

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5295
ANSWERED ON:27.04.2015
FACILITIES FOR TEA GARDEN WORKERS
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Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether lakhs of people are working as a Tea Garden workers in Assam and are staying in the Tea Garden quarters and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether such workers have been provided basic amenities such as road, proper drinking water, medical care and educational facilities inside the tea garden;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) the other facilities provided to such workers in the various parts of the country particularly to tea garden workers in Assam?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (IC) FOR LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA)

(a) to (d): As per the 'Baseline Survey' undertaken by the Tea Board in 2011, there are 2,62,671 Standard and Non-Standard quarters for 6,91,624 permanent and temporary workers in the state of Assam.

Further, the working conditions of tea garden workers are governed under the Plantation Labour Act (PLA), 1951 and enforced by the concerned state government. The following facilities are to be provided as per the Plantations Labour Act, 1951.

Drinking Water: Section 8 of the Act stipulates that in every plantation, effective arrangement shall be made by the employer to provide and maintain a sufficient supply of wholesome drinking water for all workers at convenient places in the plantation.

Medical: As per section 10 of the Act, every worker and his family is entitled to free medical treatment at the garden hospital and in cases where the patient is referred for outside treatment, free treatment to the worker and his dependents is also provided at the referral hospitals. **Housing:** Section 15 of the Act requires every employer to provide and maintain necessary housing accommodation for every worker and his family. The employer at his own expense has to maintain all houses in a fit and safe condition and execute annual and such other repairs as required from time to time.

Education: Section 14 of the Act stipulates that the State Governments may make rules requiring every employer to provide educational facilities for the children between ages of 6 and 12 of the workers employed in any plantation where work force exceeds 25 in number. The State Governments have been providing primary education facilities in the tea growing areas of South India, West Bengal and Cachar in Assam State.

Besides, the Government implements various welfare activities for tea plantation workers and their dependents in tea estates through the Tea Board. The welfare activities undertaken by the Tea Board under the Human Resource Development (HRD) Scheme aim at improving the health and hygiene of workers, education of wards of workers and imparting training to improve skills for growers/workers.

Under the health and hygiene programme, financial support is provided for augmenting the infrastructure of the tea garden hospitals/health centres and procurement of medical equipment, and accessories, ambulance etc. Family welfare education programme and scouting and guiding activities are also supported for the benefits of children of the workers. Financial assistance is given to physically challenged plantation workers and their wards by providing crutches, calliper shoes, artificial limbs etc.

Under the Education and Training support programme, books, uniforms and educational stipends are given to the wards of workers. Vocational training programmes are organised for skill improvement and self-employment of the dependants of the workers.

Further, during the XI Plan Period (2007-12) the total amount disbursed for these purposes by the Tea Board was Rs.20.15 Cr. During the first two years of the XII Plan i.e. 2012-13 and 2013-14, the Board has spent Rs.14.31 cr. and Rs.8.93 Cr. respectively on such programmes.