

Seventeenth Loksabha

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Title: Regarding migrant labourers from West Bengal not getting small central assistance during Corona lockdown.

**\*SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY (BAHARAMPUR):** Honourable Speaker Lok Sabha, through you Sir I would like to draw the attention of Hon'ble Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman ji to a very important matter. We all are aware that lakhs of workers and labourers of West Bengal who toil hard in other parts of the country, who fight and struggle for survival day in and day out, suddenly faced an extremely difficult situation in the aftermath of the lockdown. There was catastrophe in their lives. They became hapless and penniless overnight. Therefore, scores of labourers started returning to their native places and lakhs of migrant workers started coming back to Bengal as well.

Under the pressure of such mass exodus, and prodded by the opposition parties, hon. Prime Minister of India announced a Garib Kalyan Rozgar Yojana. This Rozgar Abhiyan started from 22 June. But unfortunately, though 116 districts were identified under this PMGKY, not a single district of West Bengal was included in this scheme. It has been observed that innumerable people, who had gone to other states in search of work had returned to their native villages in West Bengal because of lockdown. They have lost everything, they have returned empty handed. No one is there to take care of them.

It was announced that those districts would be included in this scheme where a minimum of 25,000 migrant labourers were present. Rs. 50,000 crores were allocated for the purpose. 116 districts were earmarked and 125 days of jobs were assured. But I

was befuddled and perturbed to note that 116 districts were chosen from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orissa, Jharkhand states but West Bengal was counted out, although there are lakhs of migrant returnees in our state.

In my district itself, 1.5 lakh migrant labourers are present. They are ruined. I have already sent the list to the Government. But even then not a single district of West Bengal could benefit out of the Central Government scheme. There are 42 members of Parliament belonging to West Bengal. They also know that how many migrant workers have returned to their hometown. Sir, I even wrote a letter to Hon'ble Prime Minister of our country with a request to incorporate the districts of my state in the beneficiary list; I requested my district of Murshidabad to be included under the scheme. It is a poor and backward region. However, nothing has been done to include any district of Bengal. Even yesterday, I tried to draw the attention of Hon'ble Finance Minister during the discussion on the Supplementary Demands for Grants, towards the fact that when 116 districts of various states were identified, why Bengal was left out? Why was Bengal deprived? Why has this happened to Bengal? I demand an appropriate response from the Finance Minister of India in this august House. Thank you, Sir.

**माननीय अध्यक्ष :** मंत्री जी आपने हाथ खड़ा किया, क्या आप कुछ बोलना चाहती हैं?

**वित्त मंत्री तथा कारपोरेट कार्य मंत्री (श्रीमती निर्मला सीतारमण):** अध्यक्ष महोदय, लीडर ऑफ अपोजिशन ने जो विषय उठाया है, मैं आपकी अनुमति से उसका जवाब देना चाह रही हूँ। जब माइग्रेंट वर्कर्स अपने-अपने राज्यों में वापस गए, प्रधानमंत्री जी ने उनके लिए प्रधानमंत्री गरीब कल्याण रोजगार अभियान चलाया, जिसकी घोषणा 20 जून को हुई, यह 125 दिनों के लिए ही है। यह अभियान छह राज्यों बिहार, झारखंड, मध्य प्रदेश, ओडिशा, राजस्थान और उत्तर प्रदेश, के 116 जिलों के लिए एनाउंसड हुआ। 13 मई को जिन-जिन जिलों में पच्चीस हजार से ज्यादा माइग्रेंट वर्कर्स वापस पहुंचे हैं, उन जिलों में प्रधानमंत्री गरीब कल्याण रोजगार योजना अभियान चलाया गया है। अगर उस दिन तक पच्चीस हजार आपके जिले में माइग्रेंट वर्कर्स पहुंच गए हैं तो उन जिलों में इस योजना को लागू कर सकते थे। इस योजना

के लागू होने के बाद त्रिपुरा और मध्य प्रदेश से नए जिलों को जोड़ने की भी मांग आई, मगर उन्हें जोड़ा नहीं गया है। छत्तीसगढ़ ने नए जिले को जोड़ने के लिए मांग की थी।

वेस्ट बंगाल में उस दिन तक पच्चीस हजार माइग्रेंट वर्कर्स की इन्फॉर्मेशन किसी जिले की राज्य सरकार से नहीं मिली। यदि मैं कह सकती हूँ, माइग्रेंट वर्कर्स ने आने से भी इंकार कर दिया है। एक जिले में पच्चीस हजार माइग्रेंट वर्कर्स नहीं पहुंचे, उसकी जानकारी तक नहीं मिली, बंगाल को कैसे इन्कलूड करेंगे? इसकी जानकारी तक नहीं मिली कि पच्चीस हजार वर्कर्स मिले कि नहीं मिले हैं। उधर पहुंचे हैं कि नहीं, उनको आने दिया या नहीं आने दिया। माइग्रेंट वर्कर्स को आने दिया कि नहीं आने दिया, यह भी सोचने लायक एक विषय है।

