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‘Tea garden workers to benefit from amendment to Act’

PTI

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Over 80 lakh tea garden workers across the country will benefit from the Centre’s proposed amendment to the Plantations Labour Act, 1951, Union Labour and Employment Minister Bandaru Dattatreya said on Friday.

80 lakh workers

“More than 80 lakh workers in West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Assam will benefit from the proposed amendment to the Plantations Labour Act, 1951,” Mr Dattatreya told reporters on the sidelines of a foundation stone laying ceremony of the Regional Labour Institute here.

He said the amendments would ensure that employers of tea garden workers provide not only

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workers were taken care of and linked with the schemes provided by respective State governments.

Dispensary upgraded

The Minister announced an upgradation of the ESI dispensary in Shillong to a six-bedded hospital to cater to the needs of the employees.

Mr Dattatreya directed the State government to conduct fresh surveys to ensure that children below the age of 14 were not exploited.

Against child labour

“I have directed the Meghalaya government that a fresh survey be made and ensured that all children are in school and their lives as happy as any other children,” he said.

“No establishments or factory should employ children below 14 years of age,” he added.

Cess unutilised

The Minister criticised the State government for its failure to utilise the workers' cess it collected and advised that the amount be fully utilised for the very purpose it was collected.

“The construction workers cess amount collected by the Meghalaya government is Rs. 80 crore and they have not spent much of the money. The amount should go to the very purpose of welfare education, scholarship and employment of construction workers,” he said.

The Regional Labour Institute, which was constructed at a cost of Rs. 13.4 crore here, was aimed at catering to the occupational safety and health needs of the industries in North Eastern region.

The Institute would function under the Directorate General of Factory Advice Service and Labour Institutes under the Union Labour Ministry. - PTI

Would ensure proper wages, health, ration, housing and other benefits to them: Minister

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