

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Occupational health and safety has always been a neglected and least priority area for Government. The magnitude of prevalence of silicosis and its denial by states reflects its status and sensitivity of government on occupational hazards. Right to Life which has been interpreted as Right to dignified life includes right to health also. Therefore it is obligatory on part of government not only to respect constitutional statutory obligations but also international covenants to which it is party. There is urgent need to treat silicosis not as health issue but as human rights issue. However, the present occupational health and safety infrastructure in India has not been able to achieve these objectives.

Therefore there is need of immediate action to prevent occupational diseases like silicosis. The agencies involved in occupational health should coordinate with each other to initiate an integrated approach to tackle this problem. Approach should deal with the complete relationship between work and total health of man. However, for proper policy making in any issue, comprehensive database is the prerequisite. But till date, there is no official survey done by state and there is no database available with government regarding silicosis.. So, first of all, an authentic and comprehensive database should be created on silicosis. There is need of adequate budgetary support must be given for Occupational Health & Safety to deal with occupational disease like silicosis.

There is lack of awareness about silicosis among the workers as well as among the doctors. In many cases, silicosis patients are wrongly diagnosed as TB patients. Doctors should be trained properly. Occupational Health should be included in the medical curriculum.

The present legislations has failed to consider the numerous problems existing in mines and industries related with silicosis or other occupational diseases.. The legislations have failed to treat silicosis as social security issue. .The legislations fail to reflect the importance of attitudes, efficiency of the organizational system and the capacities or performance of working people. It has failed to provide any incentive to the employers/entrepreneurs to invest in safety measures, or any deterrence for errors or failures n case of non-implementation of these legislations. There is little awareness about safety aspects among the Indian trade unions. The small unorganized industrial units spread over the length and breadth of the country is not covered by any occupational health services.

So to ensure a self-enforcing environment, a positive, strong infrastructure has to be developed. This necessitates a reorientation not only in the minds of the employers and the government, but also in the attitudes of the employees and the general public. An integrated approach is to be adopted to involving employers, workers and enforcement agencies. There should be clear accountability in the line departments as well as in the main supervisory ministry on one hand and employers on other hand.

Therefore it is necessary that lacunas in laws should be removed to make them more effective. The National policy on Safety, Health and environment at work place should be operationalized in line with the international standards. Occupational Safety and Health Bill 2002 should be reviewed and revamped in consultation with all the stakeholders. It should be enacted into a law that should ensure a safe and healthy work environment to the millions of workers to live their lives with dignity. The prevention detection and rehabilitation of the silicosis effected worker should be the priority of the central and state government to implement the mandate given to them by constitution.