

DR. R. B. GOUR: If there is a violation, what is the step that is taken?

SHRI ABID ALI: Appropriate steps are taken whenever such violations are brought to our notice.

DR. R. B. GOUR: Could they be prosecuted in the courts, Sir?

SHRI ABID ALI: No, Sir.

AMENDMENT TO THE MINES MATERNITY BENEFIT ACT, 1941

*115. DR. R. B. GOUR: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to refer to paragraph II on page 2 of the Report of the Ministry of Labour and Employment for 1957 and state:

(a) what are the broad features of the proposed amendments to the Mines Maternity Benefit Act, 1941; and

(b) how long will it take the Government to take a decision in this-respect?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI ABID ALI): (a) and (b). The proposals have not yet been finalised.

DR. R. B. GOUR: Since how long have these proposals been under the consideration of the Government?

SHRI ABID- ALI: This will take still a few months more.

SHRI V. PRASAD RAO: How is it, Sir, that things are always under con- sideration in the Labour Ministry?

(No reply)

DR. R. B. GOUR: Does the law that is in contemplation include the fact that the benefits under this Act will rise or vary according to the emoluments of the workers?

SHRI ABID ALI: I do not think so, Sir.

DR. R. B. GOUR: This means, Sir, that the benefit is going to be pegged when the wages will rise. Is that the thing under contemplation?

SHRI ABID ALI: There is already the Maternity Benefit Act applicable to . . .

DR. R. B. GOUR: Is there a uniform Maternity Benefit rate applicable for all mines?

SHRI ABID ALI: The question, Sir, is with regard to the Maternity Benefit Act and not mines.

DR. R. B. GOUR: I want to know about the labour in the mines.

SHRI ABID ALI: I may as well inform the House as to what this will provide. Two nursing breaks each of half-an-hour during the working shifts besides the usual rest hours will be provided. Then, a woman worker shall be employed on light work during the period and particularly one month before the maternity leave becomes due; leave with wages for three weeks shall be allowed in the event of miscarriage. Leave with pay and service rights of women workers shall not in any way be prejudiced when the worker is on leave granted under this Act. In addition to maternity leave, for twelve weeks, leave not exceeding one month shall be granted in case of illness arising out of pregnancy or confinement.

DR. R. B. GOUR: Is this uniformly applicable to all the mines?

SHRI ABID ALI: These details are under consideration. I have given an idea of the provisions which this Act will have.

RESTRICTIONS ON THE EXPORT OF COTTON TEXTILES TO U.K.

*116. SHRI V. K. DHAGE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to restrict the export of cotton textiles to the United Kingdom; and

(b) if so, to what extent?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI N. KANTINGO): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

SHRI V. K. DHAGE: May I know whether Government is aware of any such conference that was held last year between the cotton industrialists in India and U.K.?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: Yes, Sir. There have been inter-industry conferences between the textile interests in U.K., Pakistan, India and Hong Kong and there is likely to be another conference this year.

SHRI V. K. DHAGE: What was the agreement that was arrived at last year?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: No agreement was arrived at last year.

SHRI V. K. DHAGE: Were any preferences shown to the textile goods in the matter of import duty?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: No, Sir, because last year's negotiations between the industrialists of these various countries did not end in any conclusion. This year they are trying again.

SHRI V. K. DHAGE: Has Mr. Frank Lee, Permanent Under Secretary of the British Board of Trade, met any of the officials this month in the Department of Commerce?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: Yes, Sir, he did. On his way back from Hong Kong, he paid courtesy calls on the Minister and the officers of the Ministry.

SHRI V. K. DHAGE: I want to know whether he had any discussions in this regard.

SHRI N. KANUNGO: No, he had no discussion because in this interindustry conference, Government as such has got nothing to do excepting providing certain facilities.

PANDIT S. S. N. TANKHA: Has the attention of the hon. Minister been drawn to a statement published in the newspapers one or two days back that a deputation from India of some of the industrialists has gone there and is negotiating regarding this restriction of import into England?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: Yes, Sir, representatives of the textile industry of India are supposed to meet their counterparts in U.K. and possibly they have gone there.

SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: May I know the value of the exports of textiles from this country?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: Usually it is round about 150 million yards.

SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: The value of the exports, Sir.

SHRI N. KANUNGO: It varies from year to year. I cannot give it now.

SHRI V. K. DHAGE: Is the Government aware of any kind of voluntary curb being placed in the matter of textile imports in U.K.?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: The industrialists of all the countries are discussing this question now. We do not know whether they have come to any conclusions. Last year they had not.

SHRI V. K. DHAGE: Is the Government prepared to consider any such proposal in this regard?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: If any proposals come, we will consider them. I cannot say anything firm on that.

PANDIT S. S. N. TANKHA: What is the policy of Government in this matter? Does it want to restrict the export of cotton cloth from India?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: No, Sir, the policy of the Government is to boost up exports as much as possible.

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA: May I know whether it is a fact that

the Government of India have agreed with the conclusions of the Government of the U.K. for restricting the imports of cloth into that country?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: No, Sir, there has been no proposal from the U.K Government or from us.

ADVANCE LICENSING OF CERTAIN INDUSTRIES

•117. SHRI V. K. DHAGE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to grant advance licences in case of certain industries to enable them to plan their purchases from abroad on a long term basis; and

(b) if so, which are these industries?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI N. KANUNGO) : (a) and (b). With a view to plan purchases from abroad on long term basis, a scheme to grant advance actual user licences in respect of certain industries for the period October 1958 to March, 1959 is under the consideration of the Government of India. The industries to which this scheme will apply have not yet been categorised.

SHM V. K. DHAGE: What are the items for which this kind of advance licences are proposed to be given?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: These are all matters which are under consideration but it will deal mostly with industrial raw material, particularly scarce non-ferrous metals.

SHRI V. K. DHAGE: What are the countries for which this will be valid?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: We are planning to allow advance licences and these will be for countries from which we can get the things most conveniently.

SHRI V. K. DHAGE: What is the period for which it is proposed to give this advance licence?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: The whole idea is under discussion but our idea is to make it valid for six months. In advance of six months, these licences may be given.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A BRITISH AIR BASE IN ADDU ATOLL IN THE MALDIVIAN ARCHIPELAGO

•118. SHRI Y. K. DHAGE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state.

(a) whether he has received any appeal for sympathy and help from the Maldivian Education Minister in the development connected with the establishment of a British Air Base in Addu Atoll in the Maldivian Archipelago; and

(b) if so, what action Government have taken in the matter?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI LAKSHMI MENON) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

SHRI V. K. DHAGE: Has it come to the knowledge of the Government that negotiations between the Maldivian authorities and the British Government have failed?

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI MENON: No, Sir.

SHRI V. K. DHAGE: Has it come to the knowledge of the Government that a warship is being kept in the main harbour in one of the islands of the Archipelago?

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI MENON: We have seen newspaper reports about these things.

MR. CHAIRMAN: She says that she has seen Press reports. You are quoting from newspaper reports but she confines herself to official information.

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI MENON: That is right, Sir.