

Seventeenth Loksabha

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Title: Regarding the issues of the Business Correspondents working with the Odisha Gramya Bank in Odisha.

SHRI PRATAP CHANDRA SARANGI (BALASORE): Chairman Sir, I want to call your attention to the deserving but unappreciated group of Business Correspondents who primarily work with banks. These Correspondents' powerful reach is essential to advancing our nation's financial inclusion objective at the local level.

For the past nine years, 732 committed BCs have been employed by the Odisha Gramya Bank in my State of Odisha. Instead of rewarding their efforts for their door-to-door service, the Financial Institution (FI) Department has issued a Circular that will result in the withdrawal of their fixed compensation and a reduction of their commissions to an estimate of Rs. 1,500 to Rs.1,700. With this level of income, families will undoubtedly fall into the poverty trap because they are not even eligible for minimum wages. Additionally, the Government of Odisha is considering implementing OLM-BC, which will further ensure a sharp decline in the already meagre incomes of BCs.

Sir, these BCs have spent nearly ten years going above and beyond in the performance of their duties. In order to provide the BCs job stability, they need to live with dignity. I would urge the hon. Minister of Finance to take the required steps to restore the compensation paid to them. I would also request the hon. Minister to integrate this skilled workforce into the current framework of trained workforce. Thank you, Sir.