

RAJA RAM SINGH

राजा राम सिंह

Member:

- Standing Committee on Labour, Textiles and Skill Development
- Consultative Committee for the Ministry of Jal Shakti

Ref. No. - CPIML/PO/RS/0125/10/01



Member of Parliament

Lok Sabha

**सांसद, लोक सभा
(Karakat, Bihar)**

Date: - 10/01/2025

To,

(1) Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya

Minister of Labour and Employment,

Government of India,

New Delhi

(2) Secretary,

Minister of Labour and Employment,

Government of India,

New Delhi

Dear Sir,

Sub.: Ensuring enforcement of 8-hour work day in light of recent statements making attempt to violate them

We are writing to you concerned about the recent statements made by SN Subrahmanyam, Chairman of Larsen & Toubro (L&T) that employees should work 90 hours a week and even on Sundays.

In the video, Subrahmanyam was answering an employee's query on why the company made working on Saturdays compulsory. In response the Chairman said, "I regret I'm not being able to make you work on Sundays. If I can make you work on Sundays, I'll be more happy." "What do you do sitting at home? How long could you stare at your wives? Come on! Get to the office and start working." Few months ago, the Co-founder of Infosys Narayana Murthy stated that in order to increase work productivity in the nation and increase India's competitiveness, young Indians should put in up to 70 hours a week of labor. Other business titans like Bhavish Aggarwal of Ola, Sajjan Jindal of Jindal Steel Works Group publicly supported the proposal for a 70-hour work week.

It is important to note that not only does working longer hours not ensure increased productivity, but in fact reduces productivity. One of the serious impacts of long working hours is on the health of the workers. Several studies have linked long working shifts to negative impact on general health, including problems with cognitive anxiety, musculoskeletal disorders, sleep disturbance,

RAJA RAM SINGH

राजा राम सिंह

Member:

- Standing Committee on Labour, Textiles and Skill Development
- Consultative Committee for the Ministry of Jal Shakti



Member of Parliament
Lok Sabha
सांसद, लोक सभा
(Karakat, Bihar)

and stress. There is also the associated fatigue created by excess working hours that *"also spreads to other organs affecting the neuromuscular mechanism leading to reduced sensory perception, less attention, reducing the ability of discrimination, weakening the muscles, reducing the gland secretions, reducing the heartbeat or irregular heartbeat, and dilating the blood vessels"*. There is enough evidence now that that longer working hours badly affect the occupational health of workers.

India already has one of the most hardworking workforces in the world. The International Labour Organization reports that, in 2023, Indians will have the longest average workweek among the world's ten largest economies. Only Qatar, Congo, Lesotho, Bhutan, Gambia, and the United Arab Emirates have higher average working hours than India, which comes in at number seven in the world.

The 8 hour work day is a product of great struggle, one for which lives were sacrificed. India's legalised 8 hour working day came with the 1946 Amendment to the Factories Act of 1934 – a result of the Bill introduced by Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar as Labour Member in the Viceroy's Executive Council. Section 51 of the Factories Act mandates that *"no adult worker shall be required or allowed to work in a factory for more than forty-eight hours in any week."* and Section 51 mandates that *"no adult worker shall be required or allowed to work in a factory for more than nine hours in any day"*.

The Directive Principles of State Policy mandates that *"the State shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing that the health and strength of workers, men and women are not abused"* and that *"the State shall make provision for securing just and humane conditions of work."*

The statements made by the Chairman of Larsen & Toubro (L&T) and the co-founder of Infosys raises questions as to the practices being followed in the said companies and the conditions of workers working therein. The State has a responsibility to safeguard the well-being of workers and to ensure that any violations of labor laws are promptly addressed and appropriately penalized.

It is, therefore, imperative for the Government to take cognizance of these issues and initiate measures to ensure strict enforcement of laws governing working hours and steps are taken to ensure that workers are not compelled to work beyond the legally mandated limit of 48 hours per week.

Rajaram Singh
IC No. – 076