

India
27th September 2018

MR. GUY RYDER
DIRECTOR GENERAL
ILO

Dear Mr. Guy Ryder,

Sub : Impact of floods in Kerala on employment /livelihoods

The Kerala is one of the smallest State in India out of 29 States having the area of 15000 sq. miles with 35 million population and 93 % literacy in the country. The Kerala has listed as God's Own Country in the World and is one of the prominent tourist destination of India. The 370 miles sea shore, 44 large and medium lakes and rivers and the great mountains are the beauty of the state. The National Geographic traveller magazine named Kerala as one of the ten paradises of the World and 50 must see destinations of a life time.

But during the month of August 2018 severe flood affected the State due to unusually high rain fall during the Mansoon Season. It was the worst flooding in Kerala after the great flood of 99 that happened in 1924.

The State received heavy mansoon rain falls which was about 256% more than the usual rain falls in Kerala on the mid - evening of August 8, resulting in 54 dams filling to capacity, in the first 24 hours of rainfall the state received 12 inches of rain. Almost all dams had been opened since the water level had risen close to overflow level and due to heavy rainfall flooding local low-lying areas. For the first time in the state history 35 of its 54 dams had been opened.

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All the 14 Districts of the State were placed under Red Alert. One sixth of the total population of Kerala that is 5.8 million had been directly affected by the floods and related incidents. Government of India had declared it as “calamity of a severe nature”. Over 3274 relief camps have been opened at various locations to accommodate the flood victims. It is estimate that 1.24 million people have found shelter in such camps. The flooding has affected hundreds of Villages, destroyed and estimated 6200 miles of roads and thousands of homes have been damaged or destroyed. The Airports, Railway Stations, Metro Rails , Bus Terminals have been closed and suspended all the operations for many days. Schools and Education Institutions were closed and the tourists have been dissuaded and banned due to safety concerns. In one of the largest rescue operations, 40 Helicopters, 31 Aircrafts, 182 terms for rescue, 80 medical teams of defence forces, 58 teams of MDRF and 7 companies of Central Armed Police Forces, State Police and Fire Force and other Disaster Management Teams and also the entire Government Employees were pressed in to the service along with over 500 boats and necessary rescue equipments.

The Fishermen across Kerala were engaged in the flood rescue missions and total of 4537 fishermen participated in the rescue operations with 669 fishing boats. They managed to rescue more than 65000 people from various districts.

But over 483 people died and 14 are missing.

Thousands of cattle, calves and buffalos, goats and dogs were died do to the flooding. The United States embassy urged its citizens to avoid travelling to Kerala and the embassy of other countries also issued the same warning for their citizen.

More than 53% of the State Population is the workers and out of this 93% are working in the unorganised sector. Many of them have lost their homes, jobs and day to day income and in reality they are under starvation.

The State Government have estimated a financial loss of INR 49000 crors. The World Bank and ADBI along with UN representatives have found a loss of INR 20000 crors at their preliminary investigation and they have Stated in their report that the loss will be more than this when the final report come.

The flood mostly affected the poor and labour and lost their jobs, small holdings, shops and rendered jobless. No one can estimate the loss of labour in

its real magnitude. Rehabilitation of the labour and their families providing suitable engagements or jobs to atleast meet their daily requirements.

So the Director General ILO is requested to take appropriate steps to extend all possible measures through United Nations, WHO and other International Organisations.

I wish to make a statement in the next 334th GB Meeting Scheduled on 29th October to 8th November 2018 to explain the calamity in the part of India for the benefit of the suffering millions of poor and labour.

During the next 334th GB meeting Scheduled on 29th October to 8th November 2018 I request an appointment with Director General at his convenient time.

With Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Chandrasekharan', written over a horizontal line.

R. CHANDRASEKHARAN
GB Member
ILO