

National Tripartite Consultation On Promoting Registration of Construction Workers under Welfare Funds

As per the Eleven Five Year Plan, there are around 28,000 enterprises involved in the Construction Industry as of 2005. The Plan also indicated that this industry employs about 31.5 million workers both organized and unorganized. However, there have been claims that over 40 million workers are working in the construction industry. The Plan highlighted that the unorganized labour force in the industry lack welfare facilities besides poor working conditions.

The Building and Other Construction Workers Act, 1996 and the Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Cess Act were enacted by the Government of India to provide safety, health and welfare for construction workers. However, the implementation of these Acts by the States and the registration of workers under the Welfare Funds established under the Cess Act have not attracted the construction workers in substantial numbers to register themselves with these Welfare Boards leaving a substantial amount of funds collected as Cess unutilized for the welfare of the construction workers.

During 2010, the ILO carried out a diagnostic study after discussing with the Welfare Boards in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Delhi and Andhra Pradesh and prepared a discussion paper on Improved Service Delivery of Welfare Scheme for the Construction Workers under the Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Cess Act, 1996. This discussion paper indicated that lack of awareness amongst construction workers for registering themselves as beneficiaries in the State Welfare Boards as one of the major reasons for the low registration of the workers.

With the above background and to promote the registration of construction workers under the Welfare Funds, a National Tripartite Consultations on Promoting Registration of Construction Workers under Welfare Funds is being organized jointly by the Ministry of Labour and Employment and International Labour Office. This consultation would provide a forum to discuss issues hampering the registration of the workers and to come-up with a strategic plan involving the State Governments, Trade Unions and Employers Organizations as well as other stakeholders to promote the registration of construction workers in an integrated manner with identified roles of the various stakeholders.

The consultation would also provide a forum for the state governments to share and learn from experiences in implementation of welfare schemes under the Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Cess Act, 1996.

The agenda for this tripartite consultation would be (a) sharing experiences on the implementation of the BOCW Welfare Cess Act at the state level; (b) State-based strategic sessions for preparing a road-map for enhancing the registration of construction workers under the Construction Welfare Fund in a time-bound manner and (c) discuss mechanisms to self-monitor and disseminate the progress made on the implementation of the agreed road-map.

The participants for this important tripartite consultation are state-government officials (2-3 participants from each state) responsible for implementation of the Building and Other Construction Workers Cess Act, 1996; Central Trade Union organizations (2 participants each from 12 Central Trade Unions Organizations) and relevant Employers Organizations (Employers Federation of India, Confederation of Indian Industry, FICCI, ASSOCHAM, Builders Associations – total 10-12); other stakeholders (NGOs, CSOs – 12).

Duration : 1.5 days

Tentative Date : During the week of 21 March 2011

Venue : New Delhi (India Habitat Centre or any suitable venue near the Airport)

New Delhi
20 February 2011