

TELANGANA

Demonetised currency pushing beedi workers into debt

K. M. Dayashankar

NOVEMBER 26, 2016 00:54 IST

UPDATED: NOVEMBER 26, 2016 00:54 IST

Devalued high denomination currency notes being offered for payment of weekly wages

RAJANNA-SIRCILLA: Beedi industry, which provides employment to several lakhs of womenfolk in entire Telangana in general and Rajanna-Sircilla district in particular is slowly entering into a crisis following the demonetization of high currency notes.

The rolling of beedis is an alternate source of employment to the womenfolk in the Sircilla textile town and it provides

THE  HINDU

following the banning of high denominations.

The beedi workers are being offered devalued Rs 1000 and Rs 500 notes for their wages, which the beedi rolling women are refusing to accept as they cannot exchange it in the market. Since the demonetisation announcement on November 8, the beedi workers have not received their wages.

Sumalatha, a beedi worker in Baddam Yellareddynagar of Sircilla textile town says that she was borrowing for the buying household provisions and payment of school fees due to non-availability of wages for rolling beedis since last two weeks. “The beedi companies are paying old currency notes as wages, but we are not not ready to accept them as we cannot exchange them and we don’t even have bank accounts,” she said.

Rajitha, another beedi worker and widow, said that it has become a herculean task for her to run the family without wages for rolling beedis. “Why should poor people undergo hardships when only some big people were making black money,” she asked.

Shankar, a commission agent (tekedhar), said that he was likely to lose his wages as the womenfolk have stopped procuring the tendu leaves and tobacco for rolling beedies as they were not being paid wages. He said that his sole earning was a commission of Rs 10 per every 1000 beedis he collects from these women.

CITU leader Pantham Ravi said that the demonetization is likely to create unrest among the labour force in this textile town. Neither the beedi workers nor the powerloom workers were getting the wages following the demonetization, he said and feared that the distressed powerloom weavers might resort to suicide as they were being forced to borrow from private micro finance companies for their essential expenses and the debt was mounting.

Printable version | Nov 28, 2016 8:42:59 AM | <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/telangana/Demonetised-currency-pushing-beedi-workers-into-debt/article16703165.ece>

© The Hindu