

Ministry of Labour & Employment Issues Nationwide Heatwave Advisory to Protect Workers and Labourers

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The Ministry of Labour & Employment has issued advisories to all States/UTs and its attached organisations, urging immediate preventive and mitigation measures to safeguard workers and labourers from the adverse effects of rising temperatures and heat wave conditions across the country.

In a communication addressed to Chief Secretaries/Administrators of all States and Union Territories, the Ministry emphasized the need for a coordinated, multi-sectoral and multi-dimensional approach to protect workers, particularly those employed in outdoor and labour-intensive sectors.

States/UTs have been advised to issue necessary directions to employers, occupiers, industries and construction companies for immediate implementation of worker safety measures, including:

- Allowing re-scheduling of working hours for employees / workers in different sectors
- Ensuring adequate drinking water facilities and making provision for rest areas and cooling of work places
- Making provision for emergency ice packs and heat illness prevention material for working conditions requiring such facilities including for construction work
- Coordinating with Health Department to ensure regular health check-up of the workers

Factory and mine managements have also been advised to allow greater flexibility to workers, including slowing the pace of work during periods of extreme heat, assigning two-person crews where continuous work is unavoidable, providing rest areas and ensuring sufficient ventilation and cooling arrangements.

Special attention has been recommended for construction workers, brick kiln workers, daily wage earners and casual labourers. States/UTs have been encouraged to undertake awareness campaigns at labour chowks and public places, along with display of posters and banners carrying heatwave safety messages and emergency contact details.

Directorate General of Training, National Board for Workers' Education (DTNBWE) have been advised to organise awareness and training programmes on heatwave mitigation and management, covering:

- Causes and impact of heatwaves
- Safe work practices such as hydration and rest breaks
- Early recognition of heat stress symptoms
- Preventive strategies at workplace and community level
- Emergency response and first-aid measures.

Hospitals and dispensaries under Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) and Director General of Labour Welfare (DGLW) have been asked to establish dedicated help desks for heat stroke cases and ensure adequate stocks of ORS, ice packs and other heat illness prevention materials.

Further, enforcement agencies such as Chief Labour Commissioner (CLC) and Directorate General of Mines Safety (DGMS) have been requested to monitor compliance with legal provisions related to safe working conditions, drinking water, ventilation, cooling facilities and periodic health check-ups of workers.

Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) & National Career Service (NCS) were also advised to ensure cooling and ventilation and adequate supply of drinking water during the camps and outreach activities conducted by them.

All organisations have also been requested to furnish fortnightly status reports on actions taken and activities undertaken in this regard for further review and monitoring.

The Ministry reiterated that timely preventive action and close monitoring are essential to ensure the health, safety and productivity of workers during the summer season.

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