

Similarly, many State Governments do not inform the people about the true nature of the Central schemes and also about the funding that is provided by the Central Government. Many State Governments change the names of the Central Schemes and misrepresent to the people that they are State Government Schemes.

Whichever government may rule a State, there must be a clear distinction maintained with respect to the two Schemes and the distinction must be explained to the people in every village, tehsil or town.

In fact, I may go to the extent of suggesting that those who misrepresent to the people regarding funding of Central Schemes and also further indulging in the acts of changing names should be hauled for committing offences of cheating, fraud and misrepresentation, and, if need be, a special legislation should be enacted for the purpose.

Further, today schemes are prepared under executive powers of the Government and, therefore, their legal status is in grey area. It is, therefore, essential that a legislation should be enacted to govern the scope of Central schemes and misrepresentation with respect to the same should be treated as punishable offence.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Y.S. Chowdary, not present. Shri Santiuse Kujur.

Demand to increase the daily wages of tea-garden labourers of Assam

SHRI SANTIUSE KUJUR (Assam): The tea industry of Assam is the biggest industry in the country. It is famous worldwide. Assam is the largest producer of tea and contributes more than half of country's tea production. The tea gardens of Assam contribute nearly 65 per cent of the Assam's economy and growth, annually.

There are about 800 tea gardens managed by big companies and multi-national companies in Assam. These companies have, over the years, been obtaining huge profits from these tea gardens. About 40-45 lakh workers from *adivasi* (tea garden) communities are fully engaged in nurturing, maintenance and development of these tea gardens throughout the year. The high margin profits enjoyed by the tea companies are not shared with the workers who have been exploited for more than 150 years.

The daily wages given to a tea garden labour is just ₹ 95.00 in Assam. They do not get a paid weekly off. Whereas in tea gardens in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, the wages are ₹ 216.53 and 209.27 per day respectively. This meager wage indicates forced labour in tea gardens, which is the violation of the Indian Constitution (Article-23) and laws, such as, the Plantation Labour Act 1951 and the Minimum Wage Act 1948. The Minimum Wage Act lays down the minimum wage at ₹ 169, per day.

This has led to increase in poverty among tea workers, un-hygienic living conditions, loss of human resources, as they are not able to have access to good education. Therefore, the youths are forced to migrate to big cities in search of livelihood as domestic helpers. When a child is 14 -15 years old, the parents send them to the plantations as child labourers. The children are given the work of spraying pesticides in the tea gardens. As a result, children lose out on their education. Worryingly, cases of migration and trafficking of *adivasi* (tea garden) community women and youth have increased.

I, therefore, urge upon the Government to consider the matter positively by increasing the daily wages of tea garden labours of Assam to minimum ₹ 300.00 for their better life, health and education of their children, as these labourers tirelessly work and contribute to country's economy.

**Demand to sett up institutions of vocational training and skill development in
North-Eastern region**

SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM (Meghalaya): Sir, the North-East happens to be a storehouse for HRD with high literacy and academic skills. Presently, migration of job seekers from the North-East to the mega cities in the country is on the increase. It is projected to be around 50,00,000. It has been revealed that 35 per cent of the migrants migrate for employment opportunities in other cities of India, out of which 15 per cent are for Government employment and 85 per cent for private sector jobs.

With hardly any facility to impart vocational training and skill development in the Region, the youths from the North-East are left with no choice but to accept low-paid jobs in mega cities as security guards and in case of girls, a job of housemaid/ baby sitter with private household, which makes them vulnerable to physical abuse, as is often reported in the media. Many local youths, aware of the depressing situation in mega cities, are drawn towards militancy/insurgency lured by rebel's cadres and outfits.

It is, therefore, essential that vocational training and skill development be made a part of the school curriculum in the North-East to equip the youths with ready employability in regular jobs. Like other regions in the country, the Centre should set up more ITIs and RVTIs to train youths in diverse industrial trades, so that they could find jobs in local ancillary units or venture into setting up their own units with adequate loan facilities made available under MSME schemes.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Parimal Nathwani, not present. Shri Motilal Vora.