

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4873
ANSWERED ON:26.04.2010
SOCIAL SECURITY TO PLANTATION WORKERS
Roy Shri Mahendra Kumar; Tirkey Shri Manohar

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken any steps for providing alternative employment and unemployment allowance/grants for jobless tea gardens workers;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;
- (c) whether the Government has announced any new social security scheme for the plantation workers including women workers in the country; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT(SHRI HARISH RAWAT)

(a) & (b): There is no specific proposal for providing alternative employment and any unemployment allowance/grants for jobless tea gardens workers. However, some measures are reported to have been taken by the concerned State Governments which are as under:

Steps taken by Government of West Bengal:

The "West Bengal State Support Scheme for reopening of closed/abandoned Tea Gardens, 2008" has been notified. The scheme provides for waiver of taxes (rural employment & primary education cess for 3 years), as also waiver of Electricity duty (3 years), remission of stamp duty and registration fee, reschedulement of arrear taxes and concessional salami.

The State Government has taken several steps to ensure steady flow of income to each and every affected family and to guarantee regular supply of food grains along with adequate provision for basic health amenities, nutrition and drinking water.

Steps taken by Government of Kerala:

free noon meal to all school going children.

Wage employment under `Sampurn Gramin Rozgar Yojana` (SGRY) scheme.

Placement of fund of Rs.5.00 crore with the district administration, Idukki (where most closed tea gardens are located) for providing uniform and essential school books to school going children and for providing medicines to garden workers where public health system is unable to provide medical facilities.

Ex-gratia amount of Rs.500.00 per worker on account of Onam Festival.

Educational expenses for pursuing graduation course for the wards of the garden workers.

The welfare of workers in closed tea estates in Kerala is being looked after by the Plantation Workers Relief Fund Committee set up by Government of Kerala. The Chief Inspector of Plantations is the convener of the Committee. The funds required by this Committee are being provided from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund.

(c) & (d): No specific social security plans have been announced for the plantation workers including women workers. They are catered by Eleventh Plan Schemes of the Commodity Boards under the aegis of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Department of Commerce, which includes welfare of the plantation workers including women workers.

Besides the above, the Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008 provides for constitution of National Social Security Board to recommend social security schemes, inter-alia, covering health, maternity benefits for unorganized workers including plantation labour. The Board has since been constituted by the Central Government.