

an>

Title: Need to amend the Beedi and Cigar (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966 and Beedi Workers Welfare Cess Act, 1976

SHRI MD. BADARUDDOZA KHAN (MURSHIDABAD): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I stand here to raise an important issue demanding the Beedi and Cigar (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966.

The beedi industry is one of the oldest in the country employing the largest number of workforce barring a few States only. The number of workers, mainly women, is more than 90 lakhs. They are traditionally poorest of the poor coming from the backward section of people. Mode of production is almost transformed into home based. Beedi workers are in a very pitiable condition. They are deprived of minimum wages, laws of the land, welfare measures, etc. There is no uniformity of wages varying from Rs. 30 to Rs. 150 State to State and District to District even in down level for rolling 1,000 beedis. Provident Fund coverage is not more than 50 per cent so far. Even identity cards are not provided to most of the workers, as a result of which, a big number of workers are being deprived of getting welfare facilities which are their legitimate right. The Beedi and Cigar (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966 and Beedi Workers Welfare Cess Act, 1976 have become backdated. They should be amended suitably in the interest of the workers. Coverage of PF, I. Card and logbook are the crying needs of this deprived poor workforce. Welfare measures as in vogue presently should be enhanced and be ensured to all the recipients.

I urge upon the Government to come forward with sincere and positive steps at an earliest to save the most deprived almost one crore workers of the country.

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Sankar Prasad Datta and Shri Tariq Hameed Karra are permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri Md. Badaruddoza Khan.

Now, the list is over. We are having an extra list of speakers. I can allow this list if each Member will take not more than half a minute and raise the issue to the point. Otherwise, I cannot allow the list. Specially, Shrimati Rama Devi ji, you cannot read the whole thing.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes, Sir.