

The Cost of ‘Ease of doing Business’

After the announcement of the world bank’s assessment about “Ease of doing Business”(EODB) in India, the rulers of the center as well of the concerned states that are awarded with top ranks are reveling about their so called achievement. They are taking some more steps with utmost zeal for implementing the investor-friendly atmosphere.

In their bid to create investor-friendly atmosphere of ‘Ease of doing business’ the rulers are willfully disregarding and ignoring the concept of industrial safety which is crucial for promotion of industries as well for the protection of lives of the workers concerned. But the rulers are wantonly ignoring the safety of workers at the cost of the lives of the workers.

Till now the factory officials and labour officials used to inspect even randomly to ensure the implementation of safety norms and regulations. Despite the fact that these officials can be influenced and corrupted by the industrial managements, still the managements fear to float the safety norms indiscriminately and to some extent they oblige to implement the safety norms and safety regulations, nominally.

But presently with the sole objective that the investors should find no trouble in the form of so-called bureaucratic hurdles to get various licenses and corruption the rulers are changing the systems of inspection for the compliance of all standard safety norms.

The Andhra Pradesh government that topped in implementation of “Ease of doing business” has introduced a so-called jumbling system, that will fix which official should inspect which factory located in which place and at what time through a computer generated programme. According to the system once a factory is inspected, it will be scheduled for inspection again after five or ten years and not by the one who inspected it earlier as no officials are permitted to inspect a factory twice.

Earlier surprise inspections on factories used to be carried out following complaints of lapses and managements also used to be compelled to comply with all standard safety norms and periodical awareness programmes used to be carried out on safety norms to avoid accidents and mishaps. The officials used to ask the industrial managements to take up corrective measures and later used to carry out a follow up whether their directions are complied with.

Now with the initiation of this jumbling system the industrial managements hardly care to comply with safety norms and thus cut costs in pursuance of super-profits, taking away the lives of workers at the altar of industrial human sacrifice.

Added to this jumbling system the A.P. State government is mooted to introduce third party (private) inspection on industrial units, which naturally have every scope to compromise the safety of industrial units having no accountability for the accidents causing loss of life, of workers and property.

With such a system the law-enforcing agencies are denied access to inspect industries whether they are complying with all standard safety norms or not.

Even before the introduction of new system, many workers at various industries in A.P. have lost their lives in work-place industrial accidents due to the non implementation of safety norms.

In July, 2018, at Tadipatri in an industrial mishap at a steel factory six workers were killed, due to leakage of carbon monoxide. Lack of periodical inspection on its day to day functioning and non-implementation of safety norms is the cause for the mishap and killing of workers.

Again 12 workers were killed due to an explosion at a granite quarry at Hatti Belagal village in Alur mandal of Kurnool district in A.P. in the 1st week of August 2018. 5 workers are critically injured. These workers belong to Jharkhand and Odisha states. The explosion of gelatin sticks not stored according to the safety norms and procedures is the cause of the horrendous accident killing the workers.

And again 9 workers were critically injured in an explosion at steel mill at Hindupur of Anantapur district in A.P on Aug. 19, 2018. The injured workers belong to Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Odisha states. While they are working at a furnace for melting steel, the explosion occurred.

In the first week of August (2018); six workers were killed when an under-construction structure meant to store lime stone fell on this at Shree cement factory in kolla village in Sedam Taluk of Kalburgi district of Karnataka state. All these killed workers belong to Bihar state hired on contract.

These are some incidents of many such incidents occurred throughout our India in the month of August this year, taking away the lives of workers due to willful criminal negligence of industrial managements in implementing safety norms, standards and regulations at the cost of the lives of the workers.

In all these accident while the common aspect has been the non compliance of safety norms by the industrial managements another glaring fact is note-worthy. This is a more serious aspect, in this

regard of industrial safety. It is the conspicuous reality that all the workers killed in these accidents are migrated workers belonging to other states. Agricultural Crises and rural distress have compelled them to migrate for a living braving their lives to the avarice of industrial management.

“Ease of doing business” has facilitated the industrial managements, to kill the workers by willfully ignoring the implementation of safety norms and safety standards with impunity at the cost of the lives of workers making them lacking any value.

Such has been the cost of “Ease of doing business” appreciated by the imperialist World Bank!

The worker’s movement shall take-up required suitable action against this aspect of killing workers, that too the orphaned migrant workers.
