

# Rs.1000 crore to be provided for welfare scheme for tea workers of Assam and West Bengal especially women and children

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- **NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING SCHEME TO BE REALIGNED WITH A PROVISION OF OVER Rs. 3000 CRORE**
- **APPRENTICESHIP ACT TO BE AMENDED FOR ENHANCING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE YOUTH**

The Government has taken several measures to protect the weaker and vulnerable sections of the society especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. While presenting the Union Budget 2021-22 in Parliament today, the Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman said that within 48 hours of declaring a three week long complete lockdown, the Prime Minister announced the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY). Valued at Rs.2.76 lakh crore, the PMGKY provided free food grain to 800 million people, free cooking gas for 80 million families for months, and cash directly to over 400 million farmers, women, elderly, the poor and the needy.

In pursuance of the measures taken for the weaker sections, the Finance Minister announced that to further facilitate credit flow under the scheme of Stand Up India for SCs, STs, and women, it is proposed to reduce the margin money requirement from 25% to 15%, and to also include loans for activities allied to agriculture.

The Finance Minister proposed to provide Rs. 1,000 crore for the welfare of Tea workers especially women and their children in Assam and West Bengal for which a special scheme will be devised.

Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman disclosed that a target of establishing 750 Eklavya Model Residential Schools in the tribal areas has been laid out. The Finance Minister said that it is proposed to increase the unit cost of each such school from Rs. 20 crore to Rs. 38 crore, and for hilly and difficult areas, to Rs. 48 crore. This would help in creating robust infrastructure facilities for the tribal students.

She further said that the Post Matric Scholarship Scheme, for the welfare of Scheduled Castes has been revamped and the Central Assistance in this regard has been enhanced. A total of Rs. 35,219 crore for 6 years till 2025-2026 is being allocated, the Minister highlighted. This will benefit 4 crore SC students, she said.

The Finance Minister also said that the outlay for the MSME sector is being increased to Rs. 15,700 crore this year, which is more than double of current year's BE.

## **Making Corporate India Comply**

### **Measures to increase Employability of Youth**

The Government proposes to amend the Apprenticeship Act with a view to further enhancing apprenticeship opportunities for the youth. The Finance Minister said that the existing scheme of National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS) for providing post-education apprenticeship, training of graduates and diploma holders in Engineering will be realigned with provision of over Rs. 3,000 crore.

Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman said that an initiative is underway, in partnership with the United Arab Emirates (UAE), to benchmark skill qualifications, assessment, and certification, accompanied by the deployment of certified workforce. There is also a collaborative Training Inter Training Programme (TITP) between India and Japan to facilitate transfer of Japanese industrial and vocational skills, technique, and knowledge. Such initiatives will be taken forward with many more countries, the Finance Minister disclosed.