

Title: Need to reduce the excise duty on beedi products and announce Special Welfare Schemes for beedi workers in Kerala.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN (KASARGOD): I would like to invite the kind attention of this House to the serious problems faced by the beedi industries in Kerala. Out of the total labourers engaged in the beedi industry, 95 per cent are women labourers. These workers are getting very low wages. Besides this, the number of employment days are also getting reduced year by year. The hon. High Court of Kerala has prohibited smoking in public places. The Central Government must take immediate steps to reduce the excise duty imposed on beedi products and also announce a Special Welfare Scheme for the beedi workers in Kerala State. The Central Government must also take immediate steps to implement the Beedi Cigar Act in the concerned States as early as possible.

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : श्री रघुराज सिंह शाक्य--- अनुपस्थित।