

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2571

ANSWERED ON:25.07.2014

TEA PLANTATION WORKERS

Ajmal Maulana Badruddin;Gandhi Shri Feroze Varun

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken note that thousands of tea plantation workers in the country are facing low wages, job insecurity and malnutrition problems;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the action taken by the Government to ensure a better lifestyle for these workers;
- (d) whether the Government has also taken note of incidents of starvation deaths of tea workers reported in various parts of the country, particularly near Raipur tea estate in Jalpaiguri in West Bengal;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the action taken by the Government thereon?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) (SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

(a) & (b): The tea plantation workers are paid wages as per negotiated agreement reached through a process of collective bargaining between the producer associations and the workers unions. The wages currently paid (Rs/day) in the four major tea growing states are as under:

Year	Assam	#	West Bengal	#	Tamil Nadu	Kerala
2014	95.00		95.00		209.27	216.53

#paid part of wages in kind by way of food grains and fuel.

(c): The Plantation Labour Act, 1951 mandates the tea estates to provide basic welfare services and amenities e.g. housing, medical, primary education, water supply, sanitation etc. to the tea workers. Subsidised foodgrains, fuelwood and electricity is provided to workers under separate tripartite agreement entered into between industry, workers unions and the State Government. The Tea Board provides additional support under Human Resource Development Scheme (HRD) for improving health and hygiene of workers, education of wards of workers and imparting training to improve skills of growers/ workers.

Financial assistance is also given to physically challenged plantation workers and their wards by providing crutches, caliper shoes, artificial limbs etc. Books, uniforms and educational stipends are given for the wards of workers. Vocational training programmes are organised for skill improvement and self employment of the dependants of workers. Short term training for acquiring skills like plumbing, masonry, electrical /TV repair, carpentry, construction sanitary units etc. are also conducted.

(d): No information about starvation death of tea workers has been received.

(e) & (f): Question does not arise.