
Interim tea pay proposal

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Siliguri: The state labour department has mooted a proposal suggesting an interim revision of tea workers' wages and sent it to the associations of tea planters.

In the proposal, the department has mentioned that an interim hike of Rs 17.50 can be made over the existing daily wage rate, which would be effective till the wage is finally revised or the minimum wage rate is fixed.

On February 20, 2015, the last tripartite wage agreement was signed for tea workers of the state. It has expired on March 31 last year.

"The state labour minister had proposed an interim hike of Rs 17.50 over the daily wage

which means the revised wage would be Rs 150 per day and would help the workers to earn around Rs 450 or so in a month, unless the issue is settled. We have sent this proposal to the planters' associations," the official said.

The move, observers said, is because the state wants to resolve the issue ahead of the rural polls.

"Wage fixing is one of the key issues that play a role at rural polls in the tea belt. If no decision is reached ahead of the panchayat elections, it is obvious other political parties will make it an issue. Trinamul does not want to let them have this opportunity and thus taken the strategy to propose an interim hike," said an observer.
