

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1147
ANSWERED ON:13.07.2009
AMENDMENTS IN PLANTATION LABOUR ACT,1951
Botcha Lakshmi Smt. Jhansi

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

- (a) whether the Government proposes to provide financial assistance and social benefits to plantation workers;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) Whether the Government contemplates to make suitable amendments in the Plantation Labour Act, 1951; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the action being taken in this regard?

Answer

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

(a) & (b): Workers of Tea Plantations constitute a major portion of the plantation workforce. Under the Human Resource Development Scheme of the Tea Board, as approved in the 11th Plan, a provision of Rs. 50 Crore has been made for the socio-economic development of the tea plantation labourers and their dependants. The main objective of the scheme are:

- (1) For improving the health of the workers;
- (2) For education of wards of workers;
- (3) Imparting training to improve skills for growers/workers and plantation managerial staff etc.

Under the health component, there is provision for providing safe drinking water, improving sanitation facilities for the tea garden labourers and for improvement of Health Centers/Clinics/Hospitals by way of providing grants for construction of building and purchase of medical equipments.

Under the education component, financial assistance by way of educational stipends/Nehru Awards/Books and Uniform grants are given to wards of tea plantation workers for undergoing primary/secondary/higher secondary education as also higher and professional courses.

The Coffee Board under the Plan Scheme grants educational stipend/meritorious awards and also extends support to pursue professional degree courses to children of workers and tiny growers.

The above measures are over and above welfare amenities prescribed under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951 and enforced by the respective State Governments.

(c) & (d): Yes, Sir. The Plantations Labour (Amendments) Bill, 2008 has been introduced in Rajya Sabha on 21.10.2008.

The Plantations Labour (Amendments) Bill, 2008, inter alia seeks to amend the definition of 'family', 'employer', and 'worker' to make such definitions broad based. A new chapter to provide for safety and health of workers in plantations has also been proposed; the prohibition of child labour in plantations, making penalty provisions more stringent, protection of action taken in good faith under the Act and allowing the State Governments to make rules are some of the important components of the Plantations Labour (Amendment) Bill, 2008.