

Daily wage of tea labourers hiked

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In a significant first-ever move to bring about parity in wages paid to the tea labourers in the Brahmaputra and Barak valley, the State Government has decided to hike the daily wage of tea labourers by Rs.30. Besides, the tea labourers having bank accounts would also enjoy life insurance. However, the decision on possibilities of revival or privatization of the ATC (Assam Tea Corporation) gardens would be taken after due consideration of the various issues connected with the gardens. Announcing these here on Saturday, Minister of State, Labour Welfare & Tea Tribes Welfare, Shri Pallab Lochan Das further declared several other incentives for the tea community.

The interim order on wages will come into effect from March 1, 2018. The arrear, however, would have to be paid by the respective tea garden managements. The decision to this effect was taken at a recent meeting among representatives of the State Government, the CCPA (Consultative Committee of Plantation Associations), and the trade unions. The daily wage of tea labourers (after the addition of Rs.30) in the Brahmaputra valley will be Rs.167 while in the Barak Valley it will be Rs.145.

The meet further assigned the single-member panel under Additional Chief secretary Kumar Sanjay Krishna to collect views of the CCPA and the trade unions and submit a final report on the 'kind component' enjoyed by the tea labourers. The recommendations would be discussed in the next meet of the Tea Wage Board. The parity in wages is expected to come about after the final wage fixation.

Under Prime Minister Surakshya Bima Yojana and Prime Minister Jiban Jyoti Bima Yojana, the tea labourers having bank accounts would be availing of life insurance and the annual premium of Rs.342 per scheme per beneficiary would be paid by the state government. Each beneficiary would be entitled to benefits amounting to Rs.2 lakh.

Moreover, scooties would be awarded to the 100 best girl students of the tea community at the higher secondary level.

Offering a respite to the Assam Tea Corporation (ATC) gardens, Minister Das said that the financial aid of Rs.99 crore awarded recently by the state Government would be used to clear the pending public provident liability of Rs.300 crore.

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