

MR. CHAIRMAN: The following hon. Members associated themselves with the Special Mention made by Shri Sandosh Kumar P: Shri A.A. Rahim (Kerala) and Dr. John Brittas (Kerala).

Concern over working conditions of Bank employees in India

DR. V. SIVADASAN (Kerala): Sir, the banking sector is one of the core sectors and lakhs of employees are working in this sector. It has been said that computerization and digitalization would reduce the drudgery of work. But, if we observe the working of banks in India, we would find that bank employees have to work for much longer hours than what is formally expected of them. They receive no extra payment for this overtime work and some of them have to stay back until night. There are a lot of instances of burnout and depression due to this mode of work. Many persons leave the job and many employees are suffering from health problems.

There is an urgent need to rationalize this process. The restraining of employees even after office hours is a practice which should be stopped. Binding and comprehensive guidelines must be issued in this regard so that the work atmosphere in the banks of India is made humane and conducive to the health and welfare of the employees. I urge the Government to look into the matter.

Demand of recognition of Sari and Sarna Dharam as Separate Religious Codes

SHRI SAMIRUL ISLAM (West Bengal): Sir, I wish to address an issue concerning the indigenous people of West Bengal in today's Session. Saridharam and Sarnadharam are two religious practices of tribal communities, including Santhal, Bhumij, Munda, Sadan, Lodha, Sabar, Bhirhoor, etc., and also practiced by a section of Kudmi community people. Practiced by millions of tribal individuals in South Bengal and North Bengal districts, these ancient religious traditions have yet to receive official recognition. Despite their millennia-old history, no Government has officially acknowledged these religious practices. On February 17, 2023, the West Bengal Legislative Assembly passed a resolution to recognize Saridharam and Sarnadharam as distinct religious denominations. The Government of West Bengal communicated this proposal to the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, on February 27, 2023. The Government of India is yet to take action regarding this proposal. The followers of Sari and Sarna Dharam have fundamental right to practice their religious beliefs as guaranteed by the Indian Constitution. Recognition requires a survey to identify practitioners, a step yet to be initiated. Estimates suggest that the