

Title: Problems of beedi workers.

*SHRI T. GOVINDAN (KASARGOD): Hon'ble Deputy Speaker Sir, I would like to draw the attention of this Government through you Sir to the Parliament March conducted by *beedi* workers on November 27th. All the trade unions participated in it and the majority of the workers were women. This march was to express their concern and anxiety regarding the proposed Bill to ban smoking. More than 70 lakh of *beedi* workers are there in our countryâ€¦

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are not supposed to read out a written speech. Don't you know that? You can express your views; not in a written formâ€¦

SHRI T. GOVINDAN: Sir, there are 70 lakh *beedi* workers in our village industries. About two crore of people are engaged in tobacco cultivation and related trades. Without taking these aspects into consideration the Central Government is yielding in to the directives of the World Health Organisation. Though both the State and Central Governments get crores of rupees as revenue from the taxes imposed on tobacco and related trades, the Government have failed to take note of that fact. Hence I urge upon the Government to take socio economic and humanitarian aspects into consideration and to postpone the proposed legislation banning smoking. Moreover, the Government should also come forward with the offer of welfare measures, minimum wages and maternity benefits for these *beedi* workers. With these requests, I conclude. *

â€¦. English translation of the speech Originally delivered in Malayalam.