



Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar chairs the Meeting of Industrial Tripartite Committee on Plantation Industry on proposed amendment in Plantation Labour Act, 1951

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Second Tripartite meeting to discuss the Plantations Labour (Amendment) Bill, 2017 was held at Ooty, Tamilnadu on 11.10.2017. This meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar, the Minister of State(Independent Charge) for Labour & Employment to discuss the provisions of the Amendment Bill modified on the basis of suggestions received by representatives of plantations owners, trade unions and State Governments during first Tripartite Committee meeting.

During the meeting, Shri Gangwar said that objective of the amendment to the Plantations Labour Act, 1951 is to balance the requirement of both plantation workers and plantation owners. The Minister said that he wanted to discuss the provisions of the bill before finalizing the draft amendment Bill. He further added that Central Government would ensure better working conditions for the workers by way of providing improved welfare facilities to them and at the same time making the plantation financially viable and competitive.

Secretary, Ministry of Labour & Employment, Smt. M. Sathiyavathy also emphasized that the intention of the proposed amendments to Plantation Labour Act, 1951 is to provide enabling provision so that the welfare facilities to be provided under the statute may either be provided by the plantation owners themselves or by giving effect to the various schemes of either Central Government, State Government, Local Bodies, Panchayats or appropriate agencies. However, the ultimate responsibility would be that of the plantation owners to provide welfare facilities.

During discussion most of the stakeholders appreciated that the suggestions provided by them during the first tripartite meeting have been incorporated. Representatives from various State Governments acknowledged the fact that the enabling provision would reduce the financial burden on the plantation owners. At the same time, it would not be absolved the plantation owner responsibility.

It was also mentioned by the representatives from Trade Unions and State Government that the workers should not be paid less than the Minimum Wages and alongwith amendment the emphasis should also be laid on the implementation of various provisions of the Act.

Some other specific suggestions were also provided by representatives of plantation owners, Trade Unions and State Government. They were assured that the suggestions provided would be examined and incorporated if required in such a manner that it is beneficial to both workers and the plantation owners.

Smt. M. Sathiyavathy also mentioned that the execution of the provision of this Act are in the ambit of State Government and so all the plantation state should take active role in its proper implementation.

Prior to the meeting Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar, Minister for Labour & Employment(IC) alongwith other officials of the Central Government visited a tea plantation at Coonoor to have a feel of the quality of existing welfare facilities for the workers and also the challenges being faced by the plantation owners in the changing economic scenario.

This on field information would further contribute in framing an effective and relevant Plantation Labour Amendment Bill so that it leads to a win-win situation for both plantation workers and plantation owners.

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