

COMMITTEE ON THE WELFARE OF
SCHEDULED CASTES AND
SCHEDULED TRIBES
(2018-2019)

(SIXTEENTH LOK SABHA)

TWENTY-EIGHTH REPORT

ON

MINISTRY OF LABOUR & EMPLOYMENT

Action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty-Seventh Report (15th Lok Sabha) of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes on the subject "Implementation of schemes for Beedi workers with particular reference to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes".

Presented to Lok Sabha on 04.01.2019

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LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

January, 2019/ Pausa, 1940 (Saka)

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COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE WELFARE OF SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES (2018-2019)

Dr. Kirit P. Solanki - Chairperson

MEMBERS - LOK SABHA

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4. Shri Kantilal Bhuria
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27. Shri Ramkumar Verma
28. Shri Veer Singh
29. Shri Tiruchi Siva
30. Smt. Wansuk Syiem

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes having been authorised by the Committee to finalise and submit the report on their behalf, present this Twenty-Eighth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in their Twenty-Seventh Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Labour & Employment regarding "Implementation of schemes for Beedi workers with particular reference to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes".

2. The draft Report was considered and adopted by the Committee on 3rd January, 2019 (Appendix I).

3. The Report has been divided into the following chapters:-

- I Report
- II Recommendations/ Observations, which have been accepted by the Government.
- III Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of replies of the Government.
- IV Recommendations /Observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration.
- V Recommendations / Observations in respect of which final replies of the Government have not been received.

4. An analysis of the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in their Twenty-Seventh Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee is given in Appendix II.

New Delhi
January, 2019
Pausa, 1940 (Saka)

DR. KIRIT P. SOLANKI
Chairperson,
Committee on the Welfare
of Scheduled Castes and
Scheduled Tribes.

CHAPTER I

Report

1.1 This Report of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes deals with the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in their Twenty-Seventh Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) on the subject "Implementation of schemes for Beedi workers with particular reference to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes" pertaining to the Ministry of Labour & Employment.

1.2 The Twenty-Seventh Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 30 April, 2013. It contained 22 recommendations/observations. Replies of the Government in respect of all these recommendations/observations have been examined and may be categorized as under:-

- (i) Recommendations/observations which have been accepted by the Government (Sl Nos. 1, 6, 15, 16 20 & 21)
- (ii) Recommendations/observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies of the Government (Sl. Nos. 9 & 13)
- (iii) Recommendations/observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration (Sl. Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, 19 & 22)
- (iv) Recommendations/observations in respect of which final replies have not been received (11, 17 & 18)

1.3 The Committee will now deal with the Action Taken by the Government on some of the recommendations which need reiteration or comments:-

Recommendation (Sl.No.1 Para No.2.13)

1.4 As regards the identification and separate records of SC/ST Beedi workers, Committee are of the view that at this stage there is no need to make separate study for identification of SC/ST Beedi Workers as with the enumeration on the basis of caste and community of the Beedi Workers under Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY), the Ministry will be able to get the exact figures through digitalized data without any mistake. The Committee, however, are

surprised to note that 24.8% of identity cards made for Beedi Workers having questionable validity. Committee take a serious view on it and strongly recommend that the Government should quickly conduct a study to identify the fake/invalid identity cards so that genuine Beedi Workers may not be deprived of their legitimate right of the various schemes envisaged by the Government for their welfare. The Committee would like to be apprised of the progress made by the Government in this regard at the earliest.

Reply of the Government

1.5 Directions have been issued to Welfare Commissioners to conduct a special campaign to identify and weed out fake Identity cards. The exercise has been completed in Bangalore, Tirunelveli, Ajmer, Ahmedabad, Nagpur, Allahabad, Dehradun and Chandigarh Regions. In all Regions, a universal database is being prepared with address Aadhar number and mobile numbers of beneficiaries to ensure universal enrolment of Beedi Workers in RSBY Scheme. This will also help in weeding out fake cards.

Comments of the Committee

1.6 The Committee observe that the Government is preparing a universal database in all regions with address, Aadhar number and mobile numbers of beneficiaries for enabling universal enrolment of Beedi Workers in a centrally sponsored scheme i.e. Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) Scheme for BPL households and workers in the unorganised sector. The Committee wish to be informed whether the data base would cover beedi workers of the organised sector as well. The Committee desire that the Government submit a detailed progress report on the special campaign conducted to identify and weed out fake identity cards in the organised and unorganised sectors. Updated/comparative data prepared to this effect may be furnished to the Committee.

Recommendation (Sl.No.2 Para No.2.14)

1.7 The Committee are dismayed to note that only Malda and Murshidabad districts of West Bengal were selected for conducting survey of Beedi Workers. The Committee would like to be apprised of the criteria for selection of districts for survey. The survey should be made category-wise in such a manner that exact number of SCs/STs Beedi Workers is identified. The Committee also recommend that surveys of such nature should be made in other States also. The Committee are also distressed to note that there are no means to verify the credentials of applicants as they are actively engaged in rolling beedis. The Committee would like to direct the Ministry to act in a proactive manner and draw out a strategical plan for verification of commercial as well as home based beedi workers. The Committee are dissatisfied to note that identity cards issued decades back have not been renewed. Moreover, some of beedi Workers family have more than one identity card. The ID card facilitates a beedi worker to reap the benefits available to them in the form of allowances etc. and thus streamlining the method for their issuance is of utmost importance. The Committee also recommend that the credentials of the applicants should be verified to avoid issue of fake/multiple identity cards.

Reply of the Government

1.8 The Sri Ram Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources, New Delhi conducted preliminary study suo-motto in Hyderabad and Karimnagar districts of Andhra Pradesh, Jabalpur, Sagar and Katni districts of Madhya Pradesh and Kolkata and Murshidabad districts of West Bengal. The Centre submitted its study report and also made a presentation on 30-04-2008 before the Secretary (L&E).

1.9 Thereafter, due to the heavy financial burden of replicating this study across the Country, it has been decided by the Secretary (L&E) that a survey should be conducted by Sri Ram

Centre in two-three districts of West Bengal to identify the genuine Beedi workers and de-register the bogus or ineligible ones.

1.10 As such, Sri Ram Centre had agreed to conduct the survey in Malda and Murshidabad districts of West Bengal and submitted the proposal for payment of Rs.3/- per Beedi workers. The estimated expenditure was Rs. 20 lakhs for 69,500 estimated number of Beedi workers in those two districts of West Bengal.

1.11 The said proposal was submitted to Planning Unit of Ministry of Labour and Employment for consideration and approval. After examination, Planning Unit had observed that as per the existing guidelines of the Grant-in-aid (GIA) Scheme, the total cost of a survey/study can be Rs. 4 Lakh and in exceptionally good case, the cost can go upto Rs. 5 lakh.

1.12 In view of the above, it was decided by the Ministry that 15 to 20% sample survey may be conducted in the above two districts of West Bengal only.

1.13 If the survey is to be conducted for all the Beedi Workers in India approximately minimum three to four crores rupees expected is to be incurred. Further, it is informed that Regional Welfare Commissioner Offices are taking all the possible steps to verify the credentials of the workers and satisfy themselves before issuing identity cards to them. This exercise has been completed in Bangalore, Tirunelveli, Ajmer, Ahmedabad, Nagpur, Allahabad, Dehradun and Chandigarh regions. Database is being prepared in respect of Beedi Workers for requiring under RSBY Scheme. This will give indication the actual numbers of Beedi workers.

Comments of the Committee

1.14 From the information furnished, the Committee gather the impression that the Government is not serious about tackling the menace of fake identity of Beedi workers, as a result which the real SC/ST Beedi workers are being denied the benefits of welfare schemes which are intended exclusively for them. Also, there is no systematic census of the total number of beedi workers engaged in different forms of production.

Moreover, due to factors such as ignorance, illiteracy etc. most of the beedi workers do not have identity cards. Due to non availability of I-Cards, the beedi workers are not able to avail the facilities, allowances etc. available for them. The apparent lackadaisical attitude of the Government is the main hurdle in enabling the upliftment the Beedi workers, including the SCs/STs amongst them. The Committee urge upon the Government to use Aadhar based data to check the authenticity of Beedi workers for the purpose of extending benefits to them.

Recommendation (Sl.No.3 Para No. 3.15)

1.15 The Committee note with concern that only 7 hospitals and 204 dispensaries are there in all over the country to cater to the needs of the 64 lakhs beedi workers. The Committee have been informed by the Ministry that 4 hospitals and 40 dispensaries have also been sanctioned for beedi workers. The Committee desire that these hospitals and dispensaries should be made functional expeditiously. The Committee observe that most of these hospitals are located at far off places beyond the access of beedi workers due to which they are not in a position to avail the medical facilities. The Committee find that the common health problems associated with beedi rolling are respiratory, asthma, bodyache, headache, eyestrain, TB and spondylitis. These adversely affect the health of the beedi rollers. The Committee strongly feel that these workers need specialized, accessible, affordable and regular medicare. The Committee, therefore, desire that some alternative arrangements be made urgently for extending specialized medical treatment. Besides, the Committee recommend to ply mobile vans equipped with specialized doctor, nurse, medicines, etc. to facilitate the beedi workers residing in the remote areas where hospitals and dispensaries are not available.

Reply of the Government

1.16 Out of 4 newly sanctioned hospitals i.e. at Yadgir in Bangalore region and Sircilla in Hyderabad region have already started functioning. Land for remaining two hospitals at Sagardighi and Nebagram have been identified and transferring of title deed to Central Government is in process. Out of 40 newly sanctioned dispensaries, 21 dispensaries have started functioning. Expeditious efforts are being made to start the remaining hospitals and dispensaries. The Hospitals and Dispensaries are opened after a survey made to find out the concentration of beedi workers areas. All the diseases mentioned in the Committee's recommendations are treated in these hospitals and dispensaries. However, whenever, a patient requires a specialized treatment, he/she is referred to the State Government Hospitals or empanelled hospitals for the further treatment. Expenditure made on treatment in these hospitals are reimbursed as per the schemes. There is also arrangement of mobile dispensaries equipped with specialized doctors, nurse, medicines etc. to provide treatment to Beedi workers residing in remote areas. Moreover, improvement in health facilities to Beedi workers is a continuous process.

1.17 Apart from above healthcare infrastructure, Rashtriya Swasthiya Bima Yojana, an all India IT enabled Healthcare scheme has been extended to Beedi workers. This covers most hospitalization and surgical expenses. This year, all units are being mobilized to ensure universal registration of Beedi workers. Pursuant to the direction an annual wellness check is being conducted this year to evaluate the general health status of Beedi workers and their families.

Comments of the Committee

1.18 The Committee are perturbed to note as to how the 4 Hospitals and 40 newly sanctioned dispensaries will suffice to cater to the health care of 64 lakh Beedi workers. Further, a more worrisome fact is that even after so many years, Government could

make only 2 hospitals and 21 dispensaries functional. The Committee, therefore, are of the view that four newly sanctioned 15 beded hospitals are not sufficient to cater to the health requirements for all the Beedi workers. The Committee are also surprised to note that, Madhya Pradesh which has the highest percentage of Beedi workers in India has been provided only one hospital in Jabalpur (M.P) in which 30 beds are reserved for Beedi workers, which is insufficient to cater to 18.20% of the total Beedi workers, in meeting their medical requirement. It is seen that long term exposure to tobacco and poor working conditions wreak havoc on the health of workers. The Committee recommend establishing more hospitals and dispensaries in various parts of the country and more particularly in Madhya Pradesh and also make the other 2 hospitals and 21 dispensaries proposed operational under a special plan, within the financial year.

Recommendation (Sl.No.4 Para No. 3.16)

1.19 The Committee observe that most of the beedi workers are poor, SC/ST and under BPL category. They are unable to spend money on the medical care. The Committee, therefore, recommend that cashless treatment should be given in recognized hospitals. In case they are not able to avail the facility at recognised hospital the actual amount for all the diseases should be reimbursed to SC/ST beedi workers. Further, the Committee also observe that only beedi workers working in organized sector are eligible to avail medical facilities from ESI hospitals. The Committee feel that the opening of new hospitals and dispensaries alone is not sufficient to cater to the medical needs of the beedi workers. The scope and benefits under ESI are more such as leave encashment during treatment period, etc. The Committees, therefore, recommend that all beedi workers including SCs and STs working under contractors or home base beedi workers should be brought under ESI Corporation.

Reply of the Government

1.20 The ESI Act, 1948 applies to the factories employing 10 or more persons and situated in notified area called implemented area. State and Central Government are empowered to extend the provisions of the Act to other class of establishment, industrial, commercial, agriculture or otherwise. This is a contributory Scheme. Employees of the factories/ establishment drawing wages up to Rs. 15,000/- per month are covered. Further, provision of medical facility is the prerequisite for implementation of the scheme.

1.21 Employees working in Beedi manufacturing units situated in implemented area are provided ESI facilities when they are working in covered units whether employed directly or through contractor. Further, the Beedi workers and their dependents upto an unit of five members are covered under RSBY Scheme, wherein cashless hospitalization facility is provided to them.

Comments of the Committee

1.22 The Committee appreciate the fact that the Government have extended the facilities available in ESI hospitals for catering to the needs of Beedi workers directly or through contractor. The Committee observe that it is mostly women who are engaged for Beedi Rolling work which entails low pay, insecurity and hazardous conditions for health. The risks to health are not only confined to those who work, but also extend to children exposed to tobacco and also to others who often live in unventilated houses in which work goes on. The Central Government and the State Governments should establish ESI hospitals in the rural and urban areas where a large number of beedi workers reside. The Committee urge upon the Government to ensure proper implementation of the existing laws for protection and welfare of beedi workers as well as to train them with new skills to protect their health. The Committee strongly feel that unorganized Beedi workers should be included for availing cashless treatment schemes

and also covered under Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) Scheme. The Committee also desire that women Beedi workers be provided mask to protect their health.

Recommendation (Sl.No.5, Para No. 3.17)

1.23 The Committee feel happy to note that all beedi workers have been brought under the ambit of Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojna (RSBY) but at the same time take serious note of the fact that enumeration under RSBY has not yet been completed causing delay in providing benefits of RSBY to SCs/STs beedi workers. The Committee, therefore, recommend that enumeration work should be expedited and the Committee should be apprised of the exact number of SCs/STs beedi workers in the country.

Reply of the Government

1.24 Under 64 KB Smart Cards for RSBY beneficiary data is available category wise viz. SC/ST, Minority/Others/OBC. On the basis of this data for 64 KB for Beedi Workers eligible for enrolment under RSBY, the break-up of SC/ST is given at **Annexure-A**.

Comments of the Committee

1.25 The Committee note that beneficiary data for RSBY is available category wise viz. SC/ST/Minority/Others/OBC under 64 KB Smart Cards. On the basis of this data under 64 KB cards, Beedi Workers are eligible for enrolment under RSBY. The Committee urge the Government to tie up with State Governments to ensure that the RSBY scheme be implemented properly for all Beedi Workers on priority so as to make the scheme result oriented. The Committee may be apprised of the current status of SC/ST Beedi workers being benefitted under RSBY scheme in the States. The Committee recommend that healthcare facilities under the various Central/State Governments schemes such as the Rashtriya Gramin Jeevan Suraksha Yojana be ensured so that the benefits of such

schemes may reach all the concerned, including SC/ST Beedi workers and their families.

Recommendation (Sl.No.6, Para No. 3.18)

1.26 The Committee appreciate that so far 270 hospitals have been de-panelled only due to misuse of smart card but at the same time observe that the de-panelling of hospital and shortcomings in issue of smart cards in Maharashtra causes hardship to beedi workers for non-availability of medical facilities. The Committee, therefore, in order to bridge gap of de-panelled hospitals vis-a-vis shortcomings in issue of smart cards strongly recommend to strengthen the monitoring system albeit de-panelling so that basic purpose to Health facilities to the beedi worker may not be defeated. The Committee, therefore, be apprised the progress made by the Government in this regard.

Reply of the Government

1.27 Under RSBY the appropriate mechanism for detection of fraud cases and irregularities by the Hospital has been devised. Insurance Company/SNA consistently analyse the Hospitalisation data received on their server and take immediate action whenever any irregularity is observed. SNAs also take steps to ensure that adequate number of hospitals are available to service the insured population including Beedi Workers. The Welfare Commissioners are suitably instructed to monitor the implementation of RSBY Scheme in their respective Regions.

Comments of the Committee

1.28 The Committee appreciate the fact that punitive measures have been taken against the hospitals involved in fraudulent activities. However, the Committee recommend that a proper mechanism be adopted to ensure that while taking and ensuring penal steps

against hospitals indulging in fraudulent activities, no shortage of medical facility is faced by the Beedi workers.

Recommendation (Sl.No.7, Para No. 3.23)

1.29 The Committee express their displeasure to note that there is no scheme to open new school/colleges in the area inhabited by beedi workers. The Committee observe that the Government on the one hand is introducing various schemes such as Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, etc. for the development of education and on the other hand not opening schools/colleges in areas inhabited by beedi workers including SCs/STs. The Committee are of the view that it is the education which can bring significant change in the socio-economic status of the SC & ST community. Educating specially to the children is of paramount importance for overall development of the community. Government, NGOs and Corporate Sector should work together to educate the children of Beedi Workers. Educationists should work out of a model where children are encouraged to go to school instead of taking up the job of making beedis. NCERT or even other organisations may conduct detailed study and submit a proposal to involve all the stakeholders in improving education level of the children of SC & ST community. This may include opening of new schools providing incentives to join the school, discourage dropouts, provide hostel facility, provision of scholarships, etc. The Committee, therefore, recommend that new schools/colleges should be opened where schools are inadequate to cater the needs.

Reply of the Government

1.30 Since the matter is under the jurisdiction of concerned State Labour Organisation for opening of schools in the areas inhabited by Beedi workers including SCs/STs. In the context, letter has been sent to Principal Secretary, All State Government for necessary action at their end.

Comments of the Committee

1.31 The Committee feel that this is indicative of a sorry state of affairs, as even after strongly recommending for opening schools/colleges in the areas inhabited by Beedi workers no positive step has been taken in this directions by the Government so far. The Committee once again emphasise that the National Policy on Education should be implemented in the areas inhabited by beedi workers so that the beedi workers and their family members are benefitted. Also, the educational programmes should be planned to promote and enhance the literacy rate of beedi workers and their wards by the Central and State Governments. Therefore, the Committee urge upon the Government to hold discussions with State Labour Organisation (SLO) and work towards providing free schools/college facilities in the area inhabited by Beedi Workers, more particularly those having SC/ST populace.

Recommendation (Sl.No.8, Para No. 3.24)

1.32 The Committee note that entire family including wards of SC/ST beedi workers work for the whole day to meet the target of securing full day wage. In such a pernicious circumstances, children forgo or postpone their education to supplement the family income. The Committee, therefore, desire that suitable mechanism be evolved and awareness campaign regarding various schemes for the development of education should be launched to check drop out ratio so that children of beedi workers could get at least the elementary education.

Reply of the Government

1.33 Providing education is under the jurisdiction of concerned State Government. State Government take steps to evolve mechanism and arrange awareness campaigns for the development of education. In this context, a letter has already been sent to Principal Secretary all State Governments. In addition to that educational scheme under the Act is applicable to the

beneficiaries and they are provided financial assistance for primary education to Post Graduation as well as Professional Courses.

Comments of the Committee

1.34 The Committee do not agree with the version of the Government that providing education is the responsibility of State Government only. As opposed to this perspective both Central Government as well as State Governments are equally liable and responsible in regard to education. Basic educational institutions/centres for beedi workers should be set up with the involvement of Central Government and State Governments including voluntary non-Governmental agencies and Panchayat Raj Institutions. Central Government should establish Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs) in such areas and in addition to that various Central Government organisations, PSUs and companies working in these Beedi workers inhabited areas should spend their CSR funds for welfare of weaker sections of the society. Government should chalk out a policy in this regard and inform the Committee of the same. The Government has to ensure that these institutions are capable to run such education centres wherever possible to cater to the needs of beedi workers who, after work or during holidays, can present themselves at the education centre. The Committee reiterate their earlier recommendation that suitable mechanism be evolved including carrying out awareness campaign regarding optimum utilization of various schemes for the advancement of education among Beedi workers and their family members. The drop-out ratio amongst the children of beedi workers may also be checked.

Recommendation (Sl.No.9, Para No. 3.25)

1.35 The Committee observe that the cost of higher study has been enhanced manifold and the condition of beedi workers is worsening day by day. The Committee feel happy to note that

there is proposal to enhance scholarships from 8000/- to 15000/- for professional degree course. The Committee, therefore desire that this enhancement proposal should be implemented immediately. The Committee also recommend that scholarship upto graduation level should also be step up. The Committee, however are dismayed to note that the details of the scholarship to the wards of SC/ST beedi workers is not available and there is no proposal under consideration of the Government to give training to the wards of SC/ST Beedi workers. The Committee strongly recommend that training should be imparted to the wards of SC/ST beedi workers. The Committee would like to be apprised about the details of scholarship given to the wards of SCs/STs beedi workers. The Committee desire that wards of SC/ST beedi workers should be given both the scholarships- scholarship of SC/ST as per their entitlement and Scholarship of beedi workers.

Reply of the Government

1.36 All welfare commissioners have been directed to provide vocational training to the wards of Beedi workers through Modular Employable Scheme as alternative source of income so as to enable them to uplift their financial conditions. The details of the beneficiaries under the Scholarship Scheme from Class First to Post Graduation and Professional courses are enclosed as **Annexure-B**.

1.37 The proposal to enhance the scholarship from 8000/- to 15000/- for professional degree course is under process. Scholarship is provided to the beneficiaries upto Post-Graduation including Professional Courses. It is envisaged in the scheme that the beneficiary can avail only one benefit at a time.

Comments of the Committee

1.38 The Committee appreciate the fact that a proposal has been mooted for enhancing the scholarship amount to Rs. 15,000/- for pursuing professional degree courses by the

wards of Beedi workers; and the steps taken by the Welfare Commissioners for implementing vocational training to the wards of Beedi workers through Modular Employable scheme. The Committee also observe that in some areas, the supply of books and uniforms is not provided timely to the wards of Beedi workers. The Committee recommend that the Government should ensure that these benefits should be implemented timely and properly in the areas inhabited by Beedi Workers, particularly in areas with significant SC/ST populace. The Committee also recommend that bus/transport facilities should also be provided to them for the purpose.

Recommendation (Sl.No.10, Para No. 3.31)

1.39 The Committee note the steep hike in the material and construction cost of houses. Subsidy given to the beedi workers is too less to construct a simple house. The Committee feel happy to note that there is a proposal under consideration of the Government for enhancement of subsidy from Rs.40000/- to Rs.75000/-. The Committee, therefore, desire that the said proposal should be implemented immediately. The Committee also recommend that Housing loan to beedi workers particularly SC/ST beedi workers should be sanctioned by banks/financial institutions on interest free/subsidised rate of interest.

Reply of the Government

1.40 Yes, the enhancement of housing subsidy to the Beedi workers from Rs. 40,000/- to 75,000/- is under consideration of the Government. Government of India committed to implement this scheme when the consent/approval is received from the State Government. State Governments are expected to contribute Rs. 15,000/-. The response of this was requested from State Governments. So far only West Bengal has given the consent.

Comments of the Committee

1.41 The Committee observe that the matter regarding the housing subsidy to the Beedi Workers has not been resolved so far. The Committee urge the Government to take all steps to ensure proper and timely implementation of the proposal for enhancement of housing subsidy from Rs. 40,000/- to Rs. 75,000/-. The Committee have been apprised that the Government of India sanctioned several housing projects to beedi workers in the name of 'Ashraya Yojana'. However, it was found that the housing projects have not been implemented properly because of paucity of funds and lack of awareness among the beedi workers. The Committee also urge the Government to provide interest free/subsidized rate of interest on housing loans to SC/ST beedi workers and also to sensitize them about the benefits of Government housing projects.

Recommendation (SI.No.11, Para No. 3.32)

1.42 The Committee note that under Revised Integrated Housing Scheme (RIHS), the workers have to deposit Rs.5000/- after the administrative approval of Director General Labour Welfare Office which are refundable. The Committee find that it is very difficult for a poor SC/ST beedi workers to arrange Rs.5000/- for getting subsidy of Rs.40,000/- under RIHS. The Committee, therefore, recommend that submitting of Rs.5000/- by SC/ST beedi workers should be done away with.

Reply of the Government

1.43 The proposal is under process for active consideration.

Recommendation (SI.No.12, Para No. 3.33)

1.44 The Committee note that Evaluation Study of Revised Integrated Housing Scheme (RIHS) 2007 has been conducted. The Committee would like to be apprised of the outcome of the evaluation study. The Committee also recommend that similar evaluation study should also be conducted w.r.t other welfare schemes i.e. Health care and education.

Reply of the Government

1.45 Recommendations of Evaluation Study on Revised Integrated Housing Scheme (RIHS), 2007 for Beedi Workers etc. has been sent to the Welfare Commissioners and advised them to take action. Health care of Beedi workers is continuation process. Health schemes are modified from time to time to improve the health facilities of Beedi workers. Health care/facilities are given to the Beedi workers regularly when they are affected by any disease. Pursuant to the direction and annual wellness check is being conducted this year to evaluate the general health status of Beedi workers and their families.

Comments of the Committee

1.46 The Committee are perturbed to note that no clarification has been given in the post evidence replies on the outcome of the evaluation study of Revised Integrated Housing Scheme (RIHS) 2007. The Ministry, in the post-evidence replies, has furnished information on evaluation study on the welfare scheme of healthcare only. The Committee recommend that similar evaluation study should also be conducted on the welfare scheme of education facilities provided to the wards of Beedi workers. The Committee may be informed about the outcome of the proposed study.

Recommendation (Sl.No.13, Para No. 3.35)

1.47 The Committee note that an amount of Rs.10,000/- for natural death and Rs.25,000/- for accidental death is being paid to the heirs of the beedi workers. The Committee feel that the compensation is very low and recommend that it should be enhanced from Rs.10,000/- to Rs.50,000/- for natural death and from Rs.25,000 to Rs.1,00,000 for accidental death.

Reply of the Government

1.48 This matter will be placed before the next coming Central Advisory Committee on Beedi Workers Welfare Fund scheduled to be held on 21.08.2014.

Comments of the Committee

1.49 The Committee again strongly recommend that compensation for natural and accidental death being paid to the concerned family of Beedi workers is very low and it should be enhanced to Rs. 1,00,000/- in cases of natural death and Rs. 2,00,000/- in accidental death cases. The Committee wish to be apprised of the outcome of the meeting of Central Advisory Committee on Beedi Workers Welfare Fund held in this regard.

Recommendation (Sl.No.14, Para No. 3.36)

1.50 The Committee are appalled to note that financial assistance of Rs.5,000/- is given for marriage of first two daughters. The Committee find this assistance amount rather too paltry to help a beedi worker to solemnize a marriage due to increase in cost of various items and therefore recommend to enhance the amount to 50,000/- for marriage of two daughters.

Reply of the Government

1.51 This matter will be placed before the next coming Central Advisory Committee on Beedi Workers Welfare Fund scheduled to be held on 21.08.2014.

Comments of the Committee

1.52 The Committee feel constrained to note that the recommendation for increasing the financial assistance amount for the marriage of first two daughters of Beedi workers has not been considered positively by the Government. The Beedi workers belong to downtrodden section of the society and Rs. 5,000/- as assistance for a daughters' marriage is a meager amount. The Committee strongly recommend once again that the Government should look into the matter and increase the assistance amount to Rs. 50,000/- for the marriage of two daughters of Beedi workers.

Recommendation (Sl.No.15, Para No. 4.6)

1.53 The Committee observe that the responsibility of implementation of all Welfare schemes are given to the Welfare Commissioners of nine regions in the country. The Committee also observe that Welfare Commissioners of Allahabad, Kolkata, Hyderabad and Nagpur regions have given jurisdiction of 6, 10, 4 and 4 States respectively for implementing various schemes for beedi workers. The Committee observe that it is not only very difficult for the Welfare Commissioner who is holding responsibility of more than two States for proper monitoring, supervising and implementing various schemes but also for the beedi worker to express their difficulties to the Commissioner. The Committee, therefore, desire in order to have effective working and monitoring of Welfare Commissioner and to facilitate liaison/accessibility of beedi workers to their officer it is essential that a responsibility of not more than one State should be entrusted to a Welfare Commissioner. The Committee also recommend that the Ministry without further ado should strengthen the Welfare Commissioners with proper logistic support to implement, supervise and monitor various schemes meant for the welfare of beedi workers.

Reply of the Government

1.54 Nine more posts of Welfare Commissioners have been created and presently 18 Welfare Commissioners are posted for effective implementation and monitoring of the schemes in almost all the States.

Recommendation (Sl.No.16, Para No. 4.7)

1.55 The Committee find that there is one post vacant of Welfare Commissioner. The Committee also note that only one ST Welfare Commissioner belongs to SC/ST Community out of eight. The Committee would like to stress that Welfare Commissioners are instrumental in execution and implementation of Welfare Schemes for beedi workers. Therefore, the Committee strongly recommend that this post should not be kept vacant. The Committee also desire that

representation of SC/ST community be included as per guidelines of the Government of India for effectively looking after the interest of SC/ST beedi workers in the country.

Reply of the Government

1.56 In addition to existing nine Regions, nine more posts of Welfare Commissioners have been created and at present, no posts of Welfare Commissioners are vacant. Welfare Commissioners are now looking after the Welfare of Beedi Workers in almost all the States. All these posts belong to Group-A service and the posting of Welfare Commissioners are decided on the basis of seniority.

Comments of the Committee

1.57 The Committee appreciative of the fact that no post of Welfare Commissioner is vacant at this point of time. However, the Committee are surprised to note that the Government does not appear to be keen on increasing the representation of SC/ST community amongst the Welfare Commissioners. The Committee recommend that the representation of SC/ST community may be increased at the earliest so as to effectively look into the matters relating to the welfare of SC/ST Beedi workers in the country.

Recommendation (Sl.No.17, Para No. 5.9)

1.58 The Committee note that Beedi Workers Welfare Fund set up under Beedi Workers Welfare Fund Act 1976, is financed through a levy of cess by the way of excise duty on manufactured beedis. The Committee find that cess is the only source of finance of welfare schemes for beedi workers. The Committee note that expenditure on Welfare Schemes is increasing every year and the Government has decided to enhance the rate of cess and to withdraw the exemption given to beedi manufacturer of having less than 20 lakhs beedis in a year. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Beedi Workers Welfare Cess Act, 1976 be amended in a manner so as to enhance rate of cess and to withdraw the exemption being given to the beedi manufacturers having turnover of less than 20 lakh beedis per year. The

Committee also recommend that in the meantime, till the Cess Act is amended, additional budgetary support be obtained from the Ministry of Finance for funding the Beedi Workers Welfare Fund so that welfare activities of Beedi Workers are not impeded. The Committee also desire that the Ministry should rope in corporate houses for extending support for the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Beedi Workers under Corporate Social Responsibility.

Reply of the Government

1.59 This matter will be placed before the next coming Central Advisory Committee on Beedi Workers Welfare Fund scheduled to be held on 21.08.2014.

Comments of the Committee

1.60 The Committee may be apprised of the details and progress in the matter of amendment of cess act and increase in budgetary support for funding the Beedi Workers Welfare Fund.

1.61 The Committee are of the view that the Government should rope in corporate houses for extending support for the Welfare of SC & ST Beedi workers under CSR. The Committee also recommend that the Government should identify Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) with a view to enabling allocation of a specific percentage of CSR reserve to the welfare of the Beedi workers particularly SC/ST populace in the nearby region. The Committee also observe that investigation of cases of contravention of laws or malpractices in the beedi industry by the labour department generally prove to be ineffective and also time consuming. The Government should take necessary steps for efficacious implementation of Labour Laws.

Recommendation (Sl.No.18, Para No. 6.5)

1.62 The Committee note that Central Advisory Committee is constituted under Beedi Workers Welfare Fund Act 1976 to monitor the Welfare Scheme formulated under the Welfare Funds as

well as to advise the Workers Welfare Organisation for creation of new schemes/modifications of existing schemes to enhance the benefits to be provided to beedi workers. The Committee note that out of 14 State Advisory Committees (SACs) under Beedi Workers Welfare Fund Rules 1978, 4 SACs are pertaining to States of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu are still under re-constitution. The Committee urge the Government to take up the matter of reconstitution of SACs on priority so that necessary advise on matters related to administration of above fund may be sought and utilized for the welfare of beedi workers. The Committee are appalled to note that there is no provision for nomination of local MP/MLA in the Central Advisory Committee.

1.63 The Committee strongly express their displeasure in the matter that the members of SCs/STs Associations are also not being included in the Central Advisory Committee and State Advisory Committees. The Committee are of the view that the relevant Act should be suitably amended to include local MP/MLA and Members from SCs/STs Associations in this Central/State Advisory Committee. The Committee also feel that the beedi workers belonging to SC/ST community may be induced to form Associations/Self Help Group at Village Panchayat/Municipal ward level to spread awareness among their community about the welfare schemes meant for them and look after their own development.

Reply of the Government

1.64 The matter regarding reconstitution of SAC has been taken up with Welfare Commissioners of all the States. The suitable amendments in Section 5 of Beedi Workers Welfare Fund Rules, 1978 will be placed for including MP/MLA and members of SC/ST Associations in the Central Advisory Committees and the State Advisory Committees before the next coming Central Advisory Committee on Beedi Workers Welfare Fund scheduled to be held on 21.08.2014.

Comments of the Committee

1.65 The Committee desire to know the current status in regard to reconstitution of State Advisory Committees. Also the outcome of the Central Advisory Committee meeting for amendment to Section 5 of Beedi Workers Welfare Fund Rules for inclusion of local MPs/MLAs and representatives of SC/ST Associations in Central Advisory & State Advisory Committees.

Recommendation (Sl.No.19, Para No. 7.2)

1.66 The Committee note that very meager amount of pension is paid to the Beedi workers under Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Pension Act, 1952 and there is no separate pension scheme for Beedi workers. The Committee are of the view that a separate pension scheme should be launched under social security scheme of the beedi workers. The Committee also strongly recommend that the amount of minimum pension should be fixed at Rs.1500/- per month.

Reply of the Government

1.67 Recently, Employees Provident Fund Organisation has amended the Employees Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Pension Act, 1952 and presently the minimum pension has been increased to Rs. 1000/- per month with effect from July, 2014. So far, the launching of separate pension scheme for Beedi workers is concerned, the matter will be placed before the next coming Central Advisory Committee on Beedi Workers Welfare Fund scheduled to be held on 21.08.2014.

Comments of the Committee

1.68 The Committee may be apprised about the outcome in regard to constituting a separate pension scheme for Beedi workers, as placed before the Central Advisory Committee. Also, the Committee is appalled to learn that the beedi workers receive a minimum pension of Rs. 1000/- under the Employees Provident Fund & Miscellaneous

Pension Act. Keeping in view the inflation levels and the need to improve the standards of living of the socially and economically backward classes, the Committee observe that an amount of one thousand is a meager and insufficient amount and the monthly pension should at least be Rs. 3500/- (minimum pension given by the Central Government) per month to cover the daily needs of the beedi workers.

Recommendation (Sl.No.20, Para No. 7.4)

1.69 The Committee are surprised to note the lukewarm response of the Ministry that the Minimum Wages Act 1948 allow the respective State Governments to fix the wages of beedi workers. The Committee, therefore, recommend instructing the regional Welfare Commissioner of all the nine zones to look into the matter on priority and to ensure that all beedi workers should get the minimum wages fixed by the Government and apprise the Committee.

Reply of the Government

1.70 As per the existing provisions, the minimum wages are fixed by the respective State Government and power for revision and enforcement is vested with respective State Governments. However, the Welfare Commissioners have been suitably instructed to liaison with respective State Governments authorities responsible for fixation, revision and enforcement of the Act.

Comments of the Committee

1.71 The Committee, after having considered all the facts, are of the strong view that immediate and effective steps should be taken by the Regional Welfare Commissioner of all the nine zones to liaison with the respective State Governments in order to fix, revise and enforce the minimum wages within a specified time limit and apprise the Committee.

The Committee, therefore, reiterate their earlier recommendation.

Recommendation (Sl.No.21, Para No. 7.7)

1.72 The Committee note that no survey in regard to the impact of anti-smoking campaign has been conducted so far. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Government should take initiative to conduct a survey on the impact of anti-smoking campaign on the livelihood of beedi workers. The Committee also recommend that vocational training which are identified by the Welfare Commissioner should be imparted to the jobless beedi workers and their children at their earliest and apprise the Committee.

Reply of the Government

1.73 There is no proposal for conducting a survey of the impact of anti-smoking campaign on the livelihood of Beedi workers. Vocational training is being imparted to beedi workers/wards under Modular Employable Skills Scheme in 308 courses through ITI, NGOs in different trade. In addition to this it is proposed that in the next meeting of CAC under Beedi Workers Welfare Fund to be held on 21 August, 2014 that the wards of worker who are undergoing ITI training should be paid stipend @Rs.10,000/- per annum and accordingly it is being proposed to earmark 20% of the fund for the scholarship.

Comments of the Committee

1.74 The Committee may be apprised the current status of the proposal for ITI training stipend and scholarship fund, placed before the Central Advisory Committee meeting. The Committee also desire to know the exact number of beedi workers/wards enrolled for vocational training under Modular Employable skills scheme and the year of inception of these trainings.

Recommendation (Sl.No.22, Para No. 7.10)

1.75 The Committee note that the directives issued on 19.11.1991 by the Hon'ble Supreme Court are still under examination with the concerned State Governments and its organisation. The Committee take a serious note for non-implementation of directives of Hon'ble Supreme

Court by the Ministry so far. The Committee, therefore, desire that the directives of the SC should be implemented forthwith and the Committee may be apprised suitably.

Reply of the Government

1.76 The above directives dated 19.11.1991 are expressly meant for Government of Tamilnadu. State Government of Tamilnadu has intimated that the Welfare measures specially the implementation (Provident Fund Act) also covers SC/ST Beedi workers.

Comments of the Committee

1.77 The Committee have been apprised that the directives issued on 19.11.1991 by the Hon'ble Supreme Court are expressly meant for Government of Tamilnadu. State Government of Tamilnadu has intimated that the Welfare measures specially the implementation (Provident Fund Act) also covers SC/ST Beedi workers. The Committee desire, the Government to take necessary steps to analyze and implement the Provident Fund Act to make it more beneficial for all the Beedi workers particularly to SCs/STs. The Committee recommend that the Government may give directives to the State Governments to execute this Act properly for safeguarding the interests of Beedi workers.

CHAPTER - II

Recommendations/observations which have been accepted by the Government

Recommendation (Sl.No.1 Para No.2.13)

2.1 As regards the identification and separate records of SC/ST Beedi workers, Committee are of the view that at this stage there is no need to make separate study for identification of SC/ST Beedi Workers as with the enumeration on the basis of caste and community of the Beedi Workers under Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY), the Ministry will be able to get the exact figures through digitalized data without any mistake. The Committee, however, are surprised to note that 24.8% of identity cards made for Beedi Workers having questionable validity. Committee take a serious view on it and strongly recommend that the Government should quickly conduct a study to identify the fake/invalid identity cards so that genuine Beedi Workers may not be deprived of their legitimate right of the various schemes envisaged by the Government for their welfare. The Committee would like to be apprised of the progress made by the Government in this regard at the earliest.

Reply of the Government

2.2 Directions have been issued to Welfare Commissioners to conduct a special campaign to identify and weed out fake Identity cards. The exercise has been completed in Bangalore, Tirunelveli, Ajmer, Ahmedabad, Nagpur, Allahabad, Dehradun and Chandigarh Regions. In all Regions, a universal database is being prepared with address Aadhar number and mobile numbers of beneficiaries to ensure universal enrolment of Beedi Workers in RSBY Scheme. This will also help in weeding out fake cards.

Comments of the Committee

2.3 Please see para 1.6 of Chapter I.

Recommendation (Sl.No.6, Para No. 3.18)

2.4 The Committee appreciate that so far 270 hospitals have been de-panelled only due to misuse of smart card but at the same time observe that the de-panelling of hospital and shortcomings in issue of smart cards in Maharashtra causes hardship to beedi workers for non-availability of medical facilities. The Committee, therefore, in order to bridge gap of de-panelled hospitals vis-a-vis shortcomings in issue of smart cards strongly recommend to strengthen the monitoring system albeit de-panelling so that basic purpose to Health facilities to the beedi worker may not be defeated. The Committee, therefore, be apprised the progress made by the Government in this regard.

Reply of the Government

2.5 Under RSBY the appropriate mechanism for detection of fraud cases and irregularities by the Hospital has been devised. Insurance Company/SNA consistently analyse the Hospitalisation data received on their server and take immediate action whenever any irregularity is observed. SNAs also take steps to ensure that adequate number of hospitals are available to service the insured population including Beedi Workers. The Welfare Commissioners are suitably instructed to monitor the implementation of RSBY Scheme in their respective Regions.

Comments of the Committee

2.6 Please see para 1.28 of Chapter I

Recommendation (Sl.No.15, Para No. 4.6)

2.7 The Committee observe that the responsibility of implementation of all Welfare schemes are given to the Welfare Commissioners of nine regions in the country. The Committee also observe that Welfare Commissioners of Allahabad, Kolkata, Hyderabad and Nagpur regions

have given jurisdiction of 6, 10, 4 and 4 States respectively for implementing various schemes for beedi workers. The Committee observe that it is not only very difficult for the Welfare Commissioner who is holding responsibility of more than two States for proper monitoring, supervising and implementing various schemes but also for the beedi worker to express their difficulties to the Commissioner. The Committee, therefore, desire in order to have effective working and monitoring of Welfare Commissioner and to facilitate liaison/accessibility of beedi workers to their officer it is essential that a responsibility of not more than one State should be entrusted to a Welfare Commissioner. The Committee also recommend that the Ministry without further ado should strengthen the Welfare Commissioners with proper logistic support to implement, supervise and monitor various schemes meant for the welfare of beedi workers.

Reply of the Government

2.8 Nine more posts of Welfare Commissioners have been created and presently 18 Welfare Commissioners are posted for effective implementation and monitoring of the schemes in almost all the States.

Recommendation (Sl.No.16, Para No. 4.7)

2.9 The Committee find that there is one post vacant of Welfare Commissioner. The Committee also note that only one ST Welfare Commissioner belong to SC/ST Community out of eight. The Committee would like to stress that Welfare Commissioners are instrumental in execution and implementation of Welfare Schemes for beedi workers. Therefore, the Committee strongly recommend that this post should not be kept vacant. The Committee also desire that representation of SC/ST community be included as per guidelines of the Government of India for effectively looking after the interest of SC/ST beedi workers in the country.

Reply of the Government

2.10 In addition to existing nine Regions, nine more posts of Welfare Commissioners have been created and at present, no posts of Welfare Commissioners are vacant. Welfare Commissioners are now looking after the Welfare of Beedi Workers in almost all the States. All these posts belong to Group-A service and the posting of Welfare Commissioners are decided on the basis of seniority.

Comments of the Committee

2.11 Please see para 1.57 of Chapter I.

Recommendation (Sl.No.20, Para No. 7.4)

2.12 The Committee are surprised to note the lukewarm response of the Ministry that the Minimum Wages Act 1948 allow the respective State Government to fix the wages of beedi workers. The Committee, therefore, recommend to instruct the regional Welfare Commissioner of all the nine zones to look into the matter on priority and to ensure that all beedi workers should get the minimum wages fixed by the Government and apprise the Committee.

Reply of the Government

2.13 As per the existing provisions, the minimum wages are fixed by the respective State Government and power for revision and enforcement is vested with respective State Governments. However, the Welfare Commissioners have been suitably instructed to liaison with respective State Governments authorities responsible for fixation, revision and enforcement of the Act.

Comments of the Committee

2.14 Please see para 1.71 of Chapter I.

Recommendation (Sl.No.21, Para No. 7.7)

2.15 The Committee note that no survey in regard to the impact of anti-smoking campaign has been conducted so far. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Government should take initiative to conduct a survey on the impact of anti-smoking campaign on the livelihood of beedi workers. The Committee also recommend that vocational training which are identified by the Welfare Commissioner should be imparted to the jobless beedi workers and their children at their earliest and apprise the Committee.

Reply of the Government

2.16 There is no proposal for conducting a survey of the impact of anti-smoking campaign on the livelihood of Beedi workers. Vocational training is being imparted to beedi workers/wards under Modular Employable Skills Scheme in 308 courses through ITI, NGOs in different trade. In addition to this it is proposed that in the next meeting of CAC under Beedi Workers Welfare Fund to be held on 21 August, 2014 that the wards of worker who are undergoing ITI training should be paid stipend @Rs.10,000/- per annum and accordingly it is being proposed to earmark 20% of the fund for the scholarship.

Comments of the Committee

2.17 Please see para 1.74 of Chapter I.

CHAPTER - III

Recommendations/observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies of the Government

Recommendation (Sl.No.9, Para No. 3.25)

3.1 The Committee observe that the cost of higher study has been enhanced manifold and the condition of beedi workers is worsening day by day. The Committee feel happy to note that there is proposal to enhance scholarships from 8000/- to 15000/- for professional degree course. The Committee, therefore desire that this enhancement proposal should be implemented immediately. The Committee also recommend that scholarship upto graduation level should also be step up. The Committee, however, dismay to note that the details of the scholarship to the wards of SC/ST beedi workers is not available and there is no proposal under consideration of the Government to give training to the wards of SC/ST Beedi workers. The Committee strongly recommend that training should be imparted to the wards of SC/ST beedi workers. The Committee would like to be apprised about the details of scholarship given to the wards of SCs/STs beedi workers. The Committee desire that wards of SC/ST beedi workers should be given both the scholarships- scholarship of SC/ST as per their entitlement and Scholarship of beedi workers.

Reply of the Government

3.2 All welfare commissioners have been directed to provide vocational training to the wards of Beedi workers through Modular Employable Scheme as alternative source of income so as to enable them to uplift their financial conditions. The details of the beneficiaries under the Scholarship Scheme from Class First to Post Graduation and Professional courses are enclosed as **Annexure-B**.

3.3 The proposal to enhance the scholarship from 8000/- to 15000/- for professional degree course is under process. Scholarship is provided to the beneficiaries upto Post-Graduation including Professional Courses. It is envisaged in the scheme that the beneficiary can avail only one benefit at a time.

Comments of the Committee

3.4 Please see para 1.38 of Chapter I

Recommendation (Sl.No.13, Para No. 3.35)

3.5 The Committee note that an amount of Rs.10,000/- for natural death and Rs.25,000/- for accidental death is being paid to the heirs of the beedi workers. The Committee feel that the compensation is very low and recommend that it should be enhanced from Rs.10,000/- to Rs.50,000/- for natural death and from Rs.25,000 to Rs.1,00,000 for accidental death.

Reply of the Government

3.6 This matter will be placed before the next coming Central Advisory Committee on Beedi Workers Welfare Fund scheduled to be held on 21.08.2014.

Comments of the Committee

3.7 Please see para 1.49 of Chapter I.

CHAPTER - IV

Recommendations/observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration

Recommendation (Sl.No.2 Para No.2.14)

4.1 The Committee are dismayed to note that only Malda and Murshidabad districts of West Bengal were selected for conducting survey of Beedi Workers. The Committee would like to be apprised of the criteria for selection of districts for survey. The survey should be made category-wise in such a manner that exact number of SCs/STs Beedi Workers is identified. The Committee also recommend that surveys of such nature should be made in other States also. The Committee are also distressed to note that there are no means to verify the credentials of applicants as they are actively engaged in rolling beedis. The Committee would like to direct the Ministry to act in a proactive manner and draw out a strategical plan for verification of commercial as well as home based beedi workers. The Committee are dissatisfied to note that identity cards issued decades back have not been renewed. Moreover, some of beedi Workers family have more than one identity card. The ID card facilitates a beedi worker to reap the benefits available to them in the form of allowances etc. and thus streamlining the method for their issuance is of utmost importance. The Committee also recommend that the credentials of the applicants should be verified to avoid issue of fake/multiple identity cards.

Reply of the Government

4.2 The Sri Ram Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources, New Delhi conducted preliminary study suo-motto in Hyderabad and Karimnagar districts of Andhra Pradesh, Jabalpur, Sagar and Katni districts of Madhya Pradesh and Kolkata and Murshidabad

districts of West Bengal. The Centre submitted its study report and also made a presentation on 30-04-2008 before the Secretary (L&E).

4.3 Thereafter, due to the heavy financial burden of replicating this study across the Country, it has been decided by the Secretary (L&E) that a survey should be conducted by Sri Ram Centre in two-three districts of West Bengal to identify the genuine Beedi workers and de-register the bogus or ineligible ones.

4.4 As such, Sri Ram Centre had agreed to conduct the survey in Malda and Murshidabad districts of West Bengal and submitted the proposal for payment of Rs.3/- per Beedi workers. The estimated expenditure was Rs. 20 lakhs for 69,500 estimated number of Beedi workers in those two districts of West Bengal.

4.5 The said proposal was submitted to Planning Unit of Ministry of Labour and Employment for consideration and approval. After examination, Planning Unit had observed that as per the existing guidelines of the Grant-in-aid (GIA) Scheme, the total cost of a survey/study can be Rs. 4 Lakh and in exceptionally good case, the cost can go upto Rs. 5 lakh.

4.6 In view of the above, it was decided by the Ministry that 15 to 20% sample survey may be conducted in the above two districts of West Bengal only.

4.7 If the survey is to be conducted for all the Beedi Workers in India approximately minimum three to four crores rupees expected is to be incurred. Further, it is informed that Regional Welfare Commissioner Offices are taking all the possible steps to verify the credentials of the workers and satisfy themselves before issuing identity cards to them. This exercise has been completed in Bangalore, Tirunelveli, Ajmer, Ahmedabad, Nagpur, Allahabad, Dehradun and Chandigarh regions. Database is being prepared in respect of Beedi Workers for requiring under RSBY Scheme. This will give indication the actual numbers of Beedi workers.

Comments of the Committee

4.8 Please see para 1.14 of Chapter I.

Recommendation (SI.No.3 Para No. 3.15)

4.9 The Committee note with concern that only 7 hospitals and 204 dispensaries are there in all over the country to cater to the needs of the 64 lakhs beedi workers. The Committee have been informed by the Ministry that 4 hospitals and 40 dispensaries have also been sanctioned for beedi workers. The Committee desire that these hospitals and dispensaries should be made functional expeditiously. The Committee observe that most of these hospitals are located at far off places beyond the access of beedi workers due to which they are not in a position to avail the medical facilities. The Committee find that the common health problems associated with beedi rolling are respiratory, asthma, bodyache, headache, eyestrain, TB and spondylitis. These adversely affect the health of the beedi rollers. The Committee strongly feel that these workers need specialized, accessible, affordable and regular medicare. The Committee, therefore, desire that some alternative arrangements be made urgently for extending specialized medical treatment. Besides, the Committee recommend to ply mobile vans equipped with specialized doctor, nurse, medicines, etc. to facilitate the beedi workers residing in the remote areas where hospitals and dispensaries are not available.

Reply of the Government

4.10 Out of 4 newly sanctioned hospitals i.e. at Yadgir in Bangalore region and Sircilla in Hyderabad region have already started functioning. Land for remaining two hospitals at Sagardighi and Nebagram have been identified and transferring of title deed to Central Government is in process. Out of 40 newly sanctioned dispensaries, 21 dispensaries have started functioning. Expeditious efforts are being made to start the remaining hospitals and

dispensaries. The Hospitals and Dispensaries are opened after a survey made to find out the concentration of beedi workers areas. All the diseases mentioned in the Committee's recommendations are treated in these hospitals and dispensaries. However, whenever, a patient requires a specialized treatment, he/she is referred to the State Government Hospitals or empanelled hospitals for the further treatment. Expenditure made on treatment in these hospitals are reimbursed as per the schemes. There is also arrangement of mobile dispensaries equipped with specialized doctors, nurse, medicines etc. to provide treatment to Beedi workers residing in remote areas. Moreover, improvement in health facilities to Beedi workers is a continuous process.

4.11 Apart from above healthcare infrastructure, Rashtriya Swasthiya Bima Yojana, an all India IT enabled Healthcare scheme has been extended to Beedi workers. This covers most hospitalization and surgical expenses. This year all units are being mobilized to ensure universal registration of Beedi workers. Pursuant to the direction an annual wellness check is being conducted this year to evaluate the general health status of Beedi workers and their families.

Comments of the Committee

4.12 Please see para 1.18 of Chapter I

Recommendation (Sl.No.4 Para No. 3.16)

4.13 The Committee observe that most of the beedi workers are poor, SC/ST and under BPL category. They are unable to spend money on the medical care. The Committee, therefore, recommend that cashless treatment should be given in recognized hospitals. In case they are not able to avail the facility at recognised hospital the actual amount for all the diseases should be reimbursed to SC/ST beedi workers. Further, the Committee also observe that only beedi

workers working in organized sector are eligible to avail medical facilities from ESI hospitals. The Committee feel that the opening of new hospitals and dispensaries are alone not sufficient to cater to the medical needs of the beedi workers. The scope and benefits under ESI are more such as leave encashment during treatment period, etc. The Committees, therefore, recommend that all beedi workers including SCs and STs working under contractors or home base beedi workers should be brought under ESI Corporation.

Reply of the Government

4.14 The ESI Act, 1948 applies to the factories employing 10 or more persons and situated in notified area called implemented area. State and Central Government are empowered to extend the provisions of the Act to other class of establishment, industrial, commercial, agriculture or otherwise. This is a contributory Scheme. Employees of the factories/ establishment drawing wages up to Rs. 15,000/- per month are covered. Further, provision of medical facility is the prerequisite for implementation of the scheme.

4.15 Employees working in Beedi manufacturing units situated in implemented area are provided ESI facilities when they are working in covered units whether employed directly or through contractor. Further, the Beedi workers and their dependents upto an unit of five members are covered under RSBY Scheme, wherein cashless hospitalization facility is provided to them.

Comments of the Committee

4.16 Please see para 1.22 of Chapter I.

Recommendation (Sl.No.5, Para No. 3.17)

4.17 The Committee feel happy to note that all beedi workers have been brought under the ambit of Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojna (RSBY) but at the same time take serious note of the fact that enumeration under RSBY has not yet been completed causing delay in providing

benefits of RSBY to SCs/STs beedi workers. The Committee, therefore, recommend that enumeration work should be expedited and the Committee should be apprised of the exact number of SCs/STs beedi workers in the country.

Reply of the Government

4.18 Under 64 KB Smart Cards for RSBY beneficiary data is available category wise viz. SC/ST, Minority/Others/OBC. On the basis of this data for 64 KB for Beedi Workers eligible for enrolment under RSBY, the break-up of SC/ST is given at Annexure-A.

Comments of the Committee

4.19 Please see para 1.25 of Chapter I.

Recommendation (Sl.No.7, Para No. 3.23)

4.20 The Committee express their displeasure to note that there is no scheme to open new school/colleges in the area inhabited by beedi workers. The Committee observe that the Government on the one hand is introducing various schemes such as Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, etc. for the development of education and on the other hand not opening schools/colleges in areas inhabited by beedi workers including SCs/STs. The Committee are of the view that it is the education which can bring significant change in the socio-economic status of the SC & ST community. Educating specially to the children is of paramount importance for overall development of the community. Government, NGOs and Corporate Sector should work together to educate the children of Beedi Workers. Educationists should work out of a model where children are encouraged to go to school instead of taking up the job of making beedis. NCERT or even other organisations may conduct detailed study and submit a proposal to involve all the stakeholders in improving education level of the children of SC & ST community. This may include opening of new schools providing incentives to join the school, discourage

dropouts, provide hostel facility, provision of scholarships, etc. The Committee, therefore, recommend that new schools/colleges should be opened where schools are inadequate to cater the needs.

Reply of the Government

4.21 Since the matter is under the jurisdiction of concerned State Labour Organisation for opening of schools in the areas inhabited by Beedi workers including SCs/STs. In the context, letter has been sent to Principal Secretary, All State Government for necessary action at their end.

Comments of the Committee

4.22 Please see para 1.31 of Chapter I.

Recommendation (Sl.No.8, Para No. 3.24)

4.23 The Committee note that entire family including wards of SC/ST beedi workers work for the whole day to meet the target of securing full day wage. In such a pernicious circumstances, children forgo or postpone their education to supplement the family income. The Committee, therefore, desire that suitable mechanism be evolved and awareness campaign regarding various schemes for the development of education should be launched to check drop out ratio so that children of beedi workers could get at least the elementary education.

Reply of the Government

4.24 Providing education is under the jurisdiction of concerned State Government. State Government take steps to evolve mechanism and arrange awareness campaigns for the development of education. In this context, a letter has already been sent to Principal Secretary all State Government. In addition to that educational scheme under the Act is applicable to the

beneficiaries and they are provided financial assistance for primary education to Post Graduation as well as Professional Courses.

Comments of the Committee

4.25 Please see para 1.34 of Chapter I.

Recommendation (Sl.No.10, Para No. 3.31)

4.26 The Committee note the steep hike in the material and construction cost of houses. Subsidy given to the beedi workers is too less to construct a simple house. The Committee feel happy to note that there is a proposal under consideration of the Government for enhancement of subsidy from Rs.40000/- to Rs.75000/-. The Committee, therefore, desire that the said proposal should be implemented immediately. The Committee also recommend that Housing loan to beedi workers particularly SC/ST beedi workers should be sanctioned by banks/financial institutions on interest free/subsidised rate of interest.

Reply of the Government

4.27 Yes, the enhancement of housing subsidy to the Beedi workers from Rs. 40,000/- to 75,000/- is under consideration of the Government. Government of India committed to implement this scheme when the consent/approval is received from the State Government. State Governments are expected to contribute Rs. 15,000/-. The response of this was requested from State Governments. So far only West Bengal has given the consent.

Comments of the Committee

4.28 Please see para 1.41 of Chapter I.

Recommendation (SI.No.12, Para No. 3.33)

4.29 The Committee note that Evaluation Study of Revised Integrated Housing Scheme (RIHS) 2007 has been conducted. The Committee would like to be apprised of the outcome of the evaluation study. The Committee also recommend that similar evaluation study should also be conducted w.r.t other welfare schemes i.e. Health care and education.

Reply of the Government

4.30 Recommendations of Evaluation Study on Revised Integrated Housing Scheme (RIHS), 2007 for Beedi Workers etc. has been sent to the Welfare Commissioners and advised them to take action. Health care of Beedi workers is continuation process. Health schemes are modified from time to time to improve the health facilities of Beedi workers. Health care/facilities are given to the Beedi workers regularly when they are affected by any disease. Pursuant to the direction and annual wellness check is being conducted this year to evaluate the general health status of Beedi workers and their families.

Comments of the Committee

4.31 Please see para 1.46 of Chapter I.

Recommendation (SI.No.14, Para No. 3.36)

4.32 The Committee appalled to note that financial assistance of Rs.5,000/- is given for marriage of first two daughters. The Committee find this assistance amount rather too paltry to help a beedi worker to solemnize a marriage due to increase in cost of various items and therefore recommend to enhance the amount to 50,000/- for marriage of two daughters.

Reply of the Government

4.33 This matter will be placed before the next coming Central Advisory Committee on Beedi Workers Welfare Fund scheduled to be held on 21.08.2014.

Comments of the Committee

4.34 Please see para 1.52 of Chapter I.

Recommendation (Sl.No.19, Para No. 7.2)

4.35 The Committee note that very meager amount of pension is paid to the Beedi workers under Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Pension Act, 1952 and there is no separate pension scheme for Beedi workers. The Committee are of the view that a separate pension scheme should be launched under social security scheme of the beedi workers. The Committee also strongly recommend that the amount of minimum pension should be fixed at Rs.1500/- per month.

Reply of the Government

4.36 Recently, Employees Provident Fund Organisation has amended the Employees Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Pension Act, 1952 and presently the minimum pension has been increased to Rs. 1000/- per month with effect from July, 2014. So far, the launching of separate pension scheme for Beedi workers is concerned, the matter will be placed before the next coming Central Advisory Committee on Beedi Workers Welfare Fund scheduled to be held on 21.08.2014.

Comments of the Committee

4.37 Please see para 1.68 of Chapter I.

Recommendation (Sl.No.22, Para No. 7.10)

4.38 The Committee note that the directives issued on 19.11.1991 by the Hon'ble Supreme Court are still under examination with the concerned State Governments and its organisation. The Committee take a serious note for non-implementation of directives of Hon'ble Supreme Court by the Ministry so far. The Committee, therefore, desire that the directives of the SC should be implemented forthwith and the Committee may be apprised suitably.

Reply of the Government

4.39 The above directives dated 19.11.1991 are expressly meant for Government of Tamilnadu. State Government of Tamilnadu has intimated that the Welfare measures specially the implementation (Provident Fund Act) also covers SC/ST Beedi workers.

Comments of the Committee

4.40 Please see para 1.77 of Chapter I.

CHAPTER - V

Recommendations/observations in respect of which final replies of the Government have not been received

Recommendation (Sl.No.11, Para No. 3.32)

5.1 The Committee note that under Revised Integrated Housing Scheme (RIHS), the workers have to deposit Rs.5000/- after the administrative approval of Director General Labour Welfare Office which are refundable. The Committee find that it is very difficult for a poor SC/ST beedi workers to arrange Rs.5000/- for getting subsidy of Rs.40,000/- under RIHS. The Committee, therefore, recommend that submitting of Rs.5000/- by SC/ST beedi workers should be done away with.

Reply of the Government

5.2 The proposal is under process for active consideration.

Recommendation (Sl.No.17, Para No. 5.9)

5.3 The Committee note that Beedi Workers Welfare Fund set up under Beedi Workers Welfare Fund Act 1976, is financed through a levy of cess by the way of excise duty on manufactured beedis. The Committee find that cess is the only source of finance of welfare schemes for beedi workers. The Committee note that expenditure on Welfare Schemes is increasing every year and the Government has decided to enhance the rate of cess and to withdraw the exemption given to beedi manufacturer of having less than 20 lakhs beedis in a year. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Beedi Workers Welfare Cess Act, 1976 be amended in a manner so as to enhance rate of cess and to withdraw the exemption being given to the beedi manufacturers having turnover of less than 20 lakh beedis per year. The Committee also recommend that in the meantime, till the Cess Act is amended, additional

budgetary support be obtained from the Ministry of Finance for funding the Beedi Workers Welfare Fund so that welfare activities of Beedi Workers are not impeded. The Committee also desire that the Ministry should rope in corporate houses for extending support for the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Beedi Workers under Corporate Social Responsibility.

Reply of the Government

5.4 This matter will be placed before the next coming Central Advisory Committee on Beedi Workers Welfare Fund scheduled to be held on 21.08.2014.

Comments of the Committee

5.5 Please see para 1.60 & 1.61 of Chapter I.

Recommendation (Sl.No.18, Para No. 6.5)

5.6 The Committee note that Central Advisory Committee is constituted under Beedi Workers Welfare Fund Act 1976 to monitor the Welfare Scheme formulated under the Welfare Funds as well as to advise the Workers Welfare Organisation for creation of new schemes/modifications of existing schemes to enhance the benefits to be provided to beedi workers. The Committee note that out of 14 State Advisory Committees (SACs) under Beedi Workers Welfare Fund Rules 1978, 4 SACs are pertaining to States of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu are still under re-constitution. The Committee urge the Government to take up the matter of reconstitution of SACs on priority so that necessary advise on matters related to administration of above fund may be sought and utilized for the welfare of beedi workers. The Committee appalled to note that there is no provisions for nomination of local MP/MLA in the Central Advisory Committee.

5.7 The Committee strongly express their displeasure in the matter that the members of SCs/STs Associations are also not being included in the Central Advisory Committee and State

Advisory Committees. The Committee are of the view that the relevant Act should be suitably amended to include local MP/MLA and Members from SCs/STs Associations in this Central/State Advisory Committee. The Committee also feel that the beedi workers belonging to SC/ST community may be induced to form Associations/Self Help Group at Village Panchayat/Municipal ward level to spread awareness among their community about the welfare schemes meant for them and look after their own development.

Reply of the Government

5.8 The matter regarding reconstitution of SAC has been taken up with Welfare Commissioners of all the States. The suitable amendments in Section 5 of Beedi Workers Welfare Fund Rules, 1978 will be placed for including MP/MLA and members of SC/ST Associations in the Central Advisory Committees and the State Advisory Committees before the next coming Central Advisory Committee on Beedi Workers Welfare Fund scheduled to be held on 21.08.2014.

Comments of the Committee

5.9 Please see para 1.65 of Chapter I.

New Delhi;
January, 2019
Pausa, 1940 (Saka)

DR. KIRIT P. SOLANKI
Chairperson
Committee on the Welfare of
Scheduled Castes and Scheduled
Tribes

APPENDIX - I

**COMMITTEE ON THE WELFARE OF SCHEDULED CASTES
AND SCHEDULED TRIBES
(2018-2019)**

(SIXTEENTH LOK SABHA)

**SIXTEENTH SITTING
(03.01.2019)**

MINUTES

The Committee sat from 1500 hrs. to 1700 hrs. in the Committee Room No. "3", First Floor, Parliament House Annex Extension Bldg., A - Block, New Delhi - 110001

PRESENT

Dr. Kirit P. Solanki - Chairperson

MEMBERS - LOK SABHA

2. Smt. Anju Bala
3. Shri Rattan Lal Kataria
4. Shri Faggan Singh Kulaste
5. Smt. Pratima Mondal
6. Dr. (Prof.) Ajmeera Seetaram Naik
7. Shri Ram Charitra Nishad
8. Shri Vishnu Dayal Ram
9. Shri Vikram Usendi
10. Shri Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma

MEMBERS - RAJYA SABHA

11. Shri Shamsher Singh Dullo
12. Mahant Shambhuprasadji Tundiya
13. Shri Ramkumar Verma
14. Smt. Wansuk Syiem

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri T.G. Chandrasekhar, Joint Secretary
2. Shri D. R. Shekhar, Director
3. Shri V.K. Shailon, Deputy Secretary
4. Shri Mukesh Kumar, Deputy Secretary

At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members of the Committee. The Committee then considered the Action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty-Seventh Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) and Twelfth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on

the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes on the subjects "Implementation of schemes for Beedi workers with particular reference to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes" and "Representation of SCs/STs in Services and Redressal of their grievances and credit facilities being provided by IDBI Bank to SCs/STs" respectively.

After due consideration, the Committee adopted the above mentioned reports. The Committee also authorized the Chairperson to make factual corrections and to present these reports to both the Houses of Parliament in the current session of the Parliament.

APPENDIX - II

(*Vide* Para 4 of Introduction)

Analysis of action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty-Seventh Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

1.	Total number of recommendations	22
2.	Recommendations/observations which have been accepted by the Government (<i>vide</i> recommendations at Sl. Nos. 1, 6, 15, 16, 20 & 21)	
	Number	06
	Percentage to the total	27.2%
3.	Recommendations/observation which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government replies (<i>vide</i> recommendations at Sl. Nos. 9 & 13)	
	Number	02
	Percentage to the total	9%
4.	Recommendations/observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration (<i>vide</i> recommendations at Sl. Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, 19 & 22)	
	Number	11
	Percentage to the total	50%
5.	Recommendations/observations in respect of which final replies of the Government have not been received (<i>vide</i> recommendations at Sl. Nos. 11, 17 & 18)	
	Number	03
	Percentage to the total	13.63%