

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT**

**LOK SABHA**

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1288  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 19.09.2020**

**PLANTATION WORKERS**

**1288. SHRI RAJU BISTA:**

**Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:**

- (a) the steps being taken by the Ministry to ensure that Tea and Cinchona Plantation workers are paid their dues during the COVID lockdown period;**
- (b) whether the Ministry is taking any action on plantation owners who do not pay their share of Provident Fund; and**
- (c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?**

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF STATE (IC) FOR LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT  
(SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR)**

**(a): Plantation workers are covered by the Plantation Labour Act 1951 which inter-alia, covers the welfare of plantation workers including tea workers and cinchona workers.**

**The workers are also covered by various industrial and social security legislations like Employees' Compensation Act, 1923, Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972, Payment of Bonus Act, 1965, Maternity Benefit Act, 1961, Payment of Wages Act, 1936, Equal Remuneration Act, 1976, Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 and Industrial Employment (Standing Order) Act, 1946 as applicable.**

**The steps taken by this Ministry during the COVID lockdown period are as follows:**

**Contd..2/-**

**(1) An advisory was issued to the Employers Associations wherein the Employers of Public/Private Establishments were advised not to terminate their employees or reduce their wages.**

**(2) Twenty Control Rooms were set up by Ministry of Labour and Employment across the country to receive and address the grievances of workers regarding wages etc. during the national lockdown.**

**(b) to (c): The Employers of covered establishments under EPF & MP Act, 1952 including Plantation establishments are required to file Electronic Challan cum Return (ECR) in respect of all their employees and remit the dues within 15 days of close of wage month.**

**In the event of non-filing of ECR, the employers are alerted through SMS/e-mail to remit the dues and if compliance is not made, action is taken to inspect the records of estt, assess the amount in default by quasi-judicial process u/s 7A of EPF & MP Act, 1952 and recover the assessed dues. Penalty is imposed u/s 14B of the Act for wilful default in payment of dues.**

**The aforesaid action against defaulter is a continuous process as per the various provisions of the Act till compliance is secured.**

**Keeping in view the social distancing norms during Covid-19 Pandemic and provide ease and convenience to employers & employees:**

**i. e-Inspection was introduced to enable the employers to inform the outstanding dues, propose timeline to remit the dues and intimate closure of their business.**

**ii. system of virtual hearings in the quasi judicial cases under section 7A & 14B was recently launched by Hon'ble MoS (I/C), L&E, to hear the parties and fast track the assessment of worker's dues.**

**During 2019-20, Rs.7849.51 lakhs has been assessed under Section 7A, Rs.265.37 lakhs levied under Section 14B and Rs 8750.99 lakhs has been recovered from Tea and Cinchona Plantation establishments.**

**During the year 2019-20, complaints have been filed with police in 54 cases of non-payment of employees share contributions deducted from wages of employees of Tea Plantation.**