

from the concerned authorities for construction of community centre in the name/memory of CPFC and EPF organisation around the temple;

(a) if so, whether Government would probe into the matter for cutting green trees and to punish the persons/officers responsible for such illegal action; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) to (c) As per records available with Employees Provident Fund Organisation there is no instance of felling of trees in Bhavishya Nfdhi Enclave.

Retrenchment of Factory Workers

5339. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(b) whether it is a fact that the Indian factories retrenched about 8 per cent of the total number of employees during the years 1998-2000;

(c) the approximate number of people lost job during that period; and

(d) the action proposed to arrest the declining employment trend in the factories?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) and (b) No, Sir. According to the provisional information received from the Labour Bureau, 7496 workers were retrenched during 1998-2000.

(c) During the Tenth five Yr Plan, emphasis will be placed on rapid growth of sectors, which are most likely to create high quality employment opportunities. In order to enable the poor to access the opportunities and to ensure consistency between the requirement and availability of skills, emphasis will be placed on skill development.

Strike by Trade Unions

5340. SHRI HARENDRA SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the eight trade unions have gone on a nation-wide strike on the 16th April, 2002;

[16 May, 2002]

RAJYA SABHA

- (a) if so, the reasons for their strike;
- (b) the estimated loss incurred by government due to said strike; and
- (c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by Government to resolve their demands?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The nation-wide strike was called to protest against the disinvestment of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) amendment of Labour Laws and down-sizing and closure of PSUs. The financial loss suffered due to the strike has not been estimated.

(d) The Chief Labour Commissioner's Office intervened in respect of the strike notices received by them and held conciliation proceedings with a view to avert the strike. However, the strike could not be averted as the unions stuck to their demands.

Plight of beedi workers

5341. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

- (d) whether Government are aware of the plight of the beedi workers;
- (e) if so, the present status of the beedi workers;
- (a) the average wages of beedi workers, both male and female, separately; and
- (f) the steps taken for welfare of the beedi workers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) to (d) The Government is running various welfare schemes in the fields of Health, Housing, Education, Recreation and Social Security for the benefit of beedi workers and their dependants from the Beedi workers Welfare Fund. Apart from this, the Beedi & Cigar workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966 has been enacted by the government to provide for the welfare of the workers in beedi and cigar establishments and to regulate the conditions of their work and for matters connected therewith. This Act is being implemented by the State Governments. The State Governments have framed corresponding Rules under this act to enforce