

**Re Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions (Amendment) Bill, 1993**

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर (उत्तर प्रदेश) : श्रीमान्, मैं समझता हूँ कि मंत्री जी मेरी बात पर एग्री करेंगे। इस मामले पर जितने भी मजदूर संगठन हैं, सारे बहुत बेचैन हैं। मैंने बिल को पढ़ा है, इसमें केवल आप अधिकार ले रहे हैं, स्कीम क्या है यह किसी को मालूम नहीं है। ट्रिपार्टाइट मीटिंग हुई नहीं है, केवल जो आपका प्रोविडेंट बोर्ड है, उसने डिस्कस किया है। तो मेरा सरकार से निवेदन है कि इसको टाल दें, पहले तो विदबा करे, अगर विदबा नहीं कर सकते हैं तो कम से कम अभी इसको डिस्कस न करें। बल्कि, मैं तो निवेदन यह करूँगा कि जो प्रोविडेंट फंड एक्ट है उसमें आप ऐसे अमेन्डमेंट करिए जिससे कि जो आपकी स्कीम है, वह पूरी उसकी गाड़ी में आ जाए जिससे कि हम उसको डिस्कस कर सकें। मैं समझता हूँ कि इस लीगल बात को मंत्री महोदय मानेंगे। कम से कम आज इसको आप मत लें, इसको वापिस ले लीजिए। It is against the interest of labour, against the interest of the workers. इसलिए मेरा निवेदन है कि आप इसको वापिस ले लें और फिर ठंग से कोई चीज लाएं तो हम डिस्कस करके आपकी सहायता करेंगे। ... (व्यवधान) ...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) : One by one. Now, Mr. Morarka.

SHRI KAMAL MORARKA (Rajasthan) : Sir, this Bill seeks to change the entire scheme of the Provident Fund Act which was passed in 1952. It is a very far-reaching Bill as far as the existing framework of organised labour is concerned. I understand it was discussed in the Tripartite Meeting and some sort of a consensus emerged. As Mr. Mathur has rightly pointed out, it is not reflected in the Bill. In the Bill what we are seeking to do is to take away the employers' share. Even what has been there already with the Government, thousands of crores of rupees, it is going to appropriate for certain pension etc. I think this Bill needs

a far more serious consideration either by the Standing Committee on Labour which is a new mechanism or by a Select Committee. Let this be sent to the Standing Committee which should discuss it or let there be a Select Committee or some other mechanism. But I do not think we should rush through the Bill, not today, not even in the next two or three days, because there will be a lot of repercussions. There is already a lot of protests by many trade unions. I agree that the Minister has taken care to see that most of the labourers do not lose. But even in the scheme under the Bill which they have got approved in the Board, I understand, certain categories of workmen stand to lose and they have protested. So, I do not think that this matter is so urgent. There is already a Provident Fund Scheme in place. So, nothing will be lost if we postpone this. This is only an improvement on the previous scheme. So, I think the improvement can wait because it is generating a lot of controversy. I come from Bombay and in Bombay, a lot of organized unions have spoken to me—they feel that probably the money is going away; they do not know—and a lot of apprehensions are there in their minds. I think the Minister should consider postponing this.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) Yes, Mr. Sukomal Sen.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN (West Bengal) : Sir, I also raise my objection to the moving of this Bill and getting it passed.

The point is that this is a fundamental change which the Government is mooted and it will change the entire scheme. The pension scheme will be changed. Already there is a lot of protests, I would say, a storm of protests, over the pension scheme that the Minister in the earlier session announced in this House. At that time

also, we raised our objection. Later on, while starting the scheme also, we had expressed our apprehensions and we are getting representations from various organizations against the pension scheme. So, in this background, I would request the Minister to withdraw this Bill totally. it is not merely shelving or delaying or postponing of the Bill that I am asking for. I am asking for the total withdrawal of this Bill. Otherwise, you will be facing a lot of protests, a storm of protests.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) : Yes, Mrs. Kamla Sinha.

SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA (Bihar) : Sir, I share the views of my previous speakers.

This Bill, if passed, will have a very far-reaching effect in the country and it will adversely affect the workers in the organized sector and the workers in the unorganized sector also will be affected. I suggest that this Bill may be withdrawn by the Minister and another series of negotiations should be started with the trade unions, with the Members of Parliament and political leaders and if something better is evolved, then he should bring forward a better legislation. Otherwise, for the present this should be withdrawn.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) : Yes, Mr. Gaya Singh.

श्री गया सिंह (बिहार) : माननीय उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, मैं समझता हूँ कि इस बिल को ..... (व्यवधान)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) : Please be brief.

श्री गया सिंह : इस बिल को वापिस ले लेना चाहिए और हम भी इस राय के हैं, क्योंकि इसमें मेंजमेंट में वर्कर्स का जो शेयर है उसको लेकर के ही सिर्फ यह स्कीम बना रहे हैं। इससे कोई लाभ वर्कर्स को नहीं है, सभी ओर से विरोध हो रहा है। इसलिए हम समझते हैं कि इस बिल को वापिस लेकर

तमाम टूट यूनियन, पोलिटिकल पार्टियों व पार्लियामेंट के मॅम्बर्स के साथ डिस्कस करके नई स्कीम सामने लाएं और उसको इम्प्लू करे। एग्जिस्टिंग स्कीम से कोई लाभ होने वाला नहीं है। यही मेरी राय है।

SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL (Gujarat) : Sir, there is a confusion about this Bill. And let me say that the Labour Minister has not succeeded in removing the confusion. So, it should be better that the Standing Committee on Labour should discuss the Bill, and then the Minister should come to the Parliament. Until he is successful in removing the confusion, he should not bring this Bill.

DR. NARREDDY THULASI REDDY (Andhra Pradesh) : Sir, I totally support the views express by Shri Kamal Morarka. It is better to withdraw the Bill. Or, let it be discussed in the Standing Committee on Labour and let there be discussions with the trade union leaders.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) : Mr. Minister.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA) : Sir, I have no problem in postponing the discussion on the Bill because...

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR : withdraw it.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : ...whether the Bill is passed today or tomorrow or day after, the scheme is coming into effect with retrospective effect from 1st of April of this year. I know about some misunderstanding that is going on about the whole scheme. I thought that Parliament is the best forum where the matter could be discussed thoroughly, and whatever misunderstandings are there, they could be clarified. I want to make one thing clear that this is not a scheme of the Government. This scheme has not been formulated by the Government. This scheme has been formulated by a tripartite committee of the Central Board of Trustees of the Provident Fund organisation. We only accepted their scheme. And every Central trade union organisation is a party to the scheme. there-

fore, we have no complaint or criticism from the Central trade union organisations. I have read quite a number of articles where certain reservations have been expressed at the State level or at the unit level. According to me, Sir, this is a very good scheme which will go a long way in helping the workers and strengthening our social security measures. However, in the morning, I was informed by the Secretariat of the Rajya Sabha, and I have also had a meeting with the Hon. Chairman. Hon. Chairman informed me that many members have some reservations about this. So, I have proposed to the Chairman that I am willing to defer the discussion on the Bill for two days or three days or whatever it may be, and in the meantime I would request the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs to convene a meeting of the leaders of all the political parties where I could go and explain what the scheme is. I am sure that once they get our explanation, every Member will accept this Bill because it is really a good one. But, I don't mind to postpone it. There is no difficulty about that at all.

**SHRI KAMAL MORARKA :** Sir, the Hon. Minister has missed the mainpoint raised by Mr. Mathur, and that is, this Bill by itself, even if he explains it to us, does not contain the scheme...

**THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) :** That is what the hon. Member raised.

**SHRI P. A. SANGMA :** I will present the scheme in the meeting.

**THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) :** Mr. Minister, now we have to take up the statement on the Telecom Tariffs at 4 o'clock. So, this can be deferred for two days as suggested by you. And after having discussions with the leaders of the various political parties, then this can be decided.

**SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL :** The scheme should be circulated to every Member.

**THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) :** That he will explain. Now, we will take up the statement by the Minister.

**SHRI ASHIS SEN (West Bengal) :** Sir, such an important Bill should be discussed with the trade unions and others. Materially, the trade unions and the workers are involved. Simply, by having a talk with a few leaders of Rajya Sabha, this cannot be solved because we have got plenty of objections.

**THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) :** The Minister said that in the tripartite committee, central trade union leaders were represented. All these facts have been mentioned.

**SHRI ASHIS SEN :** In two days, it will not be possible to solve that. It means that we are only deferring today's discussion. It will not serve the purpose.

**THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) :** That will be decided by the Chairman in consultation with the Minister.

Now, Shri Sukh Ram to make a statement.

#### STATEMENT BY MINISTER Telecom Tariffs

**THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM) :** Mr. Chairman, Sir, I take this opportunity to make the following statement :—

The Honourable Members are aware that the last revision of Telecom Tariffs took place on 1-4-90. This revision did not make any sizeable increase in the rates, but had introduced reduction in the rental for Measured Rate Exchange Systems below 100 lines from Rs. 750/- to Rs. 600/- p.a. and unit charge for calls beyond 5000 from Rs. 1.25 to Rs. 1.10. In addition, charges on calls made from Long Distance Public Telephones were reduced from full to 50% and further concessions in rentals for telephones of Recognised Educational Institutions and the Institutions working for the Handicapped were effected. The revision was, therefore, limited in its impact and it may