

which recruits such labourers. This is done by sardars called as kuli sardars. They move from village to village and specially in the taluks of Kudla and Khallikote of Bhanj Nagar Sub-Division where they have their headmen, and collect these people to go out. Whatever is the rate of payment, they are not given at all what they are expected to get from the Government or from the worksite where they are working. Therefore, I would request the Minister to write to the Government of Orissa directly because, as he said, most of the people are not licensed. These sardars are not licensed. Whether there is a machinery in the Orissa Government is also doubtful. Therefore, my special request is that when these labourers are recruited let them be recruited at the Government level. For example, there is the project going on in Himachal Pradesh. The Himachal Pradesh Labour Department can write to the Orissa Government so that they can recruit labour through their Labour Department and send them there, and I think that that will be the best possible solution.

As far as the committee which is being appointed to find what measures are being taken, I would be very happy if it is appointed early and the report is given to the House as early as possible.

**SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA:** Sir, he wanted to give me some information. I have very gladly received the information in the presence of the Hon. Members and I shall certainly examine what can be done in the light of the information he has given.

1 P.M.

#### **BILL INTRODUCED**

**The Public Wakfs (Extension of Limitation) (Delhi Amendment) Bill, 1977**

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND HOUSING AND SUPPLY AND REHABILITATION (SHRI SIKANDAR

BAKHT): Sir, I move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Public Wakfs (Extension of Limitation) Act, 1959, as in force in the Union Territory of Delhi.

*The question was put and the motion was adopted.*

**SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT:** Sir, I introduce the Bill.

#### **REFERENCE TO CONDITION OF PLANTATION WORKERS**

**SHRI ANANDA PATHAK** (West Bengal): Sir, I would like to mention that there is widespread discontent among the plantation workers in West Bengal, Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and other States—I mean plantations of tea, rubber, coffee, etc.—as the employers have failed to provide the requisite number of living houses, drinking water and medical facilities and other amenities as per the Plantation Labour Act, 1951. They are violating the provisions of the law with impunity. This Act was enforced 26 years ago but even now we find that the workers are still living in mud-huts. And in the name of medicine, we find that they are given two types of water. In certain cases of complaints, they give one type of water. In other cases, they give the other type of water. The condition is really serious. The incidence of TB is very high in the plantations but the employers are not providing any medical facilities for them. Therefore, my main intention in mentioning this matter is that sometime back there was a list of business which was circulated wherein it was mentioned that the Plantation Labour (Amendment) Bill will be brought in this House. But unfortunately even to this day we do not know whether that will come up or not. Two or three years back the previous Government had brought a Bill and that was referred to a Joint Committee of Parliament. That Committee went round the different States

[Shri Ananda Pathak]

and plantations and thereafter they submitted their report. But what happened to that report, we do not know. Therefore, I would urge upon the hon. Minister to bring forward a comprehensive amendment Bill to the Plantation Labour Act so that employers who violate the provisions of the Act or who do not implement the provisions of the Act are punished with imprisonment as well as fine. The present provision is for a fine of Rs. 500 or something like that. The employers pay the fine and go scot-free. Therefore, I urge upon the Minister to bring forward a Bill which will contain a provision for stringent measures to be taken by the Government. Or the Government itself should take over the implementation of the welfare measures for the labourers in respect of housing, drinking water, medical facilities, etc. If necessary, the Government can impose some sort of a levy on every kilogram of tea, coffee and other products. I request the Minister to see that the scope of the Bill is further extended to cover other plantations like cardamom, coconut, etc.

Lastly, now there is a certain limit of 25 acres or something like that in regard to the application of the Plantation Labour Act. I would like to urge upon the Minister that there should be no minimum limit. Wherever a plantation is there for a commercial purpose or an industrial purpose, even if it is of only one or two or three acres, the Plantation Labour Act should be applied to it. With these words, I conclude.

SHRI N. H. KUMBHARE (Maharashtra): The hon. Member wanted to know what had happened to the Plantation Labour (Amendment) Bill. The Joint Committee has already submitted its report.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR (SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA): I hope to introduce it in the next session.

## REFERENCE TO THE ALLEGED SURVEILLANCE ON JANATA PARTY MEMBERS AND OTHERS

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): Sir, Mr. Charan Singh is in the House. I invite through you the attention of the Home Minister and other Members of the Government to a news item in the Delhi edition of today's Statesman. The caption is: "Janata MPs Allege Surveillance". Then it goes on:

"At the Janata Parliamentary Party executive meeting today, some members protested against what they called 'surveillance' by intelligence staff on senior party members, including the party President, Mr. Chandra Shekhar."

Then "Mr. Desai reportedly said that no such surveillance should be there and if the allegation was true, he would like to look into it." The Prime Minister did not deny the allegation only he said, if it is there well, it will be looked into. Mr. Krishan Kant alleged in that meeting that "a watch is being kept on 'me' for example and also the party President, Mr. Chandra Shekar." "Intelligence staff have been engaged to watch our movements and another member pointed out that the Shipping Minister, Mr. Chand Ram, was also watched"—the Shipping Minister, not my or you. "The Shipping Minister, Mr. Chand Ram, was also watchd." "And today the Haryana intelligence staff in Delhi is double of what it was during Mr. Bansilal's time."

Now, this is a very serious matter. Here is a meeting of the ruling party. MPs of the ruling party are saying this. One prominent Member, a colleague of ours in this House some time ago, now a Member of the other House, Mr. Krishan Kant, has made such allegations and others have joined him. It is said that even Ministers are under surveillance. What is more, the president of the ruling party, our esteemed friend, Mr. Chandra Shekhar is under surveillance. Only the other