the rural areas (specially big and medium size landholders) the condition of agricultural labour has not improved significantly; in fact their condition in areas with highly developed agriculture does not seem to be much different from that in areas where agriculture is still backward. Do you consider that rewards to land and capital are much in excess of rewards to labour in farming operations? A western observer has said "a society is rich when material goods are cheap and human beings dear". If you think this is the right approach, how far are we in reaching this stage. How could we move faster?
8. The Government's policy (Community Development and National Extension Services, IAAP & IADP), it is said, has been more beneficial to the better off elements in the countryside who are able to take advantage of the facilities provided under the various programmes. Further the policy of concentrating on

areas with potentialities for rapid development has tended to accentuate regional and social inequalities. If you agree with this view, what remedy would you suggest?

9. Can the rural economy provide sustained and continuous employment opportunities to its population throughout the year at reasonable wage rates? What should be done to develop seasonal industries, the peak employment period of which coincides with slack season in agriculture? What should be the type of such industries and how should agricultural labour be equipped to take advantage of them? Do you think that this the proper remedy for improving the conditions of agricultural labour?
10. What is the extent of mechanisation you would permit in processing of agricultural products and raw materials available in rural areas?
11. Recent studies reveal that during the peak agricultural season almost all the available labour in the village is utilised and that the wage rate paid to workers during peak harvesting season compares favourably with industrial wage rates. During the slack seasons many of them are forced to seek odd jobs here and there. This appears to be the general position in almost every village. How long can such a situation where agriculture depends on extra labour during the peak seasons but cannot support it throughout the year be allowed to continue?
12. Some calculations have shown that even if our current dependence on agriculture for employment which is about 70% is to be reduced to 60% in the next fifteen years, a very substantial number of workers may have to be added to the already overburdened land. One estimate of the number to be added is about 25 million. In this view of the matter how can we ensure reduction of number of workers per acre of land? If this reduction is not feasible, how could an acre of land be made to sustain more labour? What should be the role of family planning in reducing dependence of workers on the land?
13. There are a large number of small farm households with uneconomic holdings with the result that these households are not able to fully utilise all their working members. The farming on these households is mainly cereal-based. The income also is not sufficient and small farmers are not able to pay adequate wages to agricultural workers, to say nothing of their capacity to provide regular employment for them. If assured water facility for irrigation is provided to these small farms and the small farmers are encouraged to adopt diversified farming including rearing and maintenance of livestock and poultry etc., not only will there be work for all the members of the household but small farmers will also be able to employ some hired workers at better wages. Do you agree that these measures will provide full employment for unemployed small farmers and better employment and more wages to agricultural workers?
14. Maximisation of agricultural production depends not so much on the size of the farm but on how efficiently the factors of production are combined. If this view is accepted small farms can be made viable and redistribution of land among landless and small landowners can have a meaning. But once farms start shrinking in size, the management of equitably distributing the other factors of production becomes difficult. In this situation what principles should be followed in determining the optimum size of the farm? Once this optimum is determined, how should the State pursue its policies for providing this optimum and related factors of production to farmers? /be

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15. Agricultural labour in India, it is accepted, an unorganised mass. Ethically it is composed of heterogeneous elements, and economically it has not been able to organise itself. What should be done to make this section of the population conscious of the advantages of organisation?

16. Fixation of minimum wages under the Act has not made any impact because of delay and difficulties in computation and revision of minimum wages, ineffective enforcement machinery and the sheer immensity of the problem. What do you think should be done to ensure to agricultural labour need-based minimum wage and how should it be enforced?

17. What should be the role of agricultural labour in Gramdan villages and in the society which you envisage?

18. How should arrangements suggested above be made politically feasible in the current context?

The Acharya may choose to answer all or any of these question.

* Intensive Agricultural Area Programme.

** Intensive Agricultural District Programme.

MA/

PROBLEMS OF AGRICULTURAL LABOUR

By

Shri B. SivaramanSecretary, Department of Agriculture

It has been postulated that statutory protection may be given to agricultural labour on the same analogy as the protection given to industrial labour. The protection that can be given is that of a minimum wage and some reasonable protection against arbitrary dismissal. Even under the labour laws, there can be no permanent solution against unemployment, if the industry is incapable of sustaining the labour force at the price specified. Ultimately, it is the basic economic forces that control the situation; for example, it is well-known that recently, when recession affected our industrial sector, overtime was not even claimed in some industries even though people worked overtime. We have, therefore, to take note of two factors—first, protection from victimization arbitrarily and secondly, maintaining the production structure. In the agricultural sector, particularly maintenance of the production sector would be an important aspect.

Statutory protection by itself, will not be of much use in a vastly disjointed sector, like Agriculture, unless the bulk of the sector accepts the constraints, or the labour gets a bargaining position. A guarantee of a minimum wage is ineffective unless there is alternative labour available at the minimum wage to the labour. Till alternative labour is reasonably available, he will always be at the mercy of the situation. We have only to compare the effect of statutory protection to the sub-tenant in land reforms. If the sub-tenant has no alternative lessor to give him land at a fair rate, he is at the mercy of the tenant. No law has protected him yet. Therefore, this problem will have to be tackled on the economic front as will be explained later. Statutory protection will start exerting its influence only when economic forces give a reasonable base for the bulk of the demand, leaving marginal problems to be solved by Statute.

In Agriculture, permanent labour will be a small fraction of the total labour requirements of a farm. In the case of owner cultivators who work on their own farms, most of their additional labour requirements will be purely seasonal and occasional. Any Labour Law, therefore, which seeks to give permanency to all agricultural labour will go against the production demands. On the other hand, it has to be accepted that any protection, other than some permanency, can always be got round. It is therefore implied that it is the economic front which needs attention rather than the statutory right.

It is the mass of unemployed and under-employed labour in the rural areas which recreate the basic problems of agricultural labour. In spite of industrialisation for a long time to come, there will be a gradual increase in the labour force in the rural areas. More man-days of work will have to be provided in the rural areas if labour is to be brought to something like a position of strength. The prospects here are good, provided the country has got the investment to make in this sector. Intensive agriculture with high yielding varieties allows a greater number of crops to be grown in an area and requires larger number of man-days of labour, per crop. Even with semi mechanization, the position is in favour of labour. In fact, some mechanization of some operations, like ploughing, sowing and harvesting may enable more crops to be grown in a year, thereby

allowing for more employment of labour. Annexure-I gives some statistics on this from the Farm Management Studies. Recently, experiments in relay cropping show that four crops a year are possible and some of the major operations can be done only by human labour. One crop has to be sown when another is already on the field. These factors also encourage us in thinking that intensive cultivation will automatically increase the rate of man-days of labour in agriculture. During the five years, ending 1970-71, it was expected to put across in the country a programme of 32.5 million acres of high yielding varieties of foodgrains and 30 million acres of multiple cropping both of which require more intensive labour. With the ultimate potential, it would be more than 100 million acres of high yielding varieties and not less than 60 million acres intensive cultivation. This compares with the present net cultivation of about 340 million acres with second cropping on about 50 million acres. Present cultivation is of a normal pattern of which the labour requirements are low.

Intensive agriculture with high yielding seeds, fertilisers, etc. is also helpful in another way. Even a 3-acre farm, with investment in its own irrigation, can become a surplus producer. Annexure II gives the economics of such a farm. The return per acre in the intensive agriculture is very substantial. At the same time the various operations in intensive agriculture have to be timely and methodical. Good labour, therefore, can command high rates of wages in such agriculture. In the Punjab, this year, the harvesting labour demanded 1/20th of the harvest as their share according to the customary practice. As the intensive wheat crop was nearly 2 - 2½ times that of a normal crop, labour naturally benefitted. Such tendencies are bound to occur all over the country.

It has been accepted that seasonal labour by itself is not going to put the agricultural labour in any strong position, vis-a-vis his employer. Unless, in the rural sector, alternative labour opportunities are available at fair rates of wages, the labourer does not get full advantage of the situation created by intensive agriculture. In the Third Plan it was expected that in areas where there was large scale unemployment and under-employment in the rural sector, a rural works programme at fair rates of wages should be operated. It was originally contemplated that about a hundred and fifty crores of rupees will be spent on this during the plan period, but, finally, very little of this viz. Rs. 19.33 crores was actually spent. It was intended that local programmes which had a production potential like soil conservation, tree plantation, land levelling, canal cutting, etc., should be organised in the season when agricultural labour is mostly unemployed or under-employed and the fund allocated should be used for getting the work done at fair rates of work. The works were to be done mainly through Panchayati Raj. Unfortunately, in many parts, this cooperation from the Panchayati Raj bodies was not forthcoming and works were mostly handled by middleman contractors. As a result, labour was once again at the mercy of the employer. A large scale rural works programme suitably distributed will give some strength to agricultural labour. It is, therefore, something that should be done. As this work is also production oriented, being related directly to agricultural potential, it also benefits the rural economy and creates a better situation for all concerned. Some method will have to be found to ensure that these works are organised not through contractors but through departmental or Panchayati Raj institutions, who should follow well laid down norms of wages and returns.

A rural works programme by itself, when there is a general recession in the construction works in the country, will not be of much use. Road Works and irrigation works are two large scale programmes which give employment to the rural unemployed. The economy will have to maintain a certain level of such expenditure so that the labour is not once again at the mercy of the contractors.

On construction works it is possible to maintain minimum wages for labour. This will then control labour rates in agriculture in the neighbourhood. Road works in areas where intensive agriculture is developing is a necessity. Irrigation works are equally necessary for insurance against drought in drought affected areas. These construction works, therefore, will provide labour for the unemployed in the intensive cultivation areas and also in drought affected areas. Planned development, therefore, of these construction works at a certain pace will help agricultural labour.

Whether it is rural works or road and irrigation construction, unless labour has some mobility they will not be able to avail of the opportunity. Two things are essential to enable labour to have this mobility. Firstly, agricultural labour should not be tied down to small bits of land on the plea of giving land to the landless, thereby making them immobile. Agricultural labour, who have no land, should be tackled as labour and solutions found for their problem. Mobility is an important aspect in this solution. Secondly, some organisation is essential amongst agricultural labour. There has been tradition in this country of labour organising themselves into groups particularly in areas where drought and famine have been fairly common and where the location of unemployment is more or less certain. The Bilaspuri labour, the Gorakhpuri labour and the Ganjam labour are examples. The State can help in organising labour in areas where there are labour concentrations, but local employment opportunities are few. Such a mechanism can also operate in times of stress like droughts, etc. in other areas. There should also be an identification of areas requiring such labour periodically. Even now additional labour is required at important agricultural operations in many intensive cultivation areas. A link up between need and availability is necessary. There is, at present, no organisation to do this.

A good deal of the underemployed in the rural areas are small farmers, whose landed property does not give them sufficient return to maintain themselves. The land themselves being at a poor level of farming does not need the labour of the family to any large extent. If some method can be found to keep these underemployed farmers away from pure labour opportunities in the rural areas, the agricultural labour will find better opportunities in the field. Intensive agriculture has shown the way to a solution to this problem. Annexure II gives the economics of a 3-acre farm where irrigation is provided. In such a farm intensive farming is possible. The return is substantial and more mandays of work will be required for the intensive farming than now employed in doubtful farming. If we can tackle the problem of enabling farmers with even a hectare of land and above to invest in water or provide water for them and ensure the inputs for intensive agriculture, we shall be taking out a big block of underemployed in the rural areas from the labour market. It must be recognised that the State has a responsibility for providing irrigation to the small farmers through State investment wherever possible. State tubewells, community wells, etc., are now being organised and have become popular. Unfortunately because of constraint of resources, investment directly by the State in irrigation for support to the small farmer has been going down during the last 3 years whereas investment through institutions with support from

Government has increased substantially for facilities to the big farmer to have his own irrigation source. The Fourth Plan should set right this imbalance both from the aspect of social justice to the small farmer as well as solving the problem of agricultural labour in the rural areas. In some places the small farmer can manage with loans given to him through institutions for having his own irrigation source. Where dug wells are cheap as in the Gangetic plains many small farmers can look after themselves if loans are available readily. For the inputs, he requires short-term credit. For getting a fair price for his produce he requires good regulated market and a strong trading organisation. We have been placing a lot of reliance on the cooperative sector for meeting the long-term, medium-term, and short-term credit of the small farmer. Experience has shown over the years that it is the large farmer who has benefitted most by cooperation and the medium farmer to some extent. The small farmer is not in the picture at all. Therefore, it is necessary to build up a system which can ensure loans according to need for the small farmer so that he can take his due part in the agricultural revolution. The cooperative system obviously will have to be set right and the bad forces in it ousted. This by itself may not solve the problem. Alternative supervised credit for the small farmers appears to be a necessity. Due emphasis must be given to this in the Fourth Plan.

The methods that will help in the advanced areas of the country will not be all which help in the backward areas. In the backward areas and specially areas occupied by the scheduled tribes bonded labour is a serious problem. Legislation has been attempted in various parts of the country to control this. Unfortunately just as in the field of land reforms, this legislation leaves many things to be desired. In the legislation in Orissa, it was pointed out to the Thebar Commission on Backward Classes that the legislation seems to assist rather than prevent bonded labour. Legislation in the sectors affecting the small man have to be administratively workable.

In developed areas the scheme of alternative employment can be worked by the Panchayats, but in the backward areas the Panchayats are more often composed of the people who create the problems. In these areas, a strong departmental organisation to deal justice and assure that labour opportunities at fair rates, appears to be a necessity. The rural works programme suitably organised and controlled by an administrative set up will help.

There is a view that charitable and non-political organisations can help in ensuring social justice. This will be a form of escapism. It is the State and the State only that can assure justice or social justice and this should not be left to private sector organisations howsoever laudable the objectives of the organisation may be.

REQUIREMENT OF MAN DAYS IN AGRICULTURE

Region	Crops	Intensity	Man days per acre of the holding	
			Local varieties	HYP
1. Single Crop Cultivation (i.e. intensity of cultivation about 1)				
Orissa (Sambalpur	Paddy	0.92	43	63
West Bengal (Hooghly & 24 Parganas)	Paddy Jute	1.05	55	75
Maharashtra (Ahmednagar)	Jowar Bajra & Wheat	1.09	19	29
II. <u>Intensive Multi-crop Agriculture</u> (i.e. intensity 1-5-2*0)				
Punjab (Amritsar & Ferozepur)	Wheat Wheat, gram Cotton	1.50	24	54
Andhra Pradesh (West Godavari)	Paddy	2.00	97	137
Uttar Pradesh (Meerut & Muzaffarnagar)	Wheat Sugarcane	1.50	73	103
III. <u>Intensive Multi-Crop Agriculture with Mechanisation</u> (Intensity 2.00)				
Punjab	Wheat Wheat, Gram Cotton	2.00	21	47
Andhra Pradesh	Paddy	2.00	72	98
Uttar Pradesh	Wheat Sugarcane	2.00	63	89

Source:-

1. For man days per acre of the holding under local varieties in Statement I and II: Reports of Farm Management Studies.
2. For man days on HYP: On the basis of cash expensess on additional labour in the Report on the High Yielding Varieties Programme, Kharif 1966-67.
3. For Statement III - On the basis of the above two sources after making allowance for displacement of labour due to mechanisation of ploughing, harvesting and threshing.

Economics of 3 acre (irrigated/assured rainfall) or 5 acre dry operational holding cultivated under High Yielding/Local Varieties.

Item	irrigated Farming Region - Farm 3 acres Paddy 6 acres (3 acres - Kharif 3 acres -Rabi)		Assured Rainfall Region - Farm 3 acres - Paddy 3 acres (kharif) Pulse - 3 acres (Rabi)		Dry (unassured Rainfall Region - Farm 5 acres Jowar 5 acres		
	Local Variety	High Yielding Variety	Local Varieties Paddy	Pulses	High Yield- ing paddy	Pulses	Jowar (Local)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.(a) Capital cost of well.	Rs. 2500-3500	Rs. 2500-3500	-	-	-	-	-
Average.	Rs. 3000	Rs. 3000					
(b) Cost of land preparation etc.	Rs. 300	Rs. 300	-	-	-	-	-
Total (A+B)	Rs. 3300	Rs. 3300	-	-	-	-	-
2. Current Cost							
(a) On irrigation (Depreciation) per holding.	Rs. 100	Rs. 100	-	-	-	-	-
(b) Other Costs-per acre							
i) Hired human labour	Rs. 70	Rs. 105	45	10	90	10	11
ii) Bullock Labour (Owned+hired)	Rs. 100	Rs. 110	20	15	25	15	15
iii) Seed	Rs. 20	Rs. 15	18	10	15	10	5
iv) Fertilisers, Manures and pesticides	Rs. 100	Rs. 200	75	5 (manure)	150	5 (manure)	5 (manure)
v) Other (land revenue depreciation on implements, interest on short terms loans etc.)	Rs. 20	30	17	16	20	16	7
3. i) Current Cost (b)- per acre	Rs. 310	460	175	56	300	56	43
			Paddy & Pulses		Paddy & pulses		
ii) Total current cost (a+b) per holding	Rs. 1,960	2,860	525	170	695	900	170
			1070	215			
4. Production per acre (quintals)	Rs. 10	18	8	2.5	14	2.5	2.5
(per holding quintals)	Rs. 60	108	24	7.5	42	7.5	12.5

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
5. Price per quintal	Rs.46	46	46	51	46	51	47	
6. Gross value of production	Rs.2,760	4,970	1,105	Paddy & pulses 385 1490 1930		Paddy & pulses 385 2315 590		
7. Consumption needs of family and provision for seed, feed, etc.								
i) Quantity (quintals)	Rs. 16	16	16	1.5	16	1.5	11	
ii) Value	Rs.735	735	735	80 815	735	80 815	515	
8. Marketable Surplus Qty. (quintals)	Value	Rs.2,025	4,235	370	305 675	1195	305 1500	75
9. Net Income (6-3ii) per holding	Rs.800	2,110	580	215 795	1030	215 1245	375	
10. Net Income after deducting value of home consumption (9-7ii)	Rs.65	1,375	(-)20				430(-)140	
11. Interest on Capital Cost (@ Rs.60% per annum)	Rs.200	200						
12. Interest and repayment of first instalment	Rs.200+330=530	530						
13. Net Income available for other items of consumption (10-8)	Rs.(-)465	845	(-)20				430	

- Note:-
1. The table represents typical situations based on data derived from Management and other studies.
 2. Item 9. Net income, represents return to farm family labour and owned fixed capital.
 3. Value figures have been rounded up.

PROBLEMS OF AGRICULTURAL/RURAL LABOUR

BY

DIRECTORATE OF ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS.

1. The Indian agriculture is called upon to play an important role in the economic development of the country under the condition of increasing pressure of population on land and deteriorating structure of agricultural organisation in consequence. On the one hand, the population has been increasing at the annual rate of 2.5 percent, the bulk of which continues to depend on agriculture for its livelihood; on the other hand, extension of agriculture to new areas is no more possible for meeting the food requirements of increasing population or for providing employment to those who depend on agriculture for their livelihood. The major part of the working force and employment in the country is in the rural sector. Among those who work in rural areas, besides agricultural labours, proper, there are large number of marine and inland fishermen, forest labours, tribals who work as wage-labours and nomadic sheep and goat rearers whose employment and wage/income problems have not been examined on a national plane. The resources available for a broad-based programme for promoting productive employment in rural areas are limited in comparison with the need and scope for such programmes and for producing sizeable impact on fuller and fruitful utilisation of the manpower in rural areas. Sometimes questions are also raised whether land reform measures would have an impact on rural labour and also whether mixed farming involving agriculture and animal husbandry and the growth of agro-industries would open up avenues of additional or supplementary employment to the rural labour.

The rising demand for food grains arising out of the growth of population and high income elasticity of Indian population for foodgrains consumption is intended to be met through a strategy of agricultural development which lays emphasis on intensive cultivation of available and raising of agricultural output per unit areas. In spite of the efforts under way, the supply of foodgrains is lagging behind the demand for them. This has given rise to food distribution policy, the execution of which has its impact on producers, consumers and the agricultural labourers assisting in agricultural production.

In this overall context, the problems of agricultural rural/~~xxxx~~ labour could be viewed under the following heads:-

- I. Deterioration of man-land ratio.
- II. Dependence of agricultural operations on casual labour.
- III. The impact of the new strategy for agricultural development on the demand for labour.
- IV. Mechanisation in agriculture and its impact on agricultural labour.
- V. Land Reforms and agricultural labour.
- VI. Food distribution policy and its impact on agricultural labour.
- VII. Problems of special types of rural workers.

VIII. Mixed farming and agro-industries.

2. The first two items relate broadly to the structure of agricultural organisation and the role of agricultural labour in agricultural production. The items III, IV and V relate to the impact of new developments in agriculture and that of land reform measures on agricultural labour. The sixth item raises issues regarding food distribution policy and its impact on the real income of agricultural labour. All the items from I to VIII are separately examined below. The available information supplied for each item is not exhaustive or representative and the tendencies indicated are not conclusive but only suggestive.

I. Deterioration of Man-Land Ratio

3. The rate of growth of population and the continued dependence of the bulk of it on agriculture have led to further deterioration of the man-land ratio which is already low. If the population continues to grow at the same rate and the dependence on the population on agriculture remains as at present, this deterioration of man-land ratio would continue in the coming years. These factors have their effect on the size of agricultural holding and the number of holdings in the small size groups. The census of population 1951 and 1961 also show that the number of workers engaged as cultivators and agricultural labourers increased during the 10 years period. If the size of average agricultural holding decreases and the number of small holdings increases as a result, not only the number of landless agricultural labourers would increase but the number of families offering work as casual labourers in agriculture would also increase. Appendix A-Table No. 1 gives some figures to indicate this.

4. The developments which might reverse this trend are programmes of multiple cropping and use of high yielding varieties, and other development activities in rural areas which might draw some labour force away from agriculture. In so far as the intensive cultivation would increase the gross cropped area, the man-gross land ratio might show an improvement as compared with man-net land ratio. Though the multiple cropping and HVP cover a small proportion of the net sown area in the country, their impact on the conditions of agricultural labour would be considerable. Because the areas selected for these programmes are high density population areas of the States; the new strategy in agriculture which increases gross cropped area and creates larger opportunities of employment through intensive cultivation and high yields would reverse the deteriorating trend of man-land ratio and that of the conditions of agricultural labour in these densely populated areas where such an impact is needed most.

II. Dependence on Casual Agricultural Labour

5. The agricultural operations on the big or the small farms depend heavily or marginally on casual labour according to the seasonal conditions. The demand for casual assistance is for specific agricultural operations such as sowing, transplanting, harvesting or threshing. Employment of permanent agriculture

Contd...3/-

labourers for agricultural operations is relatively rare and is mainly confined to larger holdings. The mechanisation of agriculture might displace the need for casual labour to a certain extent and substitute a small number of permanent labourers in their place. On the other hand, intensive cultivation under High Yielding Varieties and multiple cropping schemes might provide more continuous employment to casual labourers throughout the year at a wage rate higher than the present average wage rate.

6. The data from the Farm Management Studies conducted in different regions given in App. A-Table No. 2 show the importance of hired labour in total human employment (as distinguished from bullock employment). The crop complex mainly determines the volume of employment; a small holding with a cropping pattern of high intensity of cultivation and high intensity of labour input for each crop would give more employment both to farm family and hired labour per unit of area. The size of holding without these considerations does not give any idea of the volume of employment in agriculture.

7. The hired labour days are contributed by casual and contract or attached labourers some of whom are permanent agricultural labourers. About 10 to 25 per cent of agriculture labour supply is engaged on the basis of some contract and the remaining are casual labourers. In three Farm Management Studies, data have been given specifically according to the source of supply of labour, permanent or casual labour, which is reproduced below:

Percent share of permanent and
casual labour in total wage-employment

<u>Region</u>	<u>Permanent labour</u> (in per cent)	<u>Casual labour</u>
U.P. (Meerut and Muzaffarnagar districts)	45	55
Haryana (Karnal district)	50	50
M.P. (Raipur district)	21	79

III

Impact of the new strategy for agriculture development on the
demand for agri. Wage-paid labour

8. The new strategy has two important programmes for increasing agricultural production:

- (a) The High Yielding Varieties Programme with a supporting package of improved agricultural practices in selected areas so as to cover 32.5 million acres by 1970-71.
- (b) Multiple cropping Programme on 30 million acres by 1970-71 in areas having sufficient irrigation potential through the introduction of short duration high yielding varieties.

Contd...4/-

9. (a) High Yielding Varieties Programme : * The level of employment per acre (made available by the existing cropping pattern and cultivation practices) has been broadly indicated in Appendix A-Table No. 2. The Report on High Yielding Varieties Programme in Kharif 1966-67 (Dte. of Eco. & Stat. June 67) based on diagnostic studies conducted in eight districts in the country indicated the additional cost incurred on wages of hired labour per acre on the High Yielding Varieties Programme. According to this Report, expenditure on hired labour is incurred on high yielding varieties because of large work involved in 'sowing and transplanting' and 'harvesting and threshing' operations of the new crop. The additional expenditure per acre at the lower scale of adoption of recommended practice for HYV Programme would be Rs.20/- whereas if the scale of adoption of agricultural practices is as recommended this expenditure on hired labour may go upto Rs. 50/- per acre. In other words taking the average wage rate of Rs. 2/-, additional employment for hired agricultural labour would be between 10 days and 25 days roughly per acre of high yielding variety crop. These magnitudes of additional employment arising out of High Yielding Varieties Programme are, however, not representative of all the areas covered in the country but are based on the above mentioned diagnostic studies conducted in the eight districts in kharif 1966.

10. (b) Multiple Cropping Programme : The Farm Management Studies indicate that the land intensively cultivated provides larger employment to both the family and hired labour on agricultural operations than the land less intensively cultivated. Generally smaller holdings are more intensively cultivated than the bigger holdings. Impact of Multiple Cropping Programme on employment could be judged somewhat from Table No. 3 in Appendix A. derived from intensity of cultivation given size-group-wise in the Farm Management Studies. The multiple cropping programme included in the new agriculture strategy would provide continuous employment to the existing stock of labour in the areas covered under the Programme. An important factor in multiple cropping is the effort required for quickly preparing the land for succeeding crop. The time available in between two short duration crops is relatively small and for such a concentrated effort both labour and machinery are essential.

IV. Mechanisation in Agriculture.

11. There is scarcity of power for agricultural operations in the country. As against an estimated requirement of 112 million horse power for agriculture operations, the available power supplied by working men, women and children, draft bullocks and the existing mechanisation of agriculture, comes to about 45 million horse power. The use of tractors and other mechanical devices facilitate higher intensity of production and probably greater production per unit of area in the size groups of holdings where such mechanisation is done. A broad assessment of bullock labour per acre likely to be displaced by the use of tractor in U.P. is given in Appendix A. Table No. 4. Agricultural labour hours likely to be displaced by the use of the tractor would be higher than those of the bullocks. However, because of the advantages of greater intensity of

* The Appendix B gives the details of the High Yielding Varieties Programme State-wise.

production and greater output per acre, there is not likely to be a serious overall impact on employment of bullocks and of labour as a result of greater use of tractors at the rate of 20 thousand to 25 thousand units per year.

12. The available approximate information is that there are about 52 thousand tractors, 1600 power tillers, 550,000 electric pumps, 4 lakh oil engines and about 50 thousand power operated sugarcane crushers which constitute mechanised agriculture in India. The tractors are used on about 2 million acres in the country.

13. By 1970-71, the demand for tractors has been estimated by the Expert Committee of the Department of Heavy Engineering at 40 thousand tractors per year. As against this demand could be compared the units of holdings and their area which might be mechanised; viz., about 16½ lakhs holdings above 30 acres each and 80 million acres of their operational areas. Though all these holdings may not be suitable for mechanised cultivation, any reasonable proportion of these holdings would suggest a potential for mechanisation much higher than the rate at which the demand for tractors is likely to increase in the next few years.

14. Apart from this question of full-scale mechanisation, the position in India is such that in the near future, there is likely to be a growing demand for Intermediate Technology where there is likely to be a combination of labour and small machinery in agriculture. The Intermediate Technology will be forced on the Indian agriculture in areas where the multiple cropping would require cultivators to prepare quickly the land for succeeding crops and for the relay crops. The time available in between two short-duration crops would be relatively small and for such a concentrated effort, both labour and machinery would be essential.

V. Land Reform and agricultural labour

15. Experience shows that land reforms measures provide wider opportunity of ownership and more secure position in regard to rights in land accompanied by more intensive farming. The intensive farming might create employment opportunities. But there has been also some displacement of labour in anticipation of land reform measures. Generally in countries where the agricultural structure is characterised by large inequalities in land ownership together with the extensive cultivation of land, there is very little opportunity for labourers to improve the conditions of their employment or their status.

16. Another important land reform programme with a direct potential of labour employment generation relates to the imposition of ceiling on agricultural holdings. But, as the ceiling legislation is not yet been fully implemented it is not possible to assess its impact on agricultural labour. In

addition to the surplus land which might be obtained by the imposition of ceiling, there would be cultivable waste-land belonging to the Government and Bhoodan and Gramdan lands which be available for the purposes of distribution to ejected and displaced tenants, landless agricultural workers and uneconomic farmers. The progress of the programme of resettlement of landless agricultural labourers has been however, not spectacular; by 1966-67, about 96,000 families were resettled on about 3.54 lakh acres, which is just below one-third of the target of achievement in respect of resettlement of families drawn up for the Third Plan.

VI. Food distribution policy and its impact on agricultural labour

17. The total population covered under statutory and modified rationing systems by the end of 1967 was 264 millions. Of this population, the modified rationing system operating in rural and semi-urban areas provided benefit to 234 million people, at a quantum of ration less than that for the statutory rationed areas depending upon the availability of supplies in different months of the year. The population covered by modified rationing could supplement their requirements of foodgrains through purchases in the open market. The remaining 30 million population was covered by statutory rationing. The rationale for opening fair price shops in rural areas is the prevalence of high prices in the open market. In the rural areas those who buy their cereal requirements against payment in cash probably have to pay higher price in the open markets for a part of the quantity they consume if the either part is obtained through the fair price shops. As the coverage of fair price shops is restricted to a very small proportion of the rural population, the food distribution arrangements may be affecting the real income of agricultural labourers depending upon the proportion of the wage-bill paid in cash. It cannot be said that this impact would be universally adverse as in the surplus districts the prices in the rural areas might be lower than the issue prices. Similarly, the adverse or favourable impact of food distribution policy would depend also on the proportion of wage bill paid in cash and the proportion of labourers affected by this system of wage payment in different crop regions. The National Commission on Labour may be interested in examining the relevance of this impact of food distribution arrangements on the real income of agricultural labourers and other rural labourers.

VII. Problems of some special types of rural workers

18. In addition to casual and permanent agricultural labourers, there are other rural workers such as the marine and inland fisherman, forest labourers, tribal workers who work as wage labourers and nomadic sheep and goat rearers. The problems of these rural workers in respect of their conditions of work, employment and income require systematic investigation on a national plane. The National Commission on Labour may like to consider their problems for suggesting operational policies for their welfare.

VII. Mixed farming and Agro-industries

19. In milk-shed areas of big dairies, mixed farming involving agriculture with animal husbandry might develop on an intensive scale creating supplementary employment to the farming community and to the agricultural labour. The Indo-German Agricultural Project in Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh is a case in point. Similarly, with the growth of agro-industries, large variety of skilled labour might become necessary. At the moment, the employment opportunities may not be large but in view of the prospect of development of mixed farming in milkshed areas of big dairies and of agro-industries in rural areas, avenues of employment opportunities are likely to be opened up for agricultural labourers.

SA/-

Appendix - A

Table No. 1.

Per capita net sown area and no. and size of holdings.

Year	Rural Popula- tion (million)	Workers (Million)		Per capita sown area (acres)	Agri. Holdings (Million)		Average size of holdings (acres)
		As cultiva- tors	As agri- labour		Total	No. below 5 acres	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. 1951	298.7	97.8	30.6	0.99	{ 35.5	21.7	7.5
					{ (A.L.E. 1950-51)		
					{ 44.4	26.6	7.6
					{ (N.S.S. - 8th Round		
					{ 1953-54)		
2. 1961	360.3	99.5	31.5	0.93	{ 48.9	30.8	6.7
					{ (N.S.S. - 16th Round,		
					{ 1959-60)		
					{ 50.8	31.5	6.5
					{ (N.S.S. - 17th Round,		
					{ 1960-61)		
3. 1964 (Estimate)	380.8			0.89			

Appendix - A

Table No. 2

Utilisation of hired agri. labour in total agri.
employment in days of 8 hours each per acre.

State	Region		Year	Average size of Holding (Acres)	Agricultural employ- ment (days) per acre		Hired agri. labour as per- centage of total agri. employment per acre
	State	Distri ct			Total	Of which hired	
1. Madras	Coimbatore & Salem		1956-57	7.47	46.7	12.0	25.7
2. Mahara- shtra	(i) Ahmed - nagar		1955-56 to 1956-57	21.17	18.8	6.0	31.9
	(ii) Nasik		"	18.24	23.1	6.6	28.6
3. Punjab	Amritsar & Ferozepur		1954-55 to 1956-57	17.56	20.5	5.5	26.8
4. Andhra Pradesh	West Godavari		1957-58 to 1959-60	8.28	67.36	52.83	78.7
5. Uttar Pradesh	Merrut & Muzaffarnagar		1954-55 to 1956-57	10.30	64.00	18.00	28.00
6. West Bengal	Hoogly & 24 Parganas		1954-55 to 1956-57	3.02	55.37	21.08	38.1
7. Orissa	Sambalpur		1957-58 to 1959-60	5.35	43.00	18.00	42.00

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Appendix - A

Table No. 3

Utilisation of agri. labour according to range of intensity of cultivation.

State	Districts	Year	Intensity * of Cultivation	Utilisation of labour per acre (No. of days)	
				Family	Hired
1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Madras	Coimbatore and Salem	1956-57	(a) Below hundred	11.9 to 30.7	7.7 to 12.2
			(b) Between 130 & 141	43.4 to 84.7	11.4 to 22.5
2. Mahara- shtra	(i) Ahmeda- nagar	1955-56 to 1956-57	(a) Between 106.1 to 109.50	7.5 to 17.1	3.6 to 7.7
			(b) Between 113.2	17.2 to 32.8	4.5 to 11.9
	(ii) Nasik	"	(a) Between 106.4 to 114.4	7.0 to 19.9	4.4 to 9.1
			(b) Between 127.0 to 134.8	33.6 to 35.2	8.9 to 12.8
3. Punjab	Amirtsar & Ferozepur	1954-55	(a) Below 109	5.9	10.8
		to 1956-57	(b) Between 124 & 162	13.6 to 20.5	3.1 to 6.0
4. Andhra Pradesh	West Godavari	1957-58	(a) Between 138 to 146	4.77 to 25.96	34.32 to 63.29
		to 1959-60	(b) Between 163 to 200	24.26 to 54.74	43.28 to 58.22

* The intensity range relates to certain size groups which have been grouped together in this column.

Appendix - A

Table No.4

Performance of bullocks & tractors in agri. operations.

<u>Agri. Operations</u>	<u>(No. of hours required per acre)</u>			
	Bullocks	10 HP Tractor	25 HP Tractor	50 HP Tractor
Seed bed Preparation	14.60	6.50	2.10	0.65
Planting	2.40	0.75	0.30	0.15
Irrigation	64.00	12.00	5.00	2.50
Threshing	8.00	2.50	1.00	0.50
Miscellaneous	16.00	4.00	1.50	1.00
Total	105.00	25.75	9.90	4.80

Source :- Journal of Indian Society of Agricultural Engineers, Dec., 1964.

John Balis, 'A Study of Farm Power Units: Their performance and Costs', P.43.

APPENDIX - B

High Yielding Varieties Programme for Paddy, Wheat,
Jowar, Bajra and Maize, 1970-71

(Area in Lakh-acres)

States	Gross Cropped Area	Area under H.V.P. 1970-71 (Paddy, Wheat, Maize, Jowar & Bajra)	H.V.P. are as % of Gross Cropped Area
1	2	3	4
Andhra Pradesh	315.21	30.50	9.68
Assam	67.14	2.00	2.98
Bihar	267.67	23.00	8.59
Gujarat	248.20	22.00	8.86
Haryana	113.08	16.00	14.15
Jammu & Kashmir	20.83	1.15	5.52
Kerala	61.51	12.00	19.51
Madras	177.35	20.50	11.56
Madhya Pradesh	468.59	12.00	2.56
Maharashtra	474.80	50.50	10.64
Mysore	266.90	13.43	5.03
Nagaland	1.21	0.05	4.13
Orissa	184.00	11.16	6.06
Punjab	126.62	28.00	22.11
Rajasthan	383.04	10.23	2.67
Uttar Pradesh	531.70	53.00	9.97
West Bengal	157.93	15.58	9.87
Andaman & Nicobar Island.	0.24	0.05	20.83
Delhi	2.52	0.85	33.73

Contd....2/-

1	2	3	4
Goa	3.43	0.33	9.62
Himachal Pradesh	21.47	2.00	9.32
Manipur	4.32	0.20	4.63
Pondicherry	1.16	0.34	29.31
Tripura	7.96	0.25	3.14

All India	3906.88	325.12	8.32

HVP Area Under: **			
Paddy	887.86	118.34	13.33
Wheat	331.65	74.55	22.48
Jowar	448.53	147.06	10.49
Maize	114.11	42.96	37.35
Bajra	289.76	42.21	14.57

* - Relates to 1964-65.

** - Area under crops in 1964-65.

APPENDIX - 'C'

/Punjab
 to 1956-57
 /Mysore dur-
 ing 1959-60

The Farm Management Studies conducted in different regions of the country under the auspices of the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Ministry of Food Agriculture, C.D. and Cooperation have so far been completed in Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Madras and Maharashtra during 1954-55, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa during 1957-58 to 1959-60 to 1961-62, another region each in Bihar during 1960.61 to 1962-63, Punjab during 1961-62 to 1963-64 and in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Kerala during 1962-63 to 1964-65. The following reports have been published:

Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, West Bengal, Maharashtra	Reports for the years 1954-55, 1955-56, 1956-57 and combined reports.
Madras	Reports for 1954-55, 1955-56 and 1956-57.
Andhra Pradesh	Reports for the years 1957-58 and 1958-59.
Orissa	Report for the year 1957-58.

The reports on Farm Management Studies provide, Inter-alia, information on utilisation of human labour according to size group of holdings and also by source (family and hired) for farm business as a whole and for individual crops, utilisation of labour on irrigated and unirrigated crops, operation-wise distribution of labour for different crops, employment and unemployment of family farm workers and wage rates.

MA/

NATIONAL COMMISSION ON LABOUR

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE
ON
AGRICULTURAL LABOUR
NEW DELHI**

DECEMBER 23-25, 1968

NATIONAL COMMISSION ON LABOUR

CONFERENCE ON AGRICULTURAL LABOUR
(December 23-25, 1968)

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE
NATIONAL COMMISSION ON LABOUR

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As Members of the Conference are aware one of the terms of reference of the Commission requires it to "study and report in particular on measures for improving conditions of rural labour and other categories of unorganised labour". Agricultural labour occupies a pivotal position in dealing with this term of reference and indeed it has a special significance to the national economy. The deliberations of the Conference and the conclusions you reach will help the Commission in formulating its recommendations concerning this important sector of employment. I look forward to the report of the Conference.

I am grateful to Shri B.Sivaraman, for having agreed to our request to inaugurate the Conference in the midst of his heavy responsibilities. With his distinguished record as an outstanding administrator and his known interest in agriculture, and sympathy for agricultural labour, he is pre-eminently qualified for this task. I feel confident that his inaugural address will set the tone of the discussions at the Conference and thereby help to make its deliberations more purposeful and fruitful.

I wish the Conference all success.

P.B.GAJENDRAGADKAR
17.12.1968.

SEMINAR ON AGRICULTURAL LABOUR

December 23, 1968

Inaugural Address

by

B. Sivaraman,
Secretary,
Agriculture, C.D. & Cooperation.

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NATIONAL LABOUR COMMISSION
NEW DELHI

Labour opportunities in agriculture today is most^{ly} of primary labour in land development and cultivation. The labour employed in these operations are those cultivating their own lands, those cultivating others land in addition to their own and pure agricultural labour. All these three classes are at such low levels of income that when we talk of agricultural labour, we have to consider the problem as a whole for all these three types of people labouring on land. All these classes require solution to their problems of unemployment and underemployment. They require a reasonable minimum earning per day whether it is self-earned or wages. All of them require better conditions of work, particularly facilities like drinking water, housing, and medical aid. This is the significant difference between problems of agricultural labour and other labour.

2. The documents circulated for this conference have analysed the replies to the questionnaire issued by the National Labour Commission and has started with a good introduction of the basic problems and a diagnostic study of the conditions of rural labour. I am picking out some of the salient points from these documents for your consideration.

3. The problem of under-employment and unemployment is considered to be the gravest problem in this field. What are the facts? Table 11 in the papers circulated for the Conference is a very important document. In 1956-57, 15.29 per cent of the employed persons in this field were willing to take up additional work. In 1961, this percentage came down to 10.71. This itself can be taken to be a great achievement of our planned improvement of the conditions of agricultural labour, but for the fact that in 1956-57, nearly 20 per cent of those already doing work of 57 hours and more were reported to be willing for more work. In 1961, this was only 1.79 per cent. This raises some doubt about the validity of the figure of 15.29 per cent in 1956-57. At the same time, on the whole, there does appear to be less people offering for additional labour. This trend should have been accentuated by 1967, if we take note of the additional labour opportunities in the rural sector owing to the development of scientific agriculture. In this connection, it would be interesting to find out the trend in the further Sample Surveys, if they can be analysed quickly. The Table has some further interesting figures. It is noticed that amongst those who have only 1-14 hours of work a week, or 15-25 hours a week, more than two-thirds do not want additional work. It should be interesting to examine who these people are

and why they will not work more. The solution to finding more employment for this class of severely under-employed will depend upon identification of this group. These figures are all-India figures. There must be areas where there can be very little of unemployment or under-employment. Punjab is an example. On the other hand, there may be backward areas and areas of low agricultural growth where the percentage of underemployed and unemployed may be very large. A solution for the richer areas will not answer the problems of the poorer. Broadly, the figures in Table 11 give us the satisfaction that it is not beyond our capacity to give reasonable employment to the unemployed and under-employed in the rural areas.

A reasonable minimum wage is the second problem. In tackling, this, the important point is that agricultural labour is mostly from the scheduled caste and scheduled tribes. A question is, therefore, raised whether the status of these groups have to be raised before we can tackle the problem of economic growth. A view has been expressed that economic growth has to come before there can be a status growth. This, latter is my view, would be the correct way of looking at this problem. If we have a look back on the history of our people, we find in this caste ridden society many instances of change of status and caste arising out of religious and economic movements. In our secular society, we have to bank upon the economic forces to push up the status. In many parts of this country, already the economic forces are at work.

There are two views expressed about ensuring the reasonable wage. One view is that minimum wages should be enforced by legislation. The other view is that it is only assured employment at reasonable wage rates which can control the wage situation. In a vast scattered sector, like agricultural labour, enforcement of any legislation will depend firstly on the acceptance of the legislation by the majority of the people leaving only marginal cases to be dealt with

by law. Secondly, any general law of this nature will have to be made effective in every nook and corner of the country. An organisation to enforce the law will, therefore, have to reach the nooks and corners. This will mean a vast petty bureaucracy. The time will come when we may have to consider whether the bad employer or the petty bureaucracy is the greater menace to agricultural labour. The bad employer has at least to live with his labour and he has to maintain good relations in order to profit. The petty bureaucrat has no such constraints. Before opting finally, therefore, for legislative control, we have to consider objectively the possibility of assured employment.

Reasonable conditions of work is now accepted as a necessary objective in labour welfare. Suitable drinking water, housing and health facilities are considered reasonable requirements. In the rural areas, all these three amenities are not only required for the labour but for the bulk of the population. We cannot separate out the requirements of labour from the general requirements of the population. Our social amenities programme in the rural areas started in the Community Development Programme aims at these very requirements. Further this is a field where the nature of agricultural labour is relevant. The small farmer, who cultivates his own lands, and also works on others lands, are equally entitled to these basic amenities. The social welfare programme has, per force, to be restricted to the funds we can spare in the various plans for this sector. Because of development requirements without which there can be no further growth, social welfare projects have to put up with restricted allocations. This has to be kept in mind.

Let us examine in some detail our capacity to give reasonable employment to the unemployed and under-employed in the rural areas. Pure agriculture labour can be found alternative employment in unskilled and semiskilled work of the nature of earth moving, canal digging, and land development work. Particularly

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in the backward areas, where labour opportunities away from the field is not easy, to organise pure agricultural labour into labour corps to work in major projects of road building and irrigation, is one of the ideas suggested. Such labour corps are not unknown in this country. Bilaspuri, Gorakhpuri, and Ganjam labour gangs are known in many parts of the country. It will be useful to examine how such labour gangs can be formed and utilised. Planned link up between our major road building and irrigation projects and such labour gangs would be useful. In this connection it is relevant to point out that the various programmes to tie up landless labour with small pieces of land will act as a deterrent to this programme of building labour corps. Tying people to small uneconomic holdings is the surest way of preventing them from utilising their full capacity for earning their livelihood. Mobility of labour is a pre-condition to remunerative employment.

Formation of labour corps can only tackle a fraction of the agricultural labour in the country. This is so because once a corps is formed there must be continuity of employment. Unless there is a long term planning of major road work or irrigation work, where the corps can move, formation of too many corps may lead to frustration for lack of work. If, therefore, the unemployed and underemployed agricultural labour is to be found additional work, it has to be any work close to his home. The only fields where this can be provided are cultivation requirements due to further intensive agriculture and secondary and tertiary labour opportunities in the agricultural sector. In 1961, out of the 1138 lakhs total workers in the agricultural sector about 10% were underemployed or unemployed. It has been estimated in paragraph 6.12 of the Introduction that by 1976 the will be an increase of 215 lakhs to the total number of workers. We have already reached 1968 and a look at the latest national sampling survey of labour should give us some indication of the number of excess labour we have to handle after 1966 till 1976. If the trend shown in the

table had been maintained after 1961, it is likely that the under-employed would have gone down much below 10% and a good proportion of the new labour absorbed. We would, therefore, be safe in assuming that the increase in labour opportunities will involve about 15 to 20 million agricultural labour from 1966 to 1976. Assuming that these require 300 days work per year, we have to provide for 4500 to 6,000 million work days. If we look at the statistics given at page 186 of the papers for the Conference, we find that every acre of high yielding varieties gives a labour opportunity of an extra 30 days. An intensive multicrop programme gives for each intensive crop addition a requirement of about 26 man days. Our programme of high yielding varieties is 60 million acres by 1973-74 and 40 million acres intensive cultivation. As the programme started only in 1966, we can assume that the labour potential of this programme will be fully available for the extra labour. This works out to 2840 million days of work. This will cover probably more than half of our requirements. What about the other half? In the normal course planned development should have provided for a lot of extra work on road building, irrigation works, and maintenance which should have provided reasonable employment to a large number of the population in the rural areas. Unfortunately, in the last three years, because of paucity of funds, growth in this sector has been negligible. In addition, the States, because of financial stringency, have avoided doing normal maintenance work which provide a lot of labour to the rural population mainly in the off season. Much of the cry of drought is due not so much to lack of agricultural production, but lack of employment opportunities, which allows for reasonable earnings to buy ones food. The lesson, therefore, is obvious that there should be no slowing down of maintenance operations in the fields where agricultural labour get off-season employment and the pace of new constructions should have some relation to the need for work of the increasing agricultural population.

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At the beginning of the Third Plan, it was realised by all concerned that the labour opportunities in the rural sector was not sufficient for the growing labour population and labour opportunities in areas of large scale unemployment and under-employment in the rural sector should be provided for by a special rural works programme. It was agreed that 150 crores will be earmarked for this programme and by 1965 it should give employment to 25 lakhs of persons. The total expenditure in the third plan was of the order of 19 crores. Considering the gap in employment opportunity in the period 1966 to 1976, there appears to be a strong case for reviving this programme and assigning of 2.5 million of the new agricultural labour to these items of work. The backward areas will have to be specially tackled with this programme as there are very few other opportunities for increased labour in such areas. The growth of labour opportunities in the high yield in varieties programme and the intensive programme will benefit only areas where these programmes can be done. The bulk of the unemployment will, therefore, be in the areas where these programmes cannot be supported.

Secondary and tertiary growth in the rural sector has been negligible. Growth of production of agricultural commodities, increases labour opportunities in processing, transport and storage activities. Marketing activities can give employment to more people in the rural sector. The growth of all these opportunities will require investment. The Seminar can usefully examine the possibilities of investment and the possibilities of extra labour opportunities.

In this connection I would like to correct a slight misunderstanding in the diagnostic study. In paragraph 4.3, it has been stated that the Government policy has been

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more beneficial to be better of element in the country side than the small farmer. Government have, no doubt, activated the thought that institutions should come forward with more liberal loans for agricultural development. Institutional credit has, as a consequence, expanded substantially. At the same time the Government's plan is to divert the State sector investment completely to supporting the small farmer in these intensive programmes by providing him water at reasonable rates and giving him credit for supplies through the cooperative sector. Previously the bulk of the State expenditure was in giving loans for wells, tubewells, etc., which mainly went to the larger farmer. The present policy only puts the large and medium farmer out of the State sector and leaves him to seek his funds in the institutional and banking sector. Limitations, if any, in the programme is due to financial constraints. It is the expectation that large number of small farmers will be enabled to take part in the intensive programmes, and thereby become fully employed on their land. This will release further labour opportunities to agricultural labour. As the diagnostic study has raised the problem of priorities, it is desirable to examine objectively what we have done so far to really help the underdogs. The States have financial constraints because it has not been possible yet to tax those who have benefited by the agricultural revolution for the improvement of small farmers and the agricultural labour in the rural areas. Whenever attempts are made to bring rationality in this sector, we notice that the cry of the small farmer being victimized by additional taxes is always raised.

The next broad problem is that of reasonable wages. If alternative employment is provided at reasonable wage rates, the problem will stabilise itself. Particularly, the backward areas and areas where the scheduled tribes are in a majority will have to be specially looked after. If we cannot give such labour opportunities, legislation will not be a solution.

Whenever we talk of local problems, the Panchayats and Panchayati Raj are brought up as the palliative. In the Rural Works Programme and other Development Programmes what is wanted is payment of sanctioned wage to the labour. In backward areas, where bonded labour and labour at low wage rates

is prevalent, it is naive to expect that persons elected from this group will play fair with labour. In such areas, strong departmental organisations will have to be considered to get the work done and to ensure fair wage to the labour. As exploitation is not unknown even to a departmental system, in these areas, the supervision will have to be particularly strong.

Lastly, a word of caution about legislation. There is often a big gap between what one talks of as the necessity for a legislation and what the legislation finally actually covers. Our Land Reforms Legislations is a standing example. This weakness in legislation in fields, like agriculture, arises out of the forces controlling democracy in a country just coming out of feudalism.

There is no direct or simple route to success for solving the problems of agricultural labour or for that matter, the underdogs in the rural sector. It is only an economic solution which will finally bring some semblance of relief in this vast sector. Economic growth in this sector can be achieved only by systematic planned and detailed work by a well spread out administrative organisation. In the Fourth Plan, special attention is being paid to the problems of the small farmer. We do not have all the answers just now, but a detailed programme of attack with suitable provisions for risks is now under preparation to tackle this field. If out of your deliberations certain broad lines of approach can be laid down for tackling the problem of pure agricultural labour, it may be possible to bring in some amount of coordination between programmes for small farmers and problems programmes for agricultural labour.

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Principal Issues

Before the Conference on Agricultural Labour

(New Delhi - December 23-25, 1968)

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One of the terms of reference of the National Commission on Labour requires it to "study and report in particular on the measures for improving conditions of rural labour and other categories of the unorganised labour"; another calls for formulation of recommendations about amelioration of their conditions. The problem of the rural labour as the Commission rightly sees it, is two-fold, social and economic; the first results from the low social status of the rural labour in society and the second from the chronic lack of sufficient employment opportunities. The social problem is more deeply rooted. Nevertheless, it is obvious that the economic problem is of greater primacy and must be immediately attacked. Indeed, without resolving the economic problem, a solution of the social problem is not only not possible but is meaningless.

It is natural to start assessing the size of the problem, namely, the number of persons involved. Two Agricultural Labour enquiries (1949 and 1960) and two population censuses (1951 and 1961) are available. Reportedly, the 18th and 19th rounds of the National Sample Survey were ^{devoted} to the same subject (which years?) though the data are not yet available.

The statisticians and economists naturally differ on the definitions of agricultural or rural labour and depending upon the definitions used, the estimates of persons involved differ.

The Commission is concerned with labour (1) which is primarily

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unorganised, (2) which has little means of livelihood other than its personal labour and (3) which is basically unskilled. All statistical sources agree that about 3 crores of workers fall in this category. This Conference is concerned with them and their families. The problem is so stupendous that a few lakhs more or less will not affect its nature nor the nature of the solution we can offer. I, therefore, suggest that we should not spend much time in a discussion of the precise estimate of the number of persons involved.

Instead we should concentrate attention on the solution to the economic problem, namely, the problem of providing full-time, regular and adequately gainful employment. The problem has been discussed for the last almost twenty years. I shall briefly summarise, for your convenience, the main solutions put forward.

Because rural labour is predominantly agricultural labour, land reform has often been advocated as a possible solution to the economic problem of employment. Land reform in this context consists of giving security and better terms including, in the extreme case, confirming on the tenants ownership of the land they cultivate. Apart from the difficulties of implementing land reform and particularly of giving effective protection to the socially handicapped persons, it is obvious that land reform cannot go very far in the solution to the economic problem of the class of population under consideration. The reason

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is that the persons concerned have little or no land which they cultivate on their own as owners or tenants. For the same reasons all programmes of agricultural development such as technological improvement through high-yielding varieties and increased application of water and fertilizer, have had little effect on the economic conditions of these persons because all such programmes are necessarily land-based.

Realizing this, another solution offered is to settle these people on land by giving them land. The programme of land distribution to the landless to date has made little impact on the problem. The reasons are well-known. Not enough land became available for distribution to the landless. A large part of the land thus distributed was either worthless unculturable waste or could not be brought under cultivation without a large investment which the persons concerned could not afford. Besides these practical difficulties, there are certain points of principle involved which have not been paid sufficient attention to and which this Conference may want to discuss briefly. Firstly, it is obvious that the new landholdings created by the distribution of land to the landless are bound to be very small falling in the category of uneconomic and non-viable holdings. A large number of such holdings already exist; their problem, particularly the manner in which they affect the agricultural development on land under their command

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are well-known. It is therefore, worth considering whether it is advisable to increase their number by distributing land to the landless. Secondly, it is equally obvious that a large part of the land which will become available for distribution will be of inferior quality and will require large capital investment. Therefore unless, along with the distribution of land to the landless, we are willing to give large assistance for purposes of land-development, it should be examined whether it would not be advisable to leave such lands in the possession of those who have the means to undertake the necessary land development. Finally, we should ask whether it is in the interest of the persons concerned to settle them on inadequate land-holdings. Such land-holdings tend to bind the persons to the land and, as labour, keep them permanently unorganized without giving them adequate incomes. It seems that to solve the problem of gainful employment of these persons a certain degree of mobility and the possibility of organizing them in suitable organizations are essential.

A third solution often suggested is to give these persons subsidiary occupations such as dairying and poultry which will give them supplementary income. The suggestion is old and was made at a time when not enough was known about the problems of dairy and poultry development. It was then believed that dairy and poultry could be developed by somebody's maintaining an odd cow and a couple of birds. Recent experience has shown that this is not true; that

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both the industries require a minimum size for economic and efficient management. It has also become clear that both the industries are not only subsidiary to agriculture but are in fact land-based. This makes it difficult for a landless person to maintain an odd cow and a few birds and remain in a competitive position alongside larger dairy and poultry units developed as an integral part of agriculture.

The three proposals, namely land reform, land distribution and subsidiary occupations such as dairy and poultry, as solutions to the problem of the landless, have one common feature namely that all the three seek a solution to the problem within agriculture. That is also the reason why they are not feasible solutions. At the root of the problem of the landless labour is the fact of over-population in agriculture. The land is already burdened with too large a population and there is little room for more persons to be taken in, whatever the means one proposes.

Two solutions have been sought outside agriculture. One is to offer employment in the traditional hand industries. This has failed to achieve any economic results because of a failure to realize, or recognize, the economic implications of the very weak technological base of these industries, the difficulties of transferring traditional skills to new recruits and the immense organizational effort necessary to establish them alongside the organized sector and to protect them from competition from that sector. A second and more promising line of action has been to create and provide employment in a

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programme of rural works. The programme has failed to make any impression because its conception was feeble and execution indifferent. It is realized that a works programme massive enough to make an impression on the situation will require organizing the surplus labour in appropriate labour organizations equipped with tools, transport and camping equipment so that it may be moved from work to work, wherever useful work is available. However, there is reluctance even to contemplate the organizational effort needed. Consequently, in spite of much talk, little was attempted and less achieved in creating and providing gainful employment in a massive programme of rural works.

Two other solutions have been attempted one by definition and the other by legislation. Interminable, unsympathetic and even callous, discussion has gone on with regard to the definitions of unemployment, under-employment and disguised unemployment implying that if we cannot define and measure, possibly the phenomenon does not exist or at any rate, until we can define and measure, we cannot devise and attempt any solution. This is sheer callousness. Scores of people are seen everywhere who are undernourished and who live below a minimal subsistence that may be defined even in a poor country. This should be sufficient evidence to show that they are not employed in a manner which would give them adequate living. Whatever the academic definitions of unemployment, under-employment and disguised unemployment, what these people badly want is a regular

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and dependable employment which would give them adequate subsistence.

The other solution is by legislation. The Minimum Wages Act of 1948 in its application to agricultural labour is a classic example of a legislation with no operative content whatever. In the nature of things, the legislation cannot be enforced for we are here concerned with a labour market which is unorganised, irregular and where the labour is at complete mercy of the employer. The only known method of enforcing a minimum price in such a market is by means of an undertaking to purchase whatever is offered at the declared minimum price or in other words by treating the minimum price as the support price. This is now practised with several agricultural commodities such as sugar, cotton and grains. But no one has thought of doing the same for agricultural labour. It requires declaring a national minimum wage, which may differ from region to region / if necessary, laying down conditions of work but the undertaking to employ all the labour that is offered at that wage and under those conditions. Much meaningless discussion on the definition and measurement of unemployment, which is another name for over-supply, of labour is the result of a failure to realize that unemployment or over-supply is not an absolute concept but is to be defined in relation to a price such as a minimum wage. If such a national minimum is declared and the responsibility is undertaken to employ all the labour that is offered at that wage, we shall immediately get an estimate of the size of the problem which has to be tackled.

Presently, the policy maker is unwilling to allow the

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problem to come to surface in this form and with its full implications. Instead, solution is sought in the overall economic development of the country. There can be no doubt that the ultimate solution lies in the overall economic development. But it takes time. Can we do anything in the meanwhile to feed these people somewhat better than at present, to improve their physical efficiency and to employ them in some productive activity in the economy so that they may participate in the process of economic development rather than wait for it? This is the question before us and I urge that we face it squarely and honestly.

We should bear in mind the following lessons of our past experience in this matter:

(1) The solution to the problem of unemployment has to be found outside agriculture.

(2) Though the ultimate solution to the problem lies in overall economic development and expansion of industry, transitional employment can be created in a massive programme of rural works comprising roads, irrigation, soil conservation, afforestation and such other works.

(3) Such useful works cannot be found in each local area or everywhere near the homes of the people concerned. Therefore, arrangement must be made to move the people where work exists and move them from work to work.

(4) It must be recognized that a long process of malnutrition has reduced the physical efficiency of most of the people concerned to a lower level so that, in their present

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physical state, they are incapable of earning their own minimum subsistence. Hence steps must be taken to improve their physical efficiency through scientific feeding, exercising and training.

(5) It is impossible to enforce a minimum wage without somebody undertaking to offer employment to all those who are willing to work for that wage.

Let me now request the Conference to deliberate on the problem with a sense of urgency which has been lacking in our discussion of the problem in the past.

23rd December, 1968.

Sd/-

V.M. Dandekar

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Proceedings of the opening Session of the
Conference on Agricultural Labour dated
December 23, 1968.

1. The Member Secretary read out a message from Chairman of the National Commission on Labour (copy enclosed).
2. Mr. B. Sivaraman, Secretary of Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperation delivered his inaugural address (copy enclosed).
3. The Chairman of the Conference, Mr. V.M. Dandekar in his opening address or introductory speech posed 'Principal' issues before the Conference (copy enclosed).
4. The Chairman called upon the participants to have preliminary discussion and decide on the procedure to be followed. He stressed that the participants should resist the temptation of discussing issues such as land reforms and intensive development of agriculture on their own ground and should consider the relevance of what they would discuss in the context of the possible solutions of problems of agricultural and rural labour.
5. Shri R.K. Patil observed that the Chairman had pointed to a solution of the problem which was characterised by four essentials. The first was that the solution should be outside agriculture. The second was that there should be enough employment in rural works, and that there should be arrangements for moving the people to areas where work exists, and lastly, that arrangements should be made for proper nutrition of these people so that they were physically well off.
6. If such a programme is really undertaken on a large scale it will solve the problem. But there are practical difficulties and there are also financial and political handicaps in undertaking such a programme. Pending this the urgency of seeking solution by way of land distribution should be kept in view.
7. The problem of agricultural labour is both social and economic. In order of priority and in point of urgency the economic problem is of greater importance than the social problem. A thorough programme of land distribution should be undertaken to find a solution to the problem, no doubt, there are political difficulties. There is a recommendation in the papers prepared by the Commission that the ceiling on land holdings should have been on the basis of families rather than of individuals. The legislation has already adopted the basis of individuals enabling the partitions to be effected..

To give an example of ceiling legislation in one State, the date of imposition of the ceiling was put off so that additional partition could be made. We have recently seen the spectacle of Chief Ministers of States opposing the agricultural income tax. In view of this it will not be possible politically to undertake a programme of land distribution; even so land distribution alone would at one stroke solve social and economic problems, and the problem of rehabilitation too.

8. Absentee landlords own the best lands. Compensation paid to them in lieu of their intermediaries' returns was not liberal. If liberal compensation at the current market rate is provided, it will be easy to release good lands and lands in sufficient quantity for a very considerable portion of the landless. Thus we will also solve the problem of rehabilitation and the absentee landlordism. Absentee landlords have some other avenues of employment as residents in urban areas. The rehabilitation programme could also be supported by progressive recoveries from those to whom the lands are allotted. Totalitarian steps by large scale expropriation and liquidation of a class are not possible in a democratic context; the democratic counterpart of the process could be planned diversion through appropriate compensation. This would not be a problem of a large magnitude. If we have the will, it is possible of achievement.
9. There could be two approaches to the problem of agricultural labour. One is the community approach whereby the problem is to be tackled at the village basis. Rural labour in the village belongs to the village which is primarily responsible to look after his welfare. This approach looks upon the village resources as belonging to the village or as at least being under the control of the village. This is essentially the philosophy underlined in the Gramdan; a reference to this is available in the record of the interviews with the Acharya.
10. The second approach looks at the problem of agricultural labour as a class in the national context under the Five Year Plan. It means creating more employment opportunities for unskilled agricultural labour, land reform, securing greater mobility for them and diverting them if possible to locations away from the village.
11. These two approaches are not completely contradictory. For instance, the village organisation could be used as an agency and this is a factor common to both the approaches. Yet the two approaches are basically different. We have to decide which one we have to adopt.

12. For examination of our problems it may be useful to draw upon the experiences of more developed countries. The Secretariat should be congratulated for having prepared excellent material for our discussion. It is important how we should meet the situation where we cannot support agricultural workers, extra labour throughout the year except during the peak season. This problem is not peculiar to our country. It should be found out how countries in similar situations tackled this problem. It would be worth-while to study the history of their development for this purpose. Both aspects of the problem need study; how the developing countries tackle the problem today and how they tackled it in the past. In Japan about 50% of the total labour force was agricultural, though it is not so now.
13. Agriculture provides at least a seasonal occupation. Every country must necessarily have what is known as farmers' holiday when the work is slack.
14. Shri S.R. Das observed that the problem of agricultural labour is both economic and social. The social aspect of the question is more important. It is said that social conditions of agricultural labour would automatically improve with the improvement of economic conditions. This is not so. Before economic development is taken up social development must be tackled. The lot of Scheduled Caste people has in no way improved. The legislative protection has not been implemented because of poor execution of the policies. Untouchability is still a chronic problem. Agricultural workers are huddled together in settlements away from villages and the existence of a separate nucleus and their isolation which is a stigma on Hinduism create many problems. Even though untouchability has been abolished by the Constitution on paper, in practice it has been eating into the vitals of Hinduism. This conference should seriously think about this question and about remedial measures which are possible and practicable.
15. Shri L.P. Chatterjee, Secretary, Labour, Government of Uttar Pradesh, said that the problem of agricultural labour and payment of wages are not merely question of surplus labour and wages. It is a much bigger question, and it really involves the rehabilitation of the poorer classes of the country. India lives in villages and the large number of surplus people are living in the villages. There is no justification for treating agricultural labour as separate from other categories of labour. The difficulties faced by them are part of the larger problem of poverty of the country. Therefore we must seek to tackle the question of removing this poverty and distress of millions of people living in villages who have no work to do.

16. In the present social set up, we may not be in a position to do justice to this question. Nowhere in the world has a bureaucratic set up succeeded in doing justice to the cause of the people. We need a more drastic type of changes.
17. We are handicapped by certain policies thrust upon us; take for instance, the ceiling legislation. People now talk of bigger farms, mechanised cultivation, more production and all that. Yet we insist on distributing land to the people. If we succeed in giving half a bigha of land to a family, that is enough. But this is not going to solve the economic problem of the country.
18. Intensive agriculture will provide more opportunities for employment. Industries will also provide job opportunities to many but that alone will not solve the problem. If we go on multiplying as we are doing, how will opening of new industries help? Unless we devise a system by which the problem of the economic development can be considered at one place, as an integrated whole, we will not go far.
19. Mr. Das, Labour Secretary to Government of Assam, felt that the problem of agricultural labour is not very acute in Assam because surplus agricultural labour as such does not exist there. Most of the labour own their own lands. Only some districts have surplus agricultural labour.
20. Wages now prevailing are higher than the minimum wages.
21. The solution of the problems faced by agricultural labour should not be found outside agriculture. Joint family system very much exists in all States. It is so in Assam too. This means that the income of a family is more or less pooled. We may have to arrange to supplement the income of the joint family of the women through employment on cottage industries as in Japan. Solution can not be found entirely within the land system and land reform alone.
22. There is also the problem about organisation of agricultural labour who are surplus and economically backward. It is therefore the duty of the society to organise some bodies which may pinpoint their grievances in the right manner.
23. Some of the acts passed by the Parliament for rural community are lopsided. Under the Act labourer or labourer's family can be given homestead land. But there are so many snags in this. Something should be done to make legislation straightforward and easy of implementation.

24. The problem of the agricultural labour varies from place to place and from season to season. It varies from place to place in the same State, and the problem is different in different seasons. For instance, agricultural labour in the peak agricultural season is on the top. He is the master of the situation during the peak season, but at other times he is really at the mercy of landlords. The real problem is to find work for the slack season. There is scope for this not only in industry but also in developing agriculture. All this taken together would provide the best solution.
25. It would not be possible to help these people in the backward areas through the Panchayats or through people's representatives; only a strong administration will be able to help. It is unfair to say that the administration will not be able to deliver the goods, in all cases.
26. Secretary(Labour), Mysore, observed that the problem of amelioration of agricultural labour would have to be tackled essentially on the economic rather than the social plane, because without economic content, social status is meaningless. The problem has been identified and it is one of unemployment and underemployment. Some suggestions have been made for tackling the problem of unemployment in rural areas. There are limitations to it. The question of redistributing land in the rural areas through imposing ceilings is inconsistent with our programme of distribution of greater inputs, better investment and improving the quality of agriculture simultaneously. If ceilings are imposed, the size of agricultural holding will be reduced, and the land will be distributed to the persons who do not have the means of doing economic cultivation. As families of these people grow, uneconomic holdings will become more uneconomic. The land which is available for redistribution is of the poorer quality of land. Better lands are being taken away, and therefore any solution in the direction of re-distribution of the lands and resettlement of landless agricultural labour would be limited.
27. Therefore we will have to think of providing them with alternative employment through organising them into a "land army" and keeping them moving from place to place. This has, however, some limitations. There would not be continuity of employment because of paucity of funds, and the question of priorities in the application of the funds would come in.
28. Another inherent handicap of rural manpower is that it is not so mobile. There is reluctance on the part of persons even to move to the next village. It was found during the Mysore famine that they were not willing to move to places even within eight miles. We may have

therefore to think in terms of settling persons in some kind of industry such as small-scale and cottage industries. The question of settling them in industries has to be looked at in the broader context of the unemployment situation in the country as a whole. If we have to tackle unemployment in rural areas, this question cannot be divorced from that of unemployment in the urban areas. These have to be tackled by means of labour-based rather than capital-based solutions.

29. Mysore State has promulgated fixed minimum wages under the Minimum Wages Act. The wages actually paid are much higher than the minimum wages. But this situation prevails during the peak seasons. The labour then is able to dictate terms to the landowners. But during the off-season they get lower wages, and enforcement of minimum wages in the rural areas poses its own problem. We do not have organisation to enforce these minimum wages. In fact, even the collection of information about the prevailing wages in these areas is difficult, and such information as we are able to gather is not hundred percent accurate. Purely legislative approach by framing certain laws would not improve the conditions of labour.
30. The problem of improving the conditions of agricultural labour is part of the larger question of rural development, as a whole. Such amenities as drinking water, housing, health facilities have been provided to all including agricultural labour. Many facilities have been provided in rural areas with the progress of community development schemes and the establishment of primary health centres all over the country. We may safely omit this part of the question from deliberations and should concentrate more upon how to find gainful employment in rural areas for people who are not employed and how to secure better wages for them for the major part of the year, through some sort of an organisation of rural workers rather than try to get laws promulgated and secure its implementation.
31. Shri Shivaraman Krishna, Deputy Secretary, Maharashtra Government, stated that nobody had any clear idea of how far the Government was committed to improving the lot of vast sections of the population. Nobody has spelt out what priority we have to accord to this problem and what portion of the available resources is to be allocated.
32. Mr. Ramaswamy Naidu, Coimbatore, Madras State, spoke of the problems of a very dry area where they have to go hundred feet deep to get water, and where most small agricultural land owners suffer much worse than the agricultural labour. They cannot irrigate

the land because they have dry land which depends upon the rainfall. If the monsoon fails the entire family suffers. It is very difficult for them to move away leaving their small land.

33. The agricultural labour is unorganised. They do not keep to the timings; they come at late hours and work for a few hours only. If they concentrate on work in the season, there would be no difficulty in completing cultivation in time. It is difficult for the labour to be absorbed in any other industry, and they also migrate from one place to another in the locality because of these difficulties. The Government must come forward to formulate big schemes around farm industries. Then alone will they be able to get the facilities like industrial work. Agricultural labour must have some bargaining power. It would be possible to organise the labour and to introduce Provident Fund and Saving Schemes for them. In some areas they can get permanent employment at least during the slack season.
 34. The programme for the following two days was agreed upon.
 35. Director proposed a Vote of Thanks.
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Proceedings of the Conference on Agricultural Labour.

Date: 24.12.1968.

Time : 11. A.M. to 11.30 A.M.

The Chairman in his opening remarks observed that there are two or three aspects of the problem posed to the Conference. Agricultural labour be includes landless labour, and very small cultivators. Should there be a distinction between these two categories? It has to be considered whether priority should be given to making available some land to those who are landless or to small cultivators who should be allotted more land to make their small holdings viable. The second point related to the ceiling in land holding and its rigorous enforcement. Some people believe that ceiling inhibits the process of agricultural development. One alternative that can be suggested is that we should create a category of registered farms which should be exempted from the limit of ceiling but should attract all other legislative protection of labour. The third point is about bonded labour as it exists in different parts of the country.

2. A clarification was sought on the point whether this was a conference for agricultural labour or of agricultural labour. If the conclusions arrived at in this conference are to be acceptable by the people for whom they are meant, it was necessary that the representatives of agricultural labour should be represented in this conference. The resolutions to be passed now by the conference cannot be taken as those accepted by the agricultural labour. The Chairman explained that the conference was not an independent conference in itself but had been convened by the National Commission on Labour to advise and assist that body in formulating its recommendations. The conference was for the agricultural labour and not of agricultural labour. The accent in the discussion would be on the solutions which were administratively feasible. For this purpose consultations as in the representatives of the State Governments who are ultimately to administer the programmes is necessary.

3. The representative from Ministry of Food and Agriculture observed that the problem was one of diversification of agricultural activities so as to provide more employment opportunities for agricultural labour. In regard to land reforms we have tended to exaggerate the place given to agricultural labour within the framework of ceiling laws. Ceiling on land did not yield much land for distribution to the landless. Under

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successive plans the slogan of 'land to the tiller' has now given place to 'land to landless'. Setting of large number of agricultural labour on small patches of land which are not economically viable offers no solution to the problem. Surplus land available for distribution should be given to those who have already some lands, but which does not provide employment throughout the year and sufficient earnings. We should not tie down the labour to a small strip of land which will not provide adequate employment and income and make him immobile.

4. There is no single solution for agricultural labour. Though a few lakhs of families have been settled on land, it touches only the fringe of the problem and offers no solution.

5. The definition of agricultural labour should be enlarged to cover cultivators viz. small holdings also.

6. There are no rigid criteria to decide the optimum size of the holding. It should take into account a number of factors such as the facilities for irrigation and availability of inputs etc. If these facilities are available to a moderate extent a piece of 3 to 5 acres of land can be considered optimum. Even in the matter of ceiling because of variation in the availability of facilities such as irrigation etc, different State Governments have laid down different ceilings. A holding of 5 acres may not be economical in the first few years but eventually when improvements take place, it can provide sufficient income and employment.

7. The solution of the problem of agricultural labour lies in a number of complementary programmes such as intensive farming, multiple cropping, mechanisation, provision of irrigation facilities by setting a large number of pump sets and tube wells, use of improved varieties and insecticides etc. Agricultural labour needs to be made oriented to these skills. This will provide him employment opportunities in a large number in nearby areas.

8. Another possibility has been opened up by marketing complex which is developing in agricultural areas.

9. As regards redistribution of land we should consider what should be the basis for it. Firstly, priority should be given to the landless labour, and to those who have already settled down in the agricultural sector. Secondly, the land is to be distributed on payment or on loan or free. It is also to be considered whether a potential buyer has the money to purchase the land.

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10. We have some experience of distribution of land under the Bhoodan Movement in Maharashtra.. In the country 20 lakh acres of land have been distributed. In Vidarbha alone Bhoodan people have distributed about 80,000 acres of land. The procedure followed for the distribution of land is this. Available land is distributed in parcels on the basis that it should provide sufficient food to the allottee in a year. Persons in a village assemble, the lots are drawn and the gathering itself selects the persons considered worthy of allotment.

11. A survey was conducted by an independent agency regarding re-distributed land was better cultivated than before. On the basis of this experience we should only lay down broad principles, and the actual distribution of land may better be left to the villagers themselves. We cannot lay down uniform principles for distribution of land to the landless and agricultural labour. But there are certain principles according to which land can be distributed and redistributed. The persons who need most should be given priority. In villages where factions exist, this should be done under a supervisory authority.

12. Allotment of the land belonging to the absentee landlords may not hamper mobility as well as production to a great extent. The farm land should be redistributed according to planned scheme after purchasing it out-right. There will be no difficulty in purchasing the land because cultivator of every economic holding will be willing to part with the land if he is assured a proper and reasonable price for his land. Similarly persons with surplus land will gladly part with it after imposition of land ceilings. The land so acquired should be given to the persons who need it most for the upkeep of their families on payment of the price which should be recovered in easy instalments. Alternatively the land can be given on reasonable rent. Hitherto acquisition of farm land has bogged down because of arbitrary fixation of very low price of land or rent. This procedure will contribute towards acquiring the land from those who are absentee landlords or those who have uneconomic holdings and have no interest in cultivation.

13. The income of the rural labour will also increase by providing alternative occupations for them elsewhere. These occupations should be attractive enough for the land owners to leave their native place and move to the place of alternative employment opportunities.

14. In Madras the Madras Land Reforms (Fixation of Ceiling on land) Act, 1961, was enacted with a view to increasing agricultural production and promoting social and economic justice. Under Section V of the Act, the ceiling area of a family consisting of five members is 30 standard acres, for every additional member 5 additional standard acres of land can be added subject to a maximum of 60 standard acres for the family as a whole. So far 34,000 acres of land have been acquired under the Act. According to rule 5 of

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the Act, the following categories of persons are eligible for allotment of surplus land and are entitled to get preference in the following order. (i) a person who has completely disposed of his holding by virtue of the provisions of the Act, (ii) a person whose extent of holding is reduced below 3 standard acres held by him partly as cultivating tenant and partly as owner or wholly as cultivating tenant, (iii) a person who is or who has been a member of the Armed Forces, (iv) a cooperative farming society, the members of which are landless agricultural labourers or landless persons or a combination of both, (v) a landless agricultural labour who is likely to engage himself in direct cultivation, (vi) a landless person who is likely to engage himself in direct cultivation, and (vii) a cultivating tenant who is holding land but the area is less than 5 standard acres.

15. There has been a great rush of persons in Madras State for getting land in their name but they do not have enough of land for those clamouring for it. While redistributing land the one important fact should be taken into consideration is that the greater the number of small sized holdings, the lesser will be the chances for applying necessary inputs which are absolutely essential for increasing production. This is illustrated by the size of land holdings in districts of Tanjore and Salem. Tanjore has a larger number of well-to-do farmers and the production is higher; Salem has a larger number of small farmers who are also agricultural labour, and the production is lower. Therefore two points have to be considered. Firstly, land distribution should not lead to the rise in number of uneconomic holdings; and secondly we should aim at increased agricultural production which would automatically provide additional employment opportunities in agriculture itself.

16. In Kerala no land is available for distribution to the landless. The hunger for land is so great that the people have started encroaching on forests. Such people should be settled elsewhere outside the State, even in border areas. This will not affect production. Even 3 to 5 cents of land is given to the farmer to secure him a foothold. If they are given land in border areas the territorial mobility will increase but the movement from one industry to another industry will not be affected. Occupational diversification is necessary for solving the problem of unemployment and under unemployment.

17. The colonisation schemes have not been successful. About 2000 families from Kerala were settled in Madhya Pradesh, where they were provided with irrigation and credit facilities. Later these agricultural families abandoned the area. This should not deter us from making further efforts in this direction.

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18. The representative of the United Trade Union Congress spoke about land ceiling. During the three Plans imposition of ceilings has been considered. Firstly ceiling was fixed on family basis, thereafter it was fixed on individual basis. In fact redistribution of land alone is not the remedy. Development of industries by itself cannot be a solution. There is also recognition that there is not enough land available. Whatever is available should be taken and cultivated within the framework of cooperative or collective farming, and an integrated development of industry and agriculture should be undertaken for solving the problem. Thus surplus labour can be gainfully employed.

19. It is not correct to say that the labour will be tied down to a piece of land and this will affect mobility. For instance in Japan, old parents look after the family farming and young members of the family go out to factories for employment thereby supplementing family means and raising their standard of living.

20. Similarly, it is not correct to say the production is affected to a significant extent because of absentee landlordism. Disabled persons are also absentees.

21. Entire village land should be treated as a compact block and placed at the disposal of a cooperative or should be cultivated collectively. This undoubtedly solves many problems but will give rise to many others which will have to be carefully solved. No country has taken drastic steps for the distribution of land. We should give priorities in the distribution of land and should give it to those who are half fed. As we do not have enough of land for redistribution, a majority of the landless will have to be left out. The person who does not have land is not better off and for him alternative employment other than agriculture will have to be provided.

22. The Chairman summarised the several points as follows: (i) solution should be sought within agriculture by way of redistribution of surplus land, land reforms, (ii) the existing ceiling legislation should be made more rigorous and effective, (iii) land should be purchased at a market rate for redistribution- (iv) each State Government has framed some rules and laid down an order of priorities for redistribution, and an agency for redistribution (v) mobility- a little possession of land gives social status to the holder but also affect his mobility. A landless worker may move out for land or work outside the State but the same may not make a land holder mobile and (vi) colonisation programmes have been generally very expensive and often disastrous failures .

23. In States like Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh surplus lands are available for redistribution. In Rajasthan mobility and method of distribution of land were mentioned as the two main issues.

There are vast arid areas and deserts; there are only 1.4% of agricultural labour and 33% of this population are cultivators. There is no problem of agricultural labour as such. The State has undertaken ambitious land development programmes consequent upon availability of irrigation facilities. So far distribution of land is concerned, the State itself should take up farming in the beginning. Later the land should be cultivated on cooperative basis, and the ownership of land may then be vested in the persons who really till it. The redistribution should be done in such a way that the persons residing in nearer areas where surplus land is available should be given preference. Second preference should go to persons who are able to move within the State. Lastly, if such people do not want to cultivate the land it should go to the people outside the State.

24. The Rajasthan Government did not have a happy experience about mobility. Recently they required 20,000 labour for the Rajasthan Canal, but the local labour was hostile to movement within the State.

25. If there is no landless labour there will be shortage of agricultural labour.

26. There is no shortage of labour at projects such as Koraput in Orissa and Kota in Rajasthan. But there is shortage of labour for the agricultural operations or schemes. A reason for this is security of jobs available in industrial projects.

27. In Koraput in Orissa, they have surplus land. In spite of the need for assistance to cultivators from outside for agricultural operations, there is no mobility of labour. Labour from different parts of the country do not want to come there. Surplus land be given to the 'land-poor' than to the landless because the 'land-poor' is neither here nor there. He has to depend on the land or go out. The Scheduled Castes would be completely shut out if priority is given to the 'land-poor' and not to the landless.

28. As a result of land legislation possibly two lakhs of acres of land would be available for distribution whereas we have over a crore of persons who need to be provided employment. In the light of this limitation it will be advisable to devote more time and attention to finding out alternative employment. Moreover, distribution will also give rise to the problem of fragmentation and uneconomic holdings will also arise.

29. The ownership of the land on which the house of the agricultural labour stand should be given to him. This would increase his bargaining power, and he would be less amenable to exploitation. He can take up dairy farming to supplement his income. After all a cow cannot be kept and supported except on a piece of land.

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Cooperative marketing society should be set up to sell the produce on the lines of the one functioning in a block at Varanasi which also gives credit to the people besides marketing their milk.

30. Ceilings on holdings should be vigorously enforced. In canal irrigated areas the quantum of land should be reduced and surplus land which has benefited at the cost of the Government should be given to the problems of landless labour. There should be finality about the

31. The representative of the Ministry of Agriculture pointed out the fallacy in the argument that ceiling laws will solve the ceilings, and the uncertainty about their implementation should end for the sake of production. The State Government can reclassify the dry lands as irrigated lands and implement the ceilings. But they cannot go on reducing the size of the holdings indefinitely. The emphasis should shift from the size of the holdings to productivity.

32. Something should be done to find out the optimum size of the holdings in relation to agricultural prices. Once this optimum is found, ceiling laws should be very vigorously implemented.

33. Alternative employment should also be found for agricultural labour.

34. Mobility of labour, ceiling on holdings and consolidation of holdings are long-term solutions. Something to be done in the coming five years should be thought of.

35. Ceiling laws should be rigidly enforced and the limit should be the family rather than the individual. Certain loopholes in Bihar enactment have led to the resumption of land by the cultivator resulting in the eviction of share-croppers. This is because of the provision in the Bihar Act that cultivators can resume the land.

36. Distribution of land should be from haves to have-nots. In Guntur District in 1921 the Missionaries alone were responsible for distribution of 14,000 acres land to the landless. Besides the Missionaries, the Government distributed the land among the landless. But such land could not be retained by the allottee and these were sold out to the influential neighbouring cultivators under 'benami' transactions. Even in case of cooperative land societies, the land has gone to influential persons. Even if 50 acres of waste or barren land is allotted to cooperative society for five years it does not give any return. The State Farming is the best solution.

37. The Chairman summed up the discussion in the afternoon as follows :-

(i) The present agricultural development programme under the new strategy should be pursued, extended and intensified. Intensive agriculture will mean more employment. Within this strategy greater attention should be paid to small land holders and they should be assured adequate supply of credit and inputs.

(ii) The basic problem is shortage of land. The ceiling legislations have not yielded enough surplus lands as was expected at the time of their framing. The existing ceiling legislation should be rigorously enforced.

(iii) Lowering of ceiling was not favoured. It was felt that nothing should be done to upset the capability of the intermediate category of cultivators who have been able to take advantage of the new agricultural strategy and make use of inputs and credit on an adequate scale to increase food production. Agriculture now seems to be getting off the ground. Ceiling can be automatically lowered in new irrigation areas where dry lands is converted to be on irrigable land. But Lowering of ceiling generally in the immediate future will be a disincentive to agricultural production. Even if some lands are available for redistribution as a result of the enforcement of ceiling, it will have to be parcelled out into small holdings which will hardly be of any use of to small farmers who may not be able to retain them. Moreover, any further amendments of land or ceiling legislation may create constitutional difficulties as has been illustrated in a case pertaining to Orissa pending in the Supreme Court. However, the implication of changing the basis of ceiling from the individual to the family may be explored.

(iv) There was much support for the suggestion for purchase of lands from people voluntarily offering to sell their lands at a better price.

(v) The State Governments have laid down principles for redistribution of lands according to certain priorities. Redistribution should continue to be made by existing agencies according to local conditions.

(vi) Sufficient land is not available in areas where it is most needed; on the other hand, land is available in some States for settlement of rural labour from other States. The colonisation or land settlement schemes for agricultural labour from other States should be more actively pursued and should be assisted with enough capital assistance. These schemes may include land development and should be provided with better amenities. These should also provide for adequate security of tenure for the newly settled.

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National Commission on Labour

Proceedings of the Conference on Agriculture Labour.

Date: 24.12.1968.

Time: 3.00 P.M. to 3.45 P.M.

Agriculture also covers works of land development. Labour is employed on these works partly through contractor and partly through departmental agencies. If we enlist a sizeable number of labour force, we are not in a position to provide continuous employment to them.

2. Every time there is a cut in the plan, the first casualty is construction work. The persons who are in need of employment are directly affected. There is a feeling that there is not enough work but this is not correct. An organisation by which workers can be discovered, planned and executed will have to be set up,

3. Possibilities of employment in labour intensive and hand-craft industries should be explored.

4. During the agricultural season there is no shortage of work, but there may be shortage of labour. The problem exists only in the 'off season'. Labour consists of all types of labour i.e. available for whole-time, part-time, women, children, non-agricultural labour, agricultural labour, etc. Therefore, the programmes should be such as to cater to the needs of all categories. The "self-employed class" such as artisans and craftsmen have of course to be treated on a different footing.

5. Hand industries such as hand-pounding of rice, collection of straw, etc. employ a large number of unskilled labour. In this connection, efforts had been made by different agencies to provide work opportunities without any coordination between them; the effort by one department undercuts that by other department. What is required is a co-ordinated approach to create work opportunities. There has been no definite policy in this respect so far. There should be a national policy for employment and a national policy for wages.

6. There are technological problems of these industries. We should aim at a technology which guarantees a minimum wage and should not go in for inferior technology. In rural industries, the main cost is the wage cost. In order to compete with the organised industry it is necessary to keep the prices low, and this can be possible only by

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cutting down the wage cost. Therefore, wages in rural industries remain suppressed.

7. In spite of all these efforts in the last 40 years and the support from the Government which heavily subsidise khadi during the last 20 years, no progress has been made under rural industries. Employment is a laudable objective but not at the cost of wages.

8. There is also the question of the scale on which the production takes place. It is necessary to keep in view the fact that the particular kind of goods produced in these industries caters to the market. There is no point in subsidising an industry which cannot stand on its own leg.

9. As mentioned at page 167 of the paper relating to Gujarat circulated by the Commission, enforcement of minimum wages results in less employment.

10. The experience in respect of the rural industry in Gujarat is not unhappy. The new Ambar Charkha with 6 spindles has with subsidy enabled a worker to earn Rs. 2.00 on an average per day for working 8 hours a day. Sometimes they actually get Rs. 2.65 to Rs. 2.85. On the basis of this experience, there is hope that it will be possible to provide work in the villages during the off season.

11. In areas close to developed towns and cities agricultural labour is tempted to seek employment in cities, rather than in rural areas. Youngsters who stay in the villages treat with contempt the work in the fields. Only those who have no other employment stick to the work in the field. The only solution is to mechanise agriculture, improve its methods and make it attractive. Big farms and mechanised farms provide employment and also ensure that workers are able to get higher wages which will obviate the necessity of their running to the cities.

12. It may not be possible ^{to} fix uniform minimum wages everywhere because the habits of the people, their methods of work, their ways of living differ.

13. There should be an agency at the block level, which should register all available agricultural labour and provide employment on construction work, decilting of tanks, repairs of roads, deepening of wells, etc. This agency should take over some of the activities at the block development level. Through this agency it will be possible to change the habits of the people, and inculcate in them punctuality. Discipline can also be inculcated among them by a certain amount physical training and drilling.

The agency should undertake setting up of small industries such as cotton ginning etc. for the purpose of providing employment.

14. The important thing now is to know if there are people who would like to work in the fields on minimum wages. If the minimum wages, the minimum conditions of work - 8 hours of work, the right to employ on any job at any job nearer or farther etc. - are laid down there may be many people who will come forward to offer their labour on these conditions.

15. The experience has been that people come forward only during the off season. Therefore, the rural problem is one of finding employment during the off season. If fair wages and welfare measures as in the industry are offered there will be ample opportunity to attract labour.

16. At the time of Chinese aggression there was a large drive for recruitment of persons by the army. Out of the people who volunteered for employment it is said that a large number were found to be below standard. Feeding camps had to be opened for such persons for three or four months to enable them to come up to the standard. No estimate of the persons rejected by the Defence Ministry is available, but probably some half a million young men came forward for war service for wages which amounted to probably less than Rs. 1000 a year.

17. The Government should finance a scheme by which any number of workers will be employed provided they are willing to accept work anywhere. A large number of workers should be forthcoming.

18. In Kerala cashew industry which offers employment for six months the workers do not bother about finding employment in the off season. According to some measures adopted recently they are paid very well for their work during these six months and the wages are something like Rs. 3.00 for female and Rs. 4.50 for male worker.

19. The minimum wages should be fixed with a bias towards the fair wages.

20. Wages in peak season and in labour shortage will pose no problem. We should fix minimum wages for slack season and enforce them through an appropriate machinery.

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21. Continuity of employment in agriculture poses the real problem. Its intensity and gravity varies in irrigated and unirrigated areas and peak and off season periods. In agriculture besides self-employed people there is another class of persons known as bonded labour. This type of labour is tied down in one form or another to agriculture. These people are kept "bonded" all the year round and are paid wages either in cash or in kind. They have problems of their own.

22. How to ensure wages to the labour during the off season period? A possible remedy was suggested. In sugar industry which provides seasonal employment retaining allowance is paid to the labour for the off season. It may be possible to introduce the same system for the agricultural labour as well. It may be slightly different here because in agriculture wages are taken for the year as a whole; therefore some allowance for the full year is to be made.

23. Another suggestion for providing alternative employment during off season was establishment of hand industries on which the labour would automatically be employed when they cannot get enough work in agriculture.

24. In the matter of fixation of maximum hours of work for agricultural workers some characteristics of Indian agriculture stand in its way. During the peak agriculture seasons labour is generally required to put in maximum hours of work according to the exigencies of the operations in hand; but during off season there is not enough work in the fields and as such fixation of 8 hours of work for agricultural workers just like industrial workers is not a practicable proposition and should not be implemented rigorously.

25. The Chairman suggested two possible courses of solving the problems faced by agricultural labour. Firstly, the Government should not accept direct responsibility, instead it should encourage formation of labour cooperative and give their work if possible; distribute land where available; promote hand-industries such as Ambar Charkhas etc; but thereafter forget about the. Alternatively, the Government should come forward and accept the responsibility for providing employment to the agricultural labour under certain conditions. Pronouncement of public policy in the past require that the second approach is accepted, and at least a small beginning made to examine practical problems. If on stipulated conditions about one lakh people come forward, it should not be impossible to organize them and to give them employment.

26. The re-actions to this suggestion could be summarised as below:-

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- (i) India has a mixed economy and there is no scope for the State assuming 100% responsibility in this matter;
- (ii) In Maharashtra State small holders form a composite force. For their benefit local committees have been constituted and a flexible approach in the matter of execution of schemes for their benefit underlined so that they get their due share;
- (iii) In Bihar State agricultural labour is fully employed during the peak season but the problem is faced only during the lean months. Their requirements differ from month to month and from area to area. Their demand varies in North Bihar and South Bihar;
- (iv) From where are the funds to be found out? If funds are assured there can be no hinderance in undertaking rural and community works on a large scale for solving the problem of ~~under-employment~~ and unemployment;
- (v) the responsibility to provide employment on fixed wages may not be exceptionable if the national income can be increased;
- (vi) a minimum wage which could meet the bare needs of the worker and his family should be provided;
- (vii) a fair wage for the agricultural worker might create problems elsewhere and as such the wages should be within limits and means of the State;
- (viii) there can be no uniform rate for all industries. Different industries have different capacities to pay. Differentiation between industry and industry and between agriculture and industry will have to be made, otherwise it would be injurious;
- (ix) agriculture has its own limitations. It cannot generate continuous employment for all the persons who are dependent on it. Local job opportunities may attract labour but mobility of labour outside the village even at the same rate or a higher rate of wages may not be possible because of the prevalence of joint family system in the rural areas. The worker who is offering his labour for outside employment will have to weigh whether it would be worthwhile to leave his

native place for employment outside his village at the wages offered to him;

- (x) political pressures might work either to get the fixed wages reduced or discourage the workers from working in far off places at a meagre rate of wages. Similarly pressure will be brought to bear on other sections of the society like the educated elite who are unemployed and are not better off;
- (xi) if people are taken to far off places this will create many problems such as housing, medical facilities etc. Employment opportunities should be created within a limited radius to avoid unnecessary problems.

27. In a way the responsibility to provide employment though on a restricted scale has already been accepted. The Planning Commission has formulated a scheme for chronically drought prone areas to provide employment.

28. Tribal labour form a sizable section of the community. This labour force is generally found in forests which has been neglected so far. Development of forestry and the solution of the problems faced by these workers deserve special consideration. Some attention should be paid towards amelioration of their living and working conditions. The Study Group on Tribal Labour has taken note of this aspect.

29. The principle of giving employment to the rural workers who are unemployed or under-employed and are willing to work must be accepted and a small beginning made whereby this labour - at the lowest rung of the society - can be given continuous employment under certain minimum conditions of work during the slack period.

30. It will be possible for the State to make a beginning of the scheme which will involve not more than a lack of person and it may be expanded to 5 lakhs. During the last three Plan periods no money was allocated to this section of the population as such. During the Fourth Five Year Plan, it would be worthwhile to set apart Rs. 10 to Rs. 50 crores for this scheme. The working of the scheme may be watched and if it is not successful, we may abandon it.

31. There are many organisational, political and financial difficulties in the implementation of this programme.

32. The scheme is not new. Under Rural Works Programme over 50% contribution was available from the Centre and the rest come the State. The 50% wanted from the State is sometimes not

available by way of local contribution. If we depend on local contribution the scheme will not succeed. The Centre should, therefore, give cent per-cent aid.

33. It was pointed out that some such scheme under the State P.W.D. (NMR workers) is already in vogue in Kerala. There will be many undesirable implications of having such a labour corps. After some-time this labour may ask for additional privileges as government servants.

34. What is actually conceived is a regular programme of employment generation outside agriculture irrespective of the fact whether there is drought, famine or flood.

35. There is enough work during the peak season. The scheme can accordingly be suspended for that period.

36. It was pointed out that Rural Industries Programme can be undertaken for creating jobs but it was felt that the difficulty of the technology in such industries not earning the minimum to the worker together with the difficulty of importing skills to this class was inherent in such a programme.

37. The employment under the labour corps can be generated by taking up such works as the construction of rural houses, roads, irrigation facilities, water storage reservoirs etc.

38. In view of the scattered agricultural farms, inadequate enforcement machinery, unorganised nature of labour and lack of employment opportunities resulting in the development of a peculiar relationship between cultivator and labour, the enforcement of Minimum Wages Act in agriculture is not possible and effective.

39. In order to improve enforcement the idea of recognising registered farms was mooted. The idea is to seek an organised sector in agriculture with a view to implementing the Minimum Wages Act. The farms will consist of 30 to 40 acres which employ hired labour, subject to provisions of labour legislation including the minimum wage legislation. If the principle underlying registration is accepted and labour laws apply to these farms, then ceiling may be raised if necessary.

40. According to judgements of courts those farms which are run on business principle or for profit are amenable to industrial laws. It was stated that

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existence of laws was never in doubt. What is wanting is enforcement?

41. Since productive capacity of land varies under different conditions, the area of land should not be the criteria for registering farms. Annual income should also be taken into account in this respect.

42. In Madhya Pradesh 85% of holdings are of 15 acres. If the farms are to be registered according to the scheme the bulk of the farms would go outside the ambit of the Act. A Committee set up in the State proposed that the record of prevalent rates of wages should be maintained by Panchayats.

43. In West Bengal, there are 60 Nyaya Panchayats which are quasi-judicial bodies. They may look into complaints for non-payment of minimum wages.

44. In Kerala there is no difficulty of enforcing the minimum wages since the complaints are sponsored by the trade unions. In Tanjore district (ADAP), Collector meets the labour in the beginning of the agricultural operations for tripartite discussions and decisions. It works very well. There is a kisan organisation to work it. In Rajasthan all farms of more than 25 acres have to submit returns under the Minimum Wages Act. At present only 57 farms are submitting such returns. Two types of wages for irrigated and non-irrigated areas are provided for in the Minimum Wages Act of the State. Since Rajasthan has a vast area and certain parts are even inaccessible, the difficulty of transport stands in the way of enforcement of the Minimum Wages Act in all the areas.

45. To enforce a minimum wage in the agricultural sector is a futile exercise in view of inadequate enforcement machinery and peculiar personal relationship between cultivator and labour. However in States like Punjab, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan where wages are already above the minimum, the problem of enforcement is not acute. In other States except in peak seasons, minimum wages cannot be enforce.

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NATIONAL COMMISSION ON LABOUR

Conference on Agricultural Labour

Date:- 25.12.68.

Time:-10.00AM to 11.30A.M.

1. The Conference was in broad agreement with the diagnosis of the situation and the importance of the issues given in the working paper prepared by the Secretariate of the Commission.
2. One of the important issues raised in the paper is about the administration of the different programmes and policies having a bearing on agricultural labour. In this matter the experience with most of the States has not been very happy. The problem varies from State to State, and the institutional arrangements for dealing with the problem also differ. Traditionally, the Revenue Department in a State has been primarily responsible for agricultural labour; this department also implements famine or scarcity measures. After independence other departments such as agriculture, panchayat, cooperative, labour departments etc. have come in a big way in contact with rural population including agricultural labour. It may not be possible to prescribe a uniform institutional arrangement applicable to every State; flexibility is desirable. Moreover, the problems of agricultural labour are very much inter-linked with various aspects of development, and these two cannot be completely separated. This introduces complications. Had it been purely a question of implementing the Minimum Wages Act, the problem would have been a simple one.
3. The problem of agricultural labour require coordination at all levels, including Panchayati Raj bodies since a strong departmental agency presided over by officers with suitable experience and aptitude be created for looking after interests of weaker sections in backward areas.
4. The question of agricultural labour is basically an economic one, and as employment opportunities improve, the question will, to some extent, be automatically solved. Too many agencies are already functioning and as such creation of another agency to look after the work of the agricultural labour will amount to duplication and may not be desirable. It is better to strengthen the present

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agencies for tackling the problem of coordination.

5. We should be very clear about the policy and programmes that are to be implemented before we come to any conclusion about the agency that should be charged with the responsibility of implementing such a policy and programmes.

6. There was varying emphasis on the agency which should be primarily responsible for the administration of programmes pertaining to agricultural labour; this will depend on the situation existing in the State. The programme failed because agricultural labour was not represented on the body responsible for it. In Madras the Pannayal Protection Act gives ample power for conciliation and lays down the conciliation procedure. The Collectors will be the suitable agency for implementation of programmes; Block Development Officers cannot be associated in such a scheme because development work and enforcement of the Act should be kept separate. A tripartite Committee/machinery with representation to interests concerned was to be created given statutory powers for implementation of Minimum Wages Act and fair wages. In West Bengal there is provision for creation of conciliation boards. A committee may be set up at the State level to look after the job opportunities for agricultural labour; it may consist of the representatives of the labour, Labour Commissioner and other interested parties. In Maharashtra (Vidarbha) a non-official chairman presides over a similar body. Representatives of agricultural labour should be selected rather than elected. The panchayat samiti may also be in the picture. The creation of a separate cell in the department concerned of the State was also suggested.

7. There is need for evolving a coordinating agency at different levels because different departments are in charge of different aspects of the responsibilities which have a bearing on agricultural labour. The Minimum Wages Act must be properly implemented. The two aspects of the agricultural labour problem should be bifurcated - one the enforcement of different laws and the other development. The development aspect - it was felt - should remain with the panchayat samitis, and the enforcement of the laws should be the responsibility of the District Collector.

8. At present the problem connected with the implementation of Minimum Wages Act differs from State to State. It would be appropriate to leave to the States to decide about the agency which should be made responsible for its implementation. In some States, Labour

Department may be better placed for the task; in some other Revenue Department may be better agency. The Labour Department is concerned primarily with industrial labour. It is, therefore, not adequately equipped to deal with agricultural labour, though at a later time, this force may become organised like the industrial labour. However, the officers of the Directorate of Backward Classes (with different names in different States) should be charged with the responsibility of implementing the Minimum Wages Act. If development agencies are charged with responsibility of enforcing the Minimum Wages Act it would be looked upon with suspicion by different interests and it will also make them unpopular and hinder the process of development. Similarly it was pointed out that the experience in the implementation of social legislation through tehsildars and naib-tehsildars has not been happy.

9. In future there would not be any separate rural works programme. However, if the States desire, they could have a separate rural works programme; the Centre will not come into undertake such work. Under rural works programme, no single agency will be necessary to implement the programme, say for example, if some irrigation work is to be undertaken, Irrigation Department would be suitable and similarly for road building P.W.D. is the right agency, etc.

10. The characteristics of 'bonded labour' are;
(i) Bonded labour should best be described in terms of debt bondage for life time or in some cases hereditarily descending from father to son.
(ii) In such an arrangement the concept of payment is generally absent. The debt is seldom liquidated.
(iii) Generally such labour is given food and a small wage supplement hence there is little possibility of liquidating the debt.

11. The system is disintegrating. Nevertheless it exists in isolated pockets. In certain States legislations to overcome the system have been enacted in the past. The existing laws relating to land reforms should take note of the situation of 'bonded labour' wherever they exist. The problem should be viewed as a special phenomenon and something should be done to liquidate the system where it exists.

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Time: -12 Noon to 1.10 PM

The Chairman read out draft recommendations of the Conference for Agricultural Labour. The changes in the various paragraphs as agreed upon at the Conference are as under:-

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Para 1 to 3 no change.

Para 4. Legislation of ceilings on agricultural holdings has not made available enough land for re-distribution as it was hoped, this is partly due to inadequate enforcement of the existing legislation. A better enforcement of the existing legislation will release more land for redistribution.

Paras 5, 6 & 7. No change.

Para 8. It should be borne in mind that the success of these schemes requires large capital investment for land development and for creating essential amenities. To the extent such schemes offer opportunities for settling surplus labour from other areas, the Centre should take the initiative in the matter and its financing should be Centre's responsibility.

Para 9. No change.

Para 10. Enforcement of Minimum Wages in agriculture will help the agricultural labour. However, there are obvious difficulties of enforcement. There is little difficulty in areas where labour is in short supply and also in peak periods generally. However, in the slack season when the conditions of the labouring classes is the most acute, enforcement of minimum wages is also the most difficult. The difficulty is inherent in the situation of lack of employment and any changes or strengthening of the Administration of enforcement is not likely to improve the situation appreciably.

Paras 11, 12, 13. No change.

Para 14. The unemployment relief programme is not new. In fact it underlies the famine relief works. The obligation to provide gainful employment to distressed population including both employers and labour, has been long accepted. It should be recognised that the rural labour is in similar distress every year in slack agricultural seasons and that similar obligation to provide gainful employment to the unemployed must be accepted. A firm declaration of public policy in this matter is now overdue.

15. "Unemployment Relief Programme" should be a full-time, regular and yearly employment programme under prescribed conditions of work. If this causes any severe dislocation in agricultural operations, it can be suspended for a couple of months. The programme should be executed during the slack season.

16. A register should be opened for a year to enrol such workers who are willing to work. It was, stated that the problem is of some dimension and cannot be handled by a private agency. A voluntary agency like B.S.S. etc. was there upon suggested. But it was pointed out that leaving the problem in the hands of non-official agency will be like "tinkering with the problem of such a magnitude". Cooperative agency if alternative to B.S.S. etc. was ruled out as

this section of population is the poorest of the lot and is unable to organise itself into a cooperative. When public funds are involved government cannot be kept out of the picture. The Executive authorities should, therefore, be a public agency of appropriate level such as a district.

17. The idea of organising a labour cooperative is not new. Ideas about a land army (Bhumi Sena) have been in the air. The scheme of organising a labour force as envisaged would be as fallen. A Zila Parishad should put forward its scheme to enrol people and find out work in their area or adjoining areas and offer to execute the scheme. Finance would be the responsibility of the Centre. These schemes should be organised on a district basis and should form an integral part of the rural development plans.

A.V.

Recommendations of the Conference
for Agricultural Labour.

1. The Conference has taken note of the Working Paper on Agricultural Labour prepared by the Secretariat of the National Commission on Labour and is in broad agreement with the diagnosis of the situation and the importance of issues emphasised therein.
2. The problem of rural labour is so large and so acute that no single solution will be found adequate. Therefore all possible avenues should be explored to give the people concerned even partial relief from their present unsatisfactory social and economic condition.
3. From the standpoint of location and traditional background of a majority of these people, agriculture offers the most natural occupation for them to settle in. The process of agricultural development by means of intensive application of new inputs which has been recently initiated, and which promises to gather momentum, will give partial relief by both increasing employment and income in agriculture. All steps should be taken to speed up this process and to make its benefits accessible to the smallest of the small cultivators. It should be noted that agricultural development which will increase employment and incomes in agriculture is important not only from the standpoint of the whole economy or from the standpoint of the large cultivators but also from the standpoint of the agricultural labour.
4. Distribution of land which will enlarge the very small holdings and will give some land to the landless will give them more direct benefits. Unfortunately not enough land of good quality is available for distribution and in many cases where land has been given to these people, it has proved to be either too bad in quality or too small in size to become a viable agricultural holding.
5. Legislation regarding ceilings on agricultural holdings has not made available enough land for redistribution as it was hoped. This is partly due to inadequate enforcement of the existing legislation. A better enforcement may release some more land for redistribution.

6. Another reason is the rather high ceilings prescribed in some areas and also the basis of 'individual' rather than 'family' holdings adopted in most cases. Possibility of reducing the ceilings where they are too high and also adopting the family holding as the basis for ceiling should be explored.

7. However, it should be remembered that any feasible reduction of the existing ceilings generally is unlikely to release much additional land for distribution.

8. Though little additional land is likely to become available for redistribution in areas where the problem of surplus labour is the most acute, large tracts of lands, especially public lands, are available in less densely populated areas. The development of such lands for settlement should receive a higher priority than it has received in the past. After the reasonable demands of the local population are met, the needs of the surplus labour in other areas should find a due place in such schemes of settlement.

9. It should be borne in mind that the success of these schemes requires large capital investment for land development and for creating essential amenities. To the extent such schemes offer opportunities for settling surplus labour from other areas, the Centre should take the necessary initiative and offer adequate financial assistance for the purpose.

10. It should also be remembered that the families of settlers in such schemes, whether they are local or in-migrants, have to expend considerable effort and bear considerable hardships before the land begins to yield and the settlement becomes habitable. Therefore, the settlers must be fully compensated for such expense and hardship by a secure tenure in the lands allotted to them.

11. Enforcement of Minimum Wages in agriculture will help the agricultural labour. However, there are obvious difficulties of enforcement. There is little difficulty in areas where labour is in

short supply and also in peak periods generally. Existence of labour organisations also facilitates the enforcement of minimum wages and therefore these should be suitably promoted and encouraged. However, in the slack season when the condition of the agricultural labour is the most acute, especially in areas where labour is unorganised, enforcement of minimum wages becomes most difficult. The difficulty is inherent in the situation of lack of employment.

12. Conditions regarding agricultural labour vary greatly between different States. Therefore the administrative set-up for relevant policy and programmes may have to be left to the convenience of the State governments. However, it will be useful to make a distinction between two types of functions: enforcement of law such as the minimum wage legislation and development programmes such as an employment programme. It seems advisable to entrust the two types of function to two separate and appropriately staffed and equipped agencies with a common co-ordinating and reporting authority.

13. Nevertheless, notification of minimum wages under the legislation helps to create norms and gives a basis for the agricultural labour to put forward an organised demand. For this purpose it is necessary to keep the notified minimum wages under continuous review and keep them in line with the cost of living in rural areas. The minimum wages notified under the legislation prevailing in many States are hopelessly out of date, and need immediate review and revision by an appropriately constituted body representing the State Government, the employers and the labour in each relevant area.

14. The problem of bonded labour, though rapidly declining, still exists in isolated pockets in the country. It is essentially a problem of permanent and perpetual indebtedness of a class of persons who have no assets except their persons to mortgage. Therefore, key to the solution of their problem lies in the liquidation of their existing debts and provision of institutional credit to prevent their again falling into indebtedness.

15. At the root of the problem of surplus rural labour is the fact of excessive pressure of population on agriculture. Therefore the scope of settling the excess population in agriculture or giving them relief by means of additional employment and/or increased wages in agriculture are limited except for the possibilities now opened by agricultural development through intensive application of new inputs. Therefore, the solution to the problem of surplus labour in agriculture must be sought primarily outside agriculture.

16. The ultimate solution of-course lies in industrial development. But it takes time. Until then transitional employment must be provided in a programme of rural works such as roads, land development, soil conservation, irrigation, afforestation, etc. The rural works programme initiated in the Third Five Year Plan showed that this was possible. However, that programme, useful though it was, did not amount to more than a few additional development projects. The programme did not involve any systematic effort to mobilise or organise rural labour for productive employment nor did it involve acceptance of an obligation to provide gainful employment to everyone who is willing to take it on reasonable conditions. It is necessary to reorientate the programme of rural works from this point of view and make a beginning, even if a small one, by initiating a programme of rural works the basis of which is the acceptance of an obligation to provide employment to all who need it.

17. The concept is not new. The obligation to provide gainful employment to distressed population in times of famine has been long accepted. What is now needed is a recognition of the fact that in certain areas rural labour is in perpetual distress because of lack of employment and that therefore there is an equal obligation to provide it with gainful employment. It is equally important to recognise that what is being asked and proposed to be offered is not relief but a right to gainful work. A firm declaration of public policy in this matter is now overdue.

18. A beginning should be made by initiating a programme in a few districts the basis of which is the provision of employment to all those who need it on prescribed conditions. This will involve, firstly,

enlisting of persons who need work on given conditions; secondly, discovering and planning useful and productive works for them to be employed on; and thirdly, efficient and economic execution of these works. It is obvious that the programme will have to be organised and administered at the district level as an integral part of the development programme. Here the labour corps will not be too large or too small to handle. The operation of the corps on a district basis will also give an area wide enough to discover and plan productive works on a continuous basis.

19. It might be mentioned that the organisation of rural labour in such corps need not mean their permanent and irrevocable withdrawal from agriculture when enough employment is available in agriculture, or when agriculture suffers because of shortage of labour, the corps could suspend their operations for a while, could release some of their personnel on a leave basis, or could even undertake agricultural operations, such as harvesting, on a contract basis.

20. It should be emphasised that, even in the present acute financial stringency, the major problems in this field are administrative and organisational rather than financial. Therefore if any body or authority at the district level, such as the Zila Parishads, are willing to undertake the administration and organisational responsibility, create a labour corps find productive works in which to employ the persons and execute the works efficiently and economically, they should receive the necessary financial support. We hope that a specific provision should be made immediately for this purpose. The acceptance of this proposal means no more than the acceptance by the society of its minimum obligation towards a class of population which has remained permanently neglected.