

The House then adjourned for lunch at one minute past one of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at two minutes past two of the clock,

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN *in the Chair*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We are now taking up the Payment of Wages (Amendment) Bill, 2017. Shri Bandaru Dattatreya.

GOVERNMENT BILL

The Payment of Wages (Amendment) Bill, 2017

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): Sir, I beg to move:

That the Bill further to amend the Payment of Wages Act, 1936, as passed by Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration.

The question was proposed.

डा. सत्यनारायण जटिया (मध्य प्रदेश): माननीय उपसभापति जी, मजदूरों के भुगतान को सुनिश्चित करने के लिए, सुरक्षा देने के लिए और समय पर भुगतान करने के लिए यह एक ऐसा विधेयक है, जिसकी आज के समय में, समसामयिक जरूरत है। उसी की पूर्ति करने के लिए, अध्यादेश को विधेयक के रूप में पारित करने के लिए यहां पर माननीय श्रम मंत्री श्री बंडारू दत्तात्रेय ने यह विधेयक पेश किया है। मैं इस विधेयक का समर्थन करते हुए कहना चाहूंगा कि मजदूरों के बारे में सोचने का यह एक अच्छा उपाय है। हमारे देश के संगठित और असंगठित क्षेत्र में हमारा श्रमिक काम करता है। देश में कुशल, अर्धकुशल, स्किल्ड, अनस्किल्ड और सेमी स्किल्ड श्रमिक काम करते हैं। चूंकि ऑर्गनाइज्ड सेक्टर में कर्मचारियों की संख्या निरंतर कम होती जा रही है, इसीलिए हमारे यहां पर असंगठित क्षेत्र के मजदूरों की संख्या में निरंतर वृद्धि हो रही है। इसलिए ऐसे श्रमिकों के बारे में, उनके भुगतान को सुनिश्चित करने के लिए यह बिल लाया गया है। यह संशोधन बिल मजदूरों की मजदूरी के भुगतान की पद्धति को रेगुलेट करने के लिए, विनियमित करने के लिए है, It regulates the payment of wages of certain class of employed persons. इस अधिनियम में अनेक बार संशोधन हुए हैं, 2005 में अंतिम बार संशोधन हुआ था। इस अधिनियम की धारा 6 यह उपबंध करती है, Section 6 of the Act provides that all wages shall be paid in current coin or currency notes or in both. यह जो धारा 6 है, इसमें उपबंध किया गया है कि हम जो कर्मचारी को, श्रमिक को भुगतान करें, वह चाहे हमारे प्रचलित सिक्के हों या नोट हों, उसके माध्यम से करें। जैसा कि आप जानते हैं, यह जो विमुद्रीकरण हुआ है, उसके कारण से और उस समय में करेन्सी का जिस प्रकार का प्रवाह होना चाहिए, उस स्थिति को भी सुचारु रूप से नियंत्रित करने के लिए यह बात बहुत जरूरी हो गई थी, उस दृष्टि से यह विधेयक लाने का काम हुआ है। यह विधेयक 28 दिसंबर, 2016 को लाया गया था। हमने कोशिश की थी कि 15 दिसंबर, 2016 को इस विधेयक को लोक सभा में पारित किया जाए, किन्तु उस वक्त की अपनी परिस्थिति के कारण से यह पारित नहीं हो पाया

[डा. सत्यनारायण जटिया]

था। इसलिए मजदूरों के भुगतान को सुनिश्चित करने के लिए इस अध्यादेश को लाना पड़ा और इस अध्यादेश के माध्यम से मजदूरों के भुगतान को उनके खातों में अंतरण करने का, उनके भुगतान को सुनिश्चित करने का एक प्रभावी उपाय किया गया। इस अधिनियम की धारा 6 पहले से ही यह अधिकार देती है कि कर्मचारी अपना ऑप्शन दे कि वह किस तरह से अपना भुगतान चाहता है। वह नगद में भुगतान चाहता है या चेक के द्वारा भुगतान चाहता है या फिर उसके खाते में उसके भुगतान का अंतरण कर दिया जाए, ट्रांसफर कर दिया जाए, इसके लिए उसके पास वैकल्पिक व्यवस्थाएं उपलब्ध हैं। फिर भी इसको सुनिश्चित करने के लिए हमारा मजदूरी संधाय अधिनियम, 1936, जो बहुत पुराना है, उसमें यह एक संशोधन करने का काम हुआ है और यह विधेयक इस रूप में यहां पर प्रस्तुत हो गया है। भुगतान की पद्धति को दोष-रहित बनाने का यह उपाय है और साथ ही यह डिजिटल, कैशलेस की दिशा में भी एक प्रभावी कदम है, जो हमारी अर्थव्यवस्था को एक सशक्त माध्यम देता है। इस तरह से यह एक प्रभावी उपाय किया गया है। इससे पहले भी आंध्र प्रदेश, उत्तराखंड, पंजाब, केरल, हरियाणा की राज्य सरकारों ने अधिनियम में संशोधन कर चेक अथवा बैंक खातों में अंतरण करने का प्रबंध कर रखा है। तो यह पद्धति प्रचलन में आ गई है और इस पद्धति को पूरी तरह से पुरखा करने के लिए यह संशोधन लाने का काम इस विधेयक के माध्यम से हम कर रहे हैं, जिससे श्रमिकों को किसी भी प्रकार से शोषण का शिकार न होना पड़े। हमेशा यह शिकायतें रहती थीं कि मजदूरों को जो भुगतान किया जा रहा है, उसमें पूरा भुगतान नहीं हो रहा है या कभी भुगतान नहीं भी हो रहा है। इस भुगतान को सुनिश्चित करने के लिए यह एक बहुत ही आवश्यक और सुरक्षात्मक कदम है कि इस तरह के विधेयक को पारित करने का काम किया जाए। इसलिए मैं चाहूंगा कि इस अध्यादेश को हम विधेयक के रूप में परिवर्तित करने का काम करें। मैं यह भी कहना चाहूंगा कि इसके कारण से ईएसआई, जो राज्य कर्मचारी बीमा योजना की स्वास्थ्य सेवा है, उसका भुगतान सुनिश्चित हो रहा है और ये राज्य कर्मचारी बीमा योजना और भविष्य निधि योजना, जो श्रमिकों के हित की बड़ी योजनाएं हैं, उन योजनाओं से भी यह उनके लिए सुरक्षा प्राप्त करने का एक महत्वपूर्ण उपाय होगा। इस विधेयक के माध्यम से यह जो पद्धति लाने का काम सरकार ने किया है, यह बहुत महत्वपूर्ण और जरूरी है।

उपसभापति महोदय, हमारे देश में जिस तरह से संगठित और असंगठित क्षेत्र के श्रमिक हैं, उन सभी के कल्याण की बात होनी चाहिए। मैं यहां पर यह कहना चाहूंगा कि हमारे देश में अनेक प्रकार के श्रमिक हैं, जिनके काम करने की पद्धतियां लगभग समान ही हैं और हम एक लंबे समय से समान काम के लिए समान वेतन देने के उपाय करने के बारे में सोच रहे हैं। मैं भारतीय मजदूर संघ के कार्यकर्ता के नाते श्रमिक क्षेत्र से वर्षों तक, 1966 से लेकर अब तक, जुड़ा रहा हूँ और इस क्षेत्र में काम करता रहा हूँ। मैं जानता हूँ कि श्रमिकों को किस प्रकार वेतन विसंगतियों से बचाने के लिए उपाय करना आवश्यक है। इस दृष्टि से सरकार इसके बारे में भी निश्चित रूप से सकारात्मक उपाय करने का काम करेगी। हमारे देश में contract labours हैं, आकस्मिक श्रमिक हैं, दिहाड़ी मजदूर हैं, कृषि मजदूर हैं, मनरेगा में काम करने वाले मजदूर हैं, आँगनवाड़ी के कार्यकर्ता और सहायक हैं। अगर हम ये सारे भुगतान सुनिश्चित कर सकें, बैंकों के माध्यम से, चेक के माध्यम से या उनके खातों में अंतरण करने के माध्यम से, तो यह बहुत अच्छा काम होगा। सरकार ने इसके लिए पहले ही जन-धन योजना के खाते शुरू किए हैं।

निश्चित रूप से प्रधान मंत्री, नरेंद्र मोदी जी ने भविष्य की सारी योजनाओं के अन्तर्गत जिस तरह से उसको श्रमबद्ध बनाया है, उसके अन्तर्गत यह भी एक कदम है, जिसको सुनिश्चित करने का उपाय करना है।

महोदय, यह विधेयक बहुत ही उपयोगी है और समसामयिक भी है। मैं श्रमिकों के हित में कहना चाहूँगा, चूँकि हम तो जानते हैं कि

"कौन बनाता है हिन्दुस्तान,
भारत का मजदूर-किसान",

कि यह भारत के मजदूरों को सुरक्षा देने का एक प्रभावी उपाय है। सरकार ने इस विधेयक के रूप में इस दिशा में एक महत्वपूर्ण फैसला किया है। मैं इस विधेयक को पारित करने के लिए और यहाँ लाने के लिए निश्चित रूप से सरकार का अभिनंदन करता हूँ, स्वागत करता हूँ और उम्मीद करता हूँ कि

"मानवता के लिए ऊषा की किरण जगाने वाले हम;
शोषित, पीड़ित, दलित जनों का भाग्य बनाने वाले हम"।

मैं इस बिल का समर्थन करता हूँ। धन्यवाद।

श्री मधुसूदन मिश्री (गुजरात): सर, आपने इस बिल पर मुझे बोलने का मौका दिया, इसके लिए मैं आपका शुक्रिया अदा करता हूँ। मैं आपका ध्यान एक ऐसे विश्लेषण की ओर आकर्षित करना चाहता हूँ कि this is the most neglected legislation as far as implementation is concerned. इसका जन्म इसलिए हुआ था कि पहले जो लोग कपड़ा मिल में काम करते थे और मंदी के वक्त जब मालिक उनको पैसा नहीं देते थे और बोलते थे कि यह कपड़ा ले जाओ, कपड़ा बाजार में बेचो और उसमें से अपनी तनखाह ले लो। इसको हटाने के लिए और इसको मिटाने के लिए उस वक्त मजदूरों ने जो लड़ाई लड़ी, मजदूरों के संगठनों ने जो लड़ाई लड़ी, उससे यह piece of legislation आया कि जो मजदूर काम करता है, उस मजदूर को मालिक द्वारा compulsorily cash में पैसा देना पड़ेगा और उसकी तारीख तय की गई। चूँकि उसको पैसा देना पड़ेगा, इस वजह से उसको उसका रिकॉर्ड रखने की व्यवस्था करनी पड़ेगी। लेकिन जैसे-जैसे समय आगे बढ़ता गया, Industrial Disputes Act आया, Bombay Industrial Relations Act आया और दूसरे Acts आए। उनमें से कितनी ही चीजें regulate हुईं, लेकिन Payment of Wages Act बिल्कुल ऐसा neglected piece रहा, जिसके बारे में Labour Department ने ज्यादा कुछ नहीं किया, क्योंकि जो organized industries थीं, वे अपने आप समय पर उनको पैसा दे देती थीं। इस वजह से लोगों को इसके ऊपर ज्यादा काम करने की जरूरत महसूस नहीं हुई। सर, आज क्या स्थिति है? चूँकि wages धीरे-धीरे बढ़ते गए, बहुत सी industries में industrial workers की स्थिति और भी खराब होती गई और unorganized sector के अन्दर काम बढ़ता गया। The worst part is, कि गवर्नमेंट के जो डिपार्टमेंट्स हैं, जो पहले गवर्नमेंट के अन्दर casual labour permanent रखते थे, उन्होंने daily wages के ऊपर उनको काम पर रखना शुरू कर दिया। उससे भी एक step आगे जाकर Minimum Wages Act के तहत जो काम लिए जाते थे, डिपार्टमेंट्स ने उन कामों को drought relief work और दूसरे works के अन्दर उन कामों को करवा कर Minimum Wages Act के सेक्शन 26 के अन्दर exemption दे दिया। इस

[श्री मधुसूदन मिश्री]

exemption की वजह से स्थिति यह हुई कि उन पर Minimum Wages Act लागू नहीं होता है। जब उन पर वह Act लागू नहीं होता है, तो उनको रिकॉर्ड रखने की भी ज्यादा जरूरत नहीं पड़ती है। सबसे पहले Payment of Wages Act के अन्दर जो स्थिति पैदा हुई है, वह यह है कि you know, all the Departments of the Government, by and large, of all the State Governments of the country, say, for example, PWD Department, Forest Department, Irrigation Department, they always keep casual labour. क्योंकि Supreme Court का जो judgement आया है, उसके अनुसार अगर कोई किसी को minimum wage से कम देता है, तो वह बेगार माना जाएगा है, it is forced labour. इस वजह से minimum wage को compulsory कर दिया गया, लेकिन कितनी ही राज्य सरकारों ने अपने फंड से भी minimum wage की payment करने में असमर्थता दिखाई है। इस वजह से स्थिति यह हो गई है कि Department, in which they are keeping casual labour, वे उसका रिकॉर्ड ही नहीं रखते हैं। कितने काम ऐसे होते हैं, जो साल में 20-25 दिन चलते हैं या 30-40 दिन चलते हैं। Say, for example, पूरे देश के अंदर Forest Development Corporations हैं। जितने भी mines and forest produce हैं, उनको आदिवासी और दूसरे लोग जंगलों के अंदर इकट्ठा करते हैं, that is a regulation between the Forest Development Corporation and the casual labour. अभी हमारे यहां से Afforestation का बिल पास हुआ था। उसमें जो plantation करने वाले मज़दूर हैं, जो चौकीदार हैं, जो sapling लगाते हैं, जो बाड़ बनाते हैं, जो पत्थर के hedge बनाते हैं या जो गड्ढा खोदने वाले मज़दूर हैं, ये सब बिल्कुल casual labour होते हैं। न तो उनमें से किसी का कोई रिकॉर्ड रखा जाता है और न ही किसी को wage slip दी जाती है। मैंने फॉरेस्ट डिपार्टमेंट से सिर्फ wage slip लेने के लिए 20 साल गुजारे हैं, क्योंकि wage slip देने का मतलब यह हुआ कि they have to keep the record. अगर wage slip हो, तो at least, they can claim कि मेरे 240 दिन हो गए हैं, इसलिए मैं Provident Fund का भी हकदार बनता हूँ और Gratuity का भी हकदार बनता हूँ। Now, this is all done by the Government Departments. I am not talking about the private people or private employers. The worst part in this country, now, is, most of the Government Departments keep the casual labour as a labour without giving them any benefit of labour legislation. उसमें Payment of Wages Act का तो सवाल ही नहीं पैदा होता है, क्योंकि मज़दूर बदलते रहते हैं। एक बार वे बदले जाते हैं और अगर उनके 240 दिन नहीं हुए हैं, तो बीच में ही सब हटा दिए जाते हैं। उनका कोई रिकॉर्ड नहीं रखा जाता है, उनको wage slip नहीं दी जाती है, क्योंकि अगर कोई labour दूसरा काम करने वाला है, इससे उसके wage का अंतर बदल जाता है। उदाहरण के लिए मैं Forest Department के अंदर काम करने वाले चौकीदार की बात करूंगा, उसके पास पांच से सात किलोमीटर का एरिया होता है। जहां-जहां प्लांटेशन होता है, वहां-वहां जाकर उसको चैक करना होता है। उसे कोई भी ranger, कभी भी, without giving any notice, उधर से उठाकर किसी दूसरी जगह पर भेज सकता है या जिसने ज्यादा पैसे दिए होंगे, उसको वह रख लेता है, इसको निकाल देता है। इन हालत के अंदर ये लोग काम कर रहे हैं। यह स्थिति ज्यादातर सभी जगहों पर है। आप Irrigation Department को देख लीजिए। आज Irrigation Department का सबसे ज्यादा काम NREGA के अंदर होता है। NREGA के अंदर fixed wages हैं। अगर उनको Irrigation Department

हायर करेगा, तो उसको 300 या 350 रुपये देने पड़ेंगे, लेकिन अगर NREGA के अंदर उनको काम दिया जाएगा, तो कम पैसे देने पड़ेंगे। Forest Department का जो actual departmental work था, that has been replaced by NREGA और NREGA में आपको wage slip देने की जरूरत ही नहीं पड़ती, न ही वे देते हैं और न ही NREGA के अंदर Payment of Wages Act लागू होता है। लाखों मज़दूर इसमें काम करते हैं। जब बजट के ऊपर चर्चा होगी, तब मैं आपको बताऊंगा कि इसके अंदर by and large, Government department के जो regular work थे, how that work was transferred into NREGA. जो लोग गड्ढा खोदने को criticize करते थे, आज वे ही गड्ढा खुदवाने वाले हैं, क्योंकि नये बजट के अंदर तालाब बनवाने की बात भी आई है और गड्ढे खुदवाने की बात भी आई है। NREGA में जो काम करते हैं, उनको 100 दिन की मज़दूरी दी जाती है। हालांकि 100 दिन की मज़दूरी के अंदर अगर हम सिर्फ seasonal work को गिनें, तब तो they are seasonal workers, so, all the labour laws must apply to them. Why are they given an exemption? उनके ऊपर minimum wage का कानून लागू नहीं होता है, इसमें उसको भी exemption दी गई है, क्योंकि इसकी clarification वे यह कहते हुए देते हैं कि यह तो सिर्फ एक स्कीम के अंदर है। वैसे यह under the Act है और उसकी एक यूनियन भी रजिस्टर हुई है, लेकिन Labour Department उसकी कोई cognizance नहीं लेता है, इसलिए Payment of Wages Act के अंतर्गत, न तो उनको wage slip दी जाती है और न ही उसके अनुसार उनको तनखाह मिलती है। आज तो स्थिति और भी खराब हो गई है। जैसे अगर मेरी तनखाह है, आप उसको मेरे एकाउंट में जमा करवाने के लिए लेकर आते हैं, लेकिन बैंक में पैसा withdraw होने वाला नहीं है और सरकार उसका कोई रिकॉर्ड नहीं रखती है। आपके पास इस कानून को लागू करवाने की क्या machinery है? NREGA के अंतर्गत अगर आप 15 दिन के अंदर काम नहीं देते, तो वे compensation के हकदार होते हैं। गुजरात में कोर्ट ने यह डिसीजन दिया कि इनको unemployment allowance मिलना चाहिए, लेकिन उनको वह नहीं दिया गया। यह केस Payment of Wages Act के तहत फाइल किया गया था। अगर आप हाई कोर्ट में जाइए, तो वहां पर डिसीजन लेने में सालों लग जाते हैं। सवाल यह है कि यह तो हम ले आए हैं, लेकिन हैंडलूम सेक्टर, जहां पॉवरलूम में 10-20 लोग काम करते हैं या डायमंड सेक्टर में जहां 10-20 लोग काम करते हैं, वहां पर तो यह ठीक है, परन्तु इस देश के जो करोड़ों लोग अनऑर्गेनाइज्ड सेक्टर में काम करते हैं, उनकी आज क्या स्थिति है? मेरी ग्रिवेंस लेबर मिनिस्ट्री और लेबर डिपार्टमेंट से है, पार्टिकुलर लेबर मिनिस्टर से नहीं है, लेकिन लेबर डिपार्टमेंट में सबसे ज्यादा के जुअलटीज़ 15-20 सालों में हुई हैं। उनका स्टाफ कम हुआ है। उनका बजट भी कम हुआ है। महोदय, आज सुबह जैसे हमारे माननीय सदस्य, श्री जाधव जी बता रहे थे कि चाइल्ड लेबर के अंदर जो इंस्पेक्शन हुए, वे दो परसेंट भी नहीं हुए।

[उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री सुखेन्दु शेखर राय) पीठासीन हुए]

उनके ऊपर कितने केस किए गए, उसकी तो बात ही आप जाने दीजिए। क्या आप उसे पेमेंट ऑफ वेजेज़ एक्ट के अंदर स्लिप दोगे, क्या उसका रिकॉर्ड रखोगे, क्या उसे आप चेक से पेमेंट करोगे या कैश पेमेंट करोगे, आप क्या एंशोर करते हैं? Who will ensure it? As far as I am concerned, this may be a very good piece of legislation for the unorganized

[श्री मधुसूदन मिश्री]

sector, लेकिन इसके बारे में, मैं मिनिस्टर साहब से जानना चाहता हूँ कि आप क्या करना चाहते हैं और पेमेंट ऑफ वेजेज एक्ट के अन्तर्गत उन्हें पेमेंट करने को कैसे इम्प्लीमेंट कराना चाहते हैं?

सर, पेमेंट ऑफ वेजेज के अंदर जो लिखा है, उसे मैं पढ़ना चाहता हूँ—“All wages shall be paid in current coin, or, currency notes, or, by crediting wages into the bank accounts of the employees.” cheque, आप सरकार के डिपार्टमेंट्स से सीधे चेक से पेमेंट कराइए। All the labours which are employed by the various Departments of the Governments as casual labourers, let their wages go into their bank accounts. Let there be a record. You examine it and find it out. Why is the Labour Department not doing it? मैं तो बोलता हूँ कि लेबर डिपार्टमेंट इतना सुस्त क्यों है और क्यों बिलकुल टूथलेस हो गया है? इसी वजह से सबसे ज्यादा केजुअलटीज हुई हैं। सबसे पहला सवाल है काम मिलने का कि काम मिलना चाहिए।

सर, एग्रीकल्चर लेबर की हालत तो इससे भी ज्यादा खराब है। उसमें किसी कानून का पालन नहीं होता है। पूरे एग्रीकल्चर डिपार्टमेंट के खड़े होने के बावजूद भी वहां किसी भी कानून पर अमल नहीं होता है और अमल कराया भी नहीं जाता है, क्योंकि उसमें सबसे ज्यादा वायलेंस होता है। ऐसा लेबर डिपार्टमेंट वाले भी मानते हैं। उसे इम्प्लीमेंट कराने में डिपार्टमेंट के इंस्पेक्टर भी डरते हैं। इसी तरह मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि यदि मुझे सरकार पर केस फाइल करना है, तो सबसे पहले सरकार से मंजूरी लेनी पड़ती है, क्योंकि उसमें यह है कि अगर इसके ऊपर केस फाइल करोगे, तो 'नो ऑब्जेक्शन' सर्टिफिकेट चाहिए।

They don't do it. और इसकी वजह से, मैं यदि 10 दिन काम करूँ और मुझे 10 दिन का पेमेंट नहीं मिलता है, तो मैं कहाँ और किस कोर्ट में जाऊंगा? मिनिस्टर साहब, मैं आपसे और आपके डिपार्टमेंट से जवाब चाहूंगा कि उसे यदि 5 या 10 दिन का पेमेंट नहीं दिया जाता है, तो क्या मैकेनिज्म है, क्या कंप्लैन्स है स्टेट के ऊपर और डिपार्टमेंट के ऊपर?

सर, मैं बताना चाहता हूँ कि बहुत पैसा खाया जाता है। फॉरेस्ट डिपार्टमेंट के अंदर जब प्लांट्स लगाए जाते हैं, तो तीन वीडिंग होती हैं। तीन में से दो की, एक वीडिंग की ही नहीं और उसका पैसा चला गया। उसमें फर्टिलाइजर डाला जाता है, लेकिन वह उसमें डाला नहीं जाता है, उसका पैसा बाहर ही बाहर चला जाता है। कितने गड्डे खोदे, उसका कोई रिकॉर्ड ही नहीं होता है और कितने मजदूर लगे, उसका भी कोई रिकॉर्ड नहीं होता, क्योंकि वह सीज़नल होता है। वह केवल 15-20 दिन का ही सीज़न होता है। तेंदू पत्ते का सीज़न ज्यादा से ज्यादा एक महीने चलता है। इरिगेशन डिपार्टमेंट में काम करने वाले, जो रोड के आजू-बाजू में किनारी टूट जाती है, उसे बांधने के लिए जिन मजदूरों को लगाया जाता है, उन्हें हमेशा बदल दिया जाता है, जिससे कि उनका इसमें कोई हक न बने। यह डेलिबरेटली क्यों होता है?

महोदय, आप इंडस्ट्री को करोड़ों रुपए दें, मुझे इसमें कोई प्रॉब्लम नहीं है। आप उन्हें दें, ताकि इंडस्ट्री में एम्प्लॉयमेंट बढ़े। हम भी चाहते हैं कि एम्प्लायमेंट बढ़े। मेरा ग्रीवेंस यह है कि जो करोड़ों की संख्या में एग्रीकल्चरल लेबर और अनऑर्गेनाइज्ड लेबर हैं, उन्हें हम क्या दे रहे हैं? उसके लिए कानूनों और उनके इम्प्लीमेंटेशन की हम क्या व्यवस्था कर रहे हैं? सर, बिलकुल

ब्लैंक हैं, unfortunately I must say. मैं अभी भी डील कर रहा हूँ। मैं तीन-चार यूनियन्स का जनरल सैक्रेटरी हूँ। मैं देखता हूँ कि क्या हालत है। सर, हमारे यहां गुजरात में अम्बाजी नाम की एक जगह है, जहां मार्बल माइंस हैं, जिसके बारे में हमारे मिनिस्टर वगैरह सब जानते हैं। वहां मार्बल माइंस में ब्लास्टिंग की वजह से मजदूर मर जाता है। वह माइंस में ब्लास्टिंग की वजह से मर जाता है, लेकिन उसे कम्पेंसेशन नहीं मिलता है। वह कहां पर जाएगा? अगर वह लेबर गया भी तो वहां से उसको भुज जाना पड़ेगा, which is almost 300 kilometers, वहां पर Conciliation Officer बैठता है। जहां पर ये माइंस हैं, वहां पर वह नहीं बैठता है। वह सोचता है, अगर पैसा नहीं दिया, तो मैं अपने पैसे लेने के लिए 300 किलोमीटर दूर थोड़े ही जाने वाला हूँ! यह कैसी व्यवस्था है? मिनिस्टर साहब, मैं आपसे गुजारिश करता हूँ कि ज़रा मेहरबानी करके इसको देखिए। मैं सरकार से भी गुजारिश करता हूँ, सिर्फ एक तरफ इंडस्ट्री की ओर मत देखिए। मुझे उनसे कोई प्रॉब्लम नहीं है। वे हैं, तो उनसे काम मिलेगा, लेकिन बिल्कुल सामने जो करोड़ों लोग हैं, उनकी तरफ भी तो थोड़ी नज़र कीजिए। यह क्यों नहीं हो रहा है? अगर आपको गरीबी दूर करनी है, तो सबसे पहले जेब में पैसा जाना चाहिए। जो मजदूरी करता है, उसको पूरा पैसा मिलना चाहिए, समय से मिलना चाहिए, उसके पूरे हक़ मिलने चाहिए, वे कहां पर हैं?

सर, कोई चाहे कुछ भी करे, आज रिक्रूटमेंट के अन्दर पैसे दिए बगैर काम नहीं मिलता है, चाहे वह फॉरेस्ट डिपार्टमेंट हो, इरिगेशन डिपार्टमेंट हो, पीडब्ल्यूडी हो या सरकार का कोई भी डिपार्टमेंट हो। प्राइवेट में तो स्थिति और भी खराब है। वहां तो hire and fire की स्थिति है। जो नहीं आया, उससे कह दिया गया कि तुम्हारा पैसा नहीं है, जाओ। तुमसे जो हो, वह कर लेना। वहां यूनियन की स्थिति क्या है? उसके सामने कौन लड़ने वाला है और उसके लिए कौन लड़ता है? It is the most hazardous activity as far as trade unions are concerned. आज ट्रेड यूनियंस के अन्दर जाने वाला आदमी नहीं है। वह सोचता है, मैं यह क्यों करूँ? मेरी सेप्टी क्या है? मेरे पास कौन-सा कानून है? हमारे यहां जो dissenting voice है, उस dissenting voice को यह कहकर बंद किया जाता है कि यह तो नक्सलाइट है। सर, एक जमाना था जब मुझे पता होता था कि यह People's War Group का आदमी है। अब इसको मैं क्या बोलूँ? हमारी सरकार — तुम सिर्फ मजदूरों, आदिवासी मजदूरों के सवाल को उठाओ, तो उसमें तुम People's War Group, leftist और नक्सलाइट हो जाते हो, क्योंकि तुम जंगल में जाकर काम करते हो। मिनिस्टर साहब, यह पेमेंट एंड वेजेज़ ऐक्ट के साथ जुड़ा हुआ है, मैं आपको यह याद दिलाना चाहता हूँ। It is not just a small piece of legislation; it is a very, very big responsibility as far as I am concerned, and you have to look into it, and your Department has to ensure all these things for the people of the country, फिर न तो नक्सलाइट्स पैदा होंगे और न ही लेफ्टिस्ट्स या राइटिस्ट्स पैदा होंगे। अगर आज पूरे देश में सब काम ठीक से चल रहा है, तो मिनिमम वेजेज़ के implementation का काम क्यों नहीं चल रहा है? पैसे समय से क्यों नहीं मिल रहे हैं? मैं यह भी नहीं समझ पा रहा हूँ कि आप MNREGA के पैसे पोस्ट ऑफिस में क्यों जमा करवा रहे हैं, बैंक में क्यों जमा करवा रहे हैं? मैंने काम किया है, मुझे पैसे दो, शाम को मुझे पैसे चाहिए। हमारी तनखाह हर महीने मिल सकती है, लेकिन MNREGA की तनखाह नहीं मिल सकती है, उसमें उसको 10 एविडेंस चाहिए। मैंने आज काम किया है, तो उसका पैसा मुझे तीन हफ्ते बाद मिलेगा। हम कैसी सरकार चला रहे हैं और हम कैसा काम करवा रहे हैं? सभी तरफ वाले, इधर वाले, उधर वाले, मैं किसी अकेले को नहीं कोस रहा हूँ, यह मेरी

[श्री मधुसूदन मिश्री]

आपसे गुजारिश है। मेरे हिसाब से इसके अन्दर से 'or' शब्द निकाल दीजिए। आपने इसके अन्दर लिखा है, "in notes or by cheque". आप इसे कैश करवाइए। मजदूरों का कितना पैसा है? वह तो किसी का भी 24,000 से ज्यादा नहीं है। किसी को मिलेगा भी नहीं, अगर इतना मिलेगा, तब तो बहुत हो गया। अगर महीने के 10,000 रुपये मिलते, तब भी बहुत हो जाता। आप वह पैसा कैश क्यों नहीं देते हैं, उसे आप चेक से क्यों देते हैं? आप रिकॉर्ड रखवाइए। सर, जंगलों के अन्दर या दूसरी जगहों पर जो एक्टिविटी होती है, जिसमें प्रॉफिट होता है, उस प्रॉफिट के अन्दर बोनस के वे हकदार होते हैं। उस बोनस को देने के लिए उनके पास रिकॉर्ड नहीं होता, तो फिर वे बोनस किसको दें?

सर, मैं सिर्फ गुजरात की बात करता हूँ, ओडिशा और आंध्र प्रदेश की बात नहीं करता हूँ। ओडिशा के तेंदू पत्ते की वजह से जो स्थिति पैदा हुई, वह सब जानते होंगे। सर, वहां किसी का रिकॉर्ड नहीं होता। मैंने जो काम करके दिया है, उसका जो बोनस approve होता है, उसका मैं legitimate हकदार हूँ, लेकिन वहां पर किसी को सांप ने काट लिया, कोई औरत ऊपर से नीचे गिर गई या पत्ते लेकर कौन गया, उन सबका रिकॉर्ड Forest Development Corporation या Forest Department के पास नहीं होता है। अगर लेबर डिपार्टमेंट वाला कोई बता दे, तो मैं जरूर पता कर लूँ। उनके डिपार्टमेंट में चेक कीजिए। लेबर डिपार्टमेंट की ओर से आप डिपार्टमेंट्स में चेक करवाइए, जो सबसे ज्यादा उसके ऊपर धौंस रखते हैं। यह हालत आज पेमेंट और वेजेज की है। Unorganized Sector में, जो दो-दो, पांच-पांच मजदूर रखते हैं, उसकी बात है, कंस्ट्रक्शन लेबर की बात है। कंस्ट्रक्शन इंडस्ट्री में कहां यह कानून लागू होता है? लाखों मजदूर कंस्ट्रक्शन इंडस्ट्री में काम करते हैं। गुजरात, मध्य प्रदेश, राजस्थान आदि से ज्यादातर मजदूर कंस्ट्रक्शन में जाते हैं, क्योंकि दूसरा कोई अनस्किल्ड काम तो है नहीं। वे लोग फुटपाथ पर सोए रहते हैं, एक्सिडेंट होते हैं, तो उनकी जानें चली जाती हैं। अभी किसी ने तीन लोगों के ऊपर गाड़ी चढ़ा दी, जब कि वे लोग फुटपाथ पर सो रहे थे। यह बीते हफ्ते की बात है। इसके कारण सब मजदूर वहां से पलायन कर गए यानी वापस चले गए। उनके पैसे वैसे के वैसे ही धरे रह गए। कांटेक्टर बोलता है कि मेरे पास पैसा नहीं है, मैं कैश कहां से लाकर दूँ? क्या आप उनको इसके लिए assure करते हैं? मैं आपसे इस तरह की आशा रखता हूँ कि जो कंस्ट्रक्शन वर्कर्स हैं, फॉरेस्ट वर्कर्स हैं तथा दूसरे डिपार्टमेंट्स के casual labour हैं, उनको आप इस पेमेंट एण्ड वेजेज एक्ट के माध्यम से इस बात के लिए assure कीजिए। सिर्फ एक्ट बनाने से मजदूरों को पैसा नहीं मिल जाता है। मुझे पैसा चाहिए, मैंने काम किया है, उसका पैसा चाहिए। मुझे मजदूरी भीख के रूप में नहीं चाहिए, मुझे समय से अपनी मजदूरी चाहिए। आपका डिपार्टमेंट या सरकार का डिपार्टमेंट आज तक उनको यह assure नहीं कर सका, चाहे वह स्टेट का हो या केंद्र का हो। केंद्र वाले बोलेंगे कि यह तो स्टेट सब्जेक्ट है, हम क्या करें? इस विषय में जो sensitivity है, मेरे हिसाब से वह बिल्कुल मर गई है। आज उनको कोई नहीं जानता, जिन हजारों मजदूरों के पैसे वैसे के वैसे बाकी पड़े हैं या पड़े रहते हैं।

सर, मुझे खुशी है कि आज आप इस तरह का बिल लेकर आए हैं, लेकिन मैं क्या करूँ, मैं इतने सालों से काम करता हूँ, मैं यह देखता हूँ कि उनकी क्या हालत है, इसलिए मैं बता रहा हूँ। सर, इस वजह से मैंने इनको कितनी ही चीजें बताई हैं। मैं इनसे आशा रखता हूँ, क्योंकि मैं

इनका हमशक्ल हूँ। एक बार ट्रेन में किसी ने मुझसे पूछ लिया कि क्या आप बंडारू दत्तात्रेय हो, तो मैंने कहा कि नहीं, मैं मधुसूदन मिश्री हूँ। ...**(व्यवधान)**... ये मेरे हमशक्ल हैं। ...**(व्यवधान)**...

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री सुखेन्दु शेखर राय): इसके लिए आपको थोड़ा दुबला होना पड़ेगा।

श्री मधुसूदन मिश्री: सर, मैं इनसे यह आशा रखता हूँ। ...**(व्यवधान)**... सर, अगर सरकारी आदमियों को बुरा लगे, तो वे मुझे माफ करें, लेकिन आप जब तक उनके ऊपर डंडा नहीं चलाइएगा, तब तक वे काम नहीं करते हैं। जब उनको लगता है कि मेरी नौकरी जाने वाली है, तब वे फटाफट काम करने लगते हैं। जब तक इस तरह की स्थिति नहीं आती है, तब तक वे काम नहीं करते हैं। मैं आपसे यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि मजदूरों के हित के लिए आप उन पर डंडा चलाइए। आप लेबर डिपार्टमेंट के ऊपर डंडा चलाइए और उनको बताइए। आप वहां जाकर random check कीजिए। आप कहीं पर भी जाकर चेक कीजिए, वहां पर बहुत सारे लोग आपसे कम्प्लेंट करेंगे।

सर, मैं इस बिल का सपोर्ट करता हूँ और आशा रखता हूँ कि मिनिस्टर साहब इसके ऊपर पूरा ध्यान देकर इस पूरे कानून को real sense में implement कराएंगे, ताकि लोगों की जेब में उनकी मजदूरी का पैसा जाए। मुझे यह आशा है कि आप इस तरह का कोई कदम उठाएंगे, धन्यवाद।

श्री संजय सेठ (उत्तर प्रदेश): माननीय उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, सर्वप्रथम मैं आपका आभार प्रकट करता हूँ कि आपने मुझे बोलने का मौका दिया। सर, सरकार जब भी संसद में कोई कानून लाती है, तो यह आवश्यक होता है कि उसके ऊपर संबंधित स्टakeहोल्डर्स से डिस्कस किया जाए। संसद में जो भी बिल आते हैं, उनका दूरगामी परिणाम होता है। प्रस्तुत विधेयक, ऐसे ही दूरगामी और गंभीर परिणामों वाला है। इस कानून का असर देश के करोड़ों श्रमिकों, कामगारों और छोटे नौकरी पेशा लोगों पर पड़ेगा। सरकार ने विधेयक के उद्देश्यों और कारणों के कथन में कहा है कि समय के बीतने के साथ प्रौद्योगिकी बदल रही है। चेक के माध्यम से मजदूरी का भुगतान या उसके नियोजित बैंक खाते में मजदूरी जमा करने से डिजिटल और अल्प नकदी अर्थव्यवस्था के उद्देश्यों की पूर्ति करने के अलावा न्यूनतम मजदूरी के भुगतान न होने या उसके कम भुगतान के बारे में शिकायतों में कमी आएगी। सरकार ने यह भी कहा है कि इस तरह के प्रबंध कुछ प्रदेश सरकारें पहले से कर चुकी हैं। सेक्शन (6), पेमेंट ऑफ वेजेज़ एक्ट के तहत अभी तक coins और रूपए में मजदूरी और दिहाड़ी का भुगतान हो सकता था। यह व्यवस्था अभी तक ठीक चल रही थी। मैं सरकार से जानना चाहता हूँ कि इस संशोधन से भुगतान में किस तरह इजाफा होगा तथा डिजिटल पेमेंट से अधिकतम मजदूरी कैसे ensure की जा सकती है? क्या सरकार ने इस संबंध में मजदूरों और कामगारों की यूनियन वगैरह से बात की है? यह व्यवस्था organised industry के लिए तो ठीक है, लेकिन जहां unorganised industry है, जैसे agriculture है, construction है, उनमें सारे मजदूर एक जगह से दूसरी जगह, दूर-दूर जगहों पर जाते हैं, जैसे बंगाल से, उत्तर प्रदेश या अलग-अलग जगहों से पंजाब, महाराष्ट्र, केरल या दूसरे प्रदेशों में जाकर काम करते हैं। इनकी रोज की मजदूरी अगर इन्हें न मिले, तो इनका खाना नहीं चलता है। अगर इन्हें बैंक के जरिए पेमेंट दिया जाएगा, तो पहले उन्हें बैंक में लाइन खड़े होकर पैसा निकालना पड़ेगा और फिर वे अपना खाना खा पाएंगे। इसलिए digital payment करने से सब मजदूरों की नौकरी चली जाएगी या वे पलायन कर जाएंगे, वापस अपने प्रदेश चले जाएंगे। हमारे यहां हर शहर में

[श्री संजय सेठ]

अगर सुबह आप निकलें, तो किसी भी चौराहे पर लेबर खड़ी आपको मिल जाएगी, जिन्हें वहां से construction works के लिए रोजाना ले जाया जाता है। अगर हम उन्हें शाम को चैक से पेमेंट करेंगे या digital payment करेंगे तो वे उसे accept नहीं करेंगे, क्योंकि उन्हें शाम को उसी पैसे से खाने का इंतजाम करना होता है। इसलिए यह व्यवस्था बिल्कुल व्यवहारिक नहीं है।

इनमें से अधिकतर मजदूर पढ़े-लिखे नहीं होते और उनके लोकल बैंकों में खाते भी नहीं होते। दूर से आए लोगों के अपने शहरों में खाते हो सकते हैं, लेकिन दूसरी जगह खाते खुलवाने में वे हिचकते हैं। अगर उन्हें चैक के माध्यम से पेमेंट मिलता है तो वे चैक को बैंक में जमा करके पैसा नहीं निकाल सकते। वे अपना खाता ही दूसरी जगह नहीं खुलवाते। इसलिए इस बिल में यह एक व्यावहारिक कमी है, जिसे मजदूर मानने को तैयार नहीं होंगे।

ऐसे ही, agricultural sector में जो मजदूर गांव में काम करता है, वह चैक से पेमेंट नहीं लेगा। इन सारी समस्याओं पर ध्यान देने और बिल में व्यवस्था करने की जरूरत है कि कैसे इन लोगों के हित में प्रावधान किया जा सकता है?

सरकार ने कहा है कि प्रौद्योगिकी बदल रही है, देश बदल रहा है लेकिन हमारे देश का गरीब किसान, मजदूर आज भी वहीं खड़ा है। न उसके बच्चों के लिए पढ़ाई-लिखाई की व्यवस्था है और न दो वक्त की रोटी की व्यवस्था है। अगर वह अपनी शारीरिक ताकत का इस्तेमाल करके रोजी-रोटी की व्यवस्था करता है, तो उसके लिए पढ़े-लिखे और कुलीन वर्ग की digital व्यवस्था लाकर कुर्बानी के लिए प्रेरित किया जा रहा है। यह उसे मौत के मुंह में धकेलने जैसा है। पश्चिमी उत्तर प्रदेश और पूर्व उत्तर प्रदेश के तमाम कामगार पहले ही नोटबंदी के चलते बेरोजगार हो चुके हैं। इस बिल पर कानूनी मुहर लगने से मजदूरों की हालत और खराब होगी। बिल के सेक्शन 6 में एक proviso जोड़ा गया है, जिसके तहत सरकार तमाम establishments के बारे में नोटिफिकेशन जारी करके यह व्यवस्था कर सकती है कि वे केवल digital भुगतान प्रणाली को ही अपनाएं। इस तरह का बिल में delegation सिर्फ गैर-कानूनी ही नहीं, बल्कि संविधान का भी उल्लंघन है। इससे संविधान के अनुच्छेद 14 का उल्लंघन होता है। मैं समझता हूं कि इस प्रावधान को Committee on Subordinate Legislation को रेफर करना चाहिए तथा यह opinion लेनी चाहिए कि इस तरह का delegation कहां तक उचित है? यह बिल Department related Standing Committee को भी रेफर नहीं किया गया है। चूंकि यह बिल लोक सभा से पास होकर यहां आया है, मैं propose करता हूं कि इस बिल को सलैक्ट कमेटी को रेफर किया जाए तथा स्टेक-होल्डर्स की opinion लेने के बाद ही इसे सदन में रखा जाए। धन्यवाद।

MS. DOLA SEN (West Bengal): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, thank you for allowing me to speak on this important Bill. India has 472 million labour force. Out of this, 90 per cent of the workforce is in the informal and unorganized sector. It contributes to 45 per cent of the GDP. However, workers are deprived of the benefits of formal employment like provident fund, health insurance like the ESI, bonus, dearness allowance, etc. Even, employers pay the employees and workers less than the minimum wages mandated by the States or the Centre. This is today's reality. With due respect to Union Labour Minister who is present here, I am sorry to say

that the Central Labour Directorate has not been able to exert law of the land in this respect till date. Sir, it is important to protect the interests of the workers and labourers. I am glad that a reformed labour code will ensure that wages reach the workers in a timely manner. However, the Bill states that all wages must be transferred to the bank account. Unless the Government specifically notifies a certain amount, which may be paid in cash, this may pose a difficulty for many who still do not have bank accounts. This Government constantly talks about cashless India, Digital India. However, does the Government know how many people have bank accounts? The harsh reality is that 80 per cent of women don't have bank accounts in India. And, more than 50 per cent of workers don't have bank accounts till date. To add to the misery of the workers, the restrictions on cash withdrawal have still not been removed by the Government. How will a poor worker stand in the ATM queues during his work hours to withdraw money? How will he pay service to banks? Sir, political parties can receive ₹ 2,000 cash donation but the poor workers cannot. For example, I want to add that if an entrepreneur has to pay ₹ 2 crores as wages or salaries of workmen per week, say, on every Saturday, he is also entitled to withdraw only ₹ 24,000 from his account. Obviously, there is no need of lockout and strike. Factories after factories are being closed and will be closed further affecting crores of workmen of our country. Sir, in Bengal there are over four lakh people working in tea gardens. There are over five lakh of people who are working in the jute mills. Sir, 1.5 crore of Bengal population is associated with tea industry and 2.5 crore of Bengal population is associated with jute industry. There are thousands of beedi workers; there are thousands of construction workers, etc., etc. These workers and labourers could not be paid their wages due to demonetization. Sir, demonetization has caused hardship to all the workers and labourers. After three months of pain and agony, over 25 crore daily wage workers have lost their jobs. Unemployment has increased to 7 per cent, unfortunately. There is a need to provide a comprehensive social security system for workers in the informal sector. Let the objective reality be up to the mark at first. The Government cannot make the poor worker suffer because of its own agenda to go cashless and digital. Thank you very much.

डा. अनिल कुमार साहनी (बिहार): उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, जो मजदूरी संदाय (संशोधन) विधेयक, 2017 सदन में लाया गया है, इसमें दर्शाया गया है कि श्रमिकों को चेक द्वारा और डिजिटल पेमेंट द्वारा पेमेंट की जाएगी। मैं आपके माध्यम से सरकार का ध्यान इस बात की ओर आकृष्ट करना चाहता हूँ कि इस देश में बहुत सारे ऐसे मजदूर हैं, जो असंगठित हैं। उनको किसी प्रकार का संरक्षण प्राप्त नहीं है, वे डेली मजदूरी करते हैं और डेली कमाकर अपने परिवार को चलाते हैं। उनको इस डिजिटल पेमेंट से किस प्रकार से पेमेंट की जाएगी? मैं आपकी भावना की कद्र करता हूँ। बिल इसलिए लाया गया है कि मजदूरों को सही समय पर मजदूरी मिल सके। मगर जो मजदूर हैं, जिस प्रकार से खेतिहर मजदूर हैं, रोड बनाने वाले मजदूर हैं, मकान बनाने

[डा. अनिल कुमार साहनी]

वाले मजदूर हैं, हमारे जल श्रमिक हैं, जो जल में काम करते हैं, वे किसी न किसी के अधीन काम करते हैं। जब वे किसी न किसी के अधीन काम करते हैं तो वे नकद पर काम करते हैं। अगर आप रिक्शा चलाने वाले को भी कह दीजिए कि चैक से पैसा लो, डिजिटल पेमेंट से लो, ए.टी.एम. से लो, तो वह रिक्शा वाला जो डेली कमाकर अपने परिवार को चलाता है, वह किस प्रकार से यह काम करेगा? इस बिल में कहीं पर ध्यान नहीं दिया गया है कि जो डेली मजदूरी करने वाले लोग हैं, जो डेली काम करने वाले लोग हैं उनका क्या होगा, किस प्रकार से उनका पेमेंट दिया जाएगा? आज बड़े-बड़े ठेकेदार हमारे मजदूरों का पैसा रख लेते हैं। इसके कारण से याद दिलाना चाहते हैं कि उनके खाते और बही में उनकी मजदूरी का जो चार्ट बने, उसमें उनकी मजदूरी की जानकारी व्यापक रूप से रहे कि आपने पैसा दिया या नहीं और पैसा कैसे दिया। वैसे यह तो ठीक है, लेकिन जो आपने कहा है कि चैक द्वारा दिया जाए या डिजिटल पेमेंट द्वारा किया जाए, तो यह व्यावहारिक रूप से नहीं आ पाएगा। व्यावहारिक रूप से लाने के लिए आपने इस पर क्या कठोर कदम उठाया है, इसको आगे लाने के लिए क्या काम किया है? खास करके हम जल श्रमिक संघ से जुड़े हुए रहे हैं, जल श्रमिक संघ के कार्यक्रम में भाग लेते रहे हैं और उसके हम पदाधिकारी भी रहे हैं, तो मैं आपसे कहना चाहता हूँ कि जल श्रमिक संघ के जो लोग काम करते हैं, जैसे खेतिहर मजदूर हैं, जो खेत में काम करते हैं, उसी तरह से जल श्रमिक संघ भी है, उसको वहीं बांटकर पैसा दे दिया जाता है, मगर आपने जो यह बना दिया है तो इसके अनुसार उनको किस प्रकार से डिजिटल पेमेंट से पैसा दिया जाएगा, इस पर आपको पुनर्विचार करने की आवश्यकता है।

आज हमारे श्रमिकों के बारे में, जो मजदूरी करते हैं, अभी इस बारे में मधुसूदन मिश्री जी बोले तथा संजय सेठ जी भी बोले हैं। उन्होंने बहुत व्यावहारिक बात बोली है कि जो गरीब अपने परिवार को चलाता है, दैनिक मजदूरी करके चलाता है तो डिजिटल पेमेंट से उसका परिवार कैसे चलेगा? आज यहां सभी लोग बैठे हुए हैं। आपके खाते में कितना ही पैसा रहे, मगर आपकी पॉकेट में एकाध हजार रूपया नहीं रहे तो आप अपने आपको हल्का महसूस करते हैं, जबकि जो व्यक्ति मजदूरी करके खाता है, तथा जो सुबह काम पर जाता है तो शाम को उसे नकद पैसा चाहिए, अगर उसे नकद पैसा नहीं दीजिएगा, और कहा भी जाता है कि मजदूर का पसीना सूखने से पहले उसके हाथ में अगर पैसा नहीं दिया गया तो उसके साथ इंसान नहीं होता है। अगर उसकी मजदूरी का पैसा उसके खाते में भेज देंगे तो उसका परिवार कैसे चलेगा, इस पर आप पुनर्विचार करें। आप इस ओर देखें कि वे लोग अपना रोज गुजारा कैसे करेंगे, जबकि वे असंगठित मजदूर हैं, हमारे खेतिहर मजदूर हैं, हमारे जल श्रमिक मजदूर हैं, हमारे बीड़ी बनाने वाले मजदूर हैं, हमारे रोड पर काम करने वाले मजदूर हैं, हमारे घर बनाने वाले मजदूर हैं, तो उनका आप किस प्रकार से पेमेंट करवाइएगा? इसमें आपने नकद का भी प्रावधान किया है, मगर इस पर ज्यादा जोर देना होगा कि जो नकद लेना चाहे उसको नकद भी देने का प्रावधान रहे। अगर आप चैक से पेमेंट करेंगे तो कल जाकर वह बैंक से पैसा लेगा लेकिन उसका परिवार आज तो भूखा मरेगा। इस बात को देखने के लिए आपने क्या प्रावधान किया है?

माननीय उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, इस गरीब मजदूर, शोषित उपेक्षितों की जो बात आप कह रहे हैं, आप डिजिटल पेमेंट करने की बात जिस प्रकार से आप इस बिल में लाए हैं, यह व्यावहारिक

नहीं है। यह व्यवहार में नहीं है कि किस प्रकार से हमारे गरीब को पेमेंट किया जाएगा, इसके संबंध में माननीय मंत्री महोदय बताने की कोशिश करेंगे, इन्हीं सुझावों के साथ मैं पुनः इस विधेयक में संशोधन का प्रस्ताव रखता हूँ।

SHRI T. K. RANGARAJAN (Tamil Nadu): Thank you Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, for giving me an opportunity to speak on this Bill. Sir, this Bill was first introduced on the last day of the Winter Session and thereafter an Ordinance was promulgated. Is resorting to Ordinance route at all required on this issue? That is my first question. It is not at all required. Ordinance route is taken to make the issue fait accompli as a supplementary drive to demonetization misadventure, aims at benefiting only the big corporate and MNCs in the digital service, credit card service filed where every transaction includes service charge, unlike cash transaction. That is the basic purpose of this 'corporate service Government' behind imposing this Bill *via* Ordinance route and not for the welfare of labour.

Besides, the whole exercise of bringing an Ordinance on this issue smacks of authoritarianism and that has also been reflected in the very content of the Ordinance. Originally, under the existing Payment of Wages Act, the worker possesses the right to choose as to which mode he receives his wage. Sir, salary is my right. Salary is my property. I must decide how to withdraw that and how to use that. The Right to Property is a Constitutional right. The Government of day has taken oath on the Constitution. Are you not violating the Constitution? Is it right? I request the hon. Minister to please examine this.

Sir, precisely, the right of worker's consent has been snatched away through this amendment. Can the hon. Labour Minister deny that? While taking away the worker's right to consent on mode of wage payment, the administration has been empowered to decide the sector or area where wage payment will be made either by cheque or bank transfer.

Sir, today, the organized labour is 7 per cent and unorganized labour is 93 per cent. According to my information from banking sector, only 89 lakh people from unorganized sector have bank account. Crores of people do not have any account at all. They take their salary by cash. Hon. Minister has said about Kerala and other things. Sir, in Kerala only Government employees are being paid in cheque or through bank account, not ordinary employees or workers from unorganized sector. That is not in Kerala. I think, you have to correct that. Sir, it may not be the problem for organized sector, because for most of them salary is paid through bank. Most of the establishments under organized sector are in urban and semi-urban areas having bank service. Wherever there is Government office or wherever there is a public sector unit, you will find a banking service. But, in case of unorganized

[Shri T. K. Rangarajan]

sector occupations, particularly in unbanked rural areas, payment of wages through cheque or bank transfer would create a serious problem for workers and leave them at the mercy of employer even in the matter of getting their legitimate earned wage. Legitimate earned wage itself becomes a problem. I don't know how the Ministry of Labour thought about it. Does this amendment Bill has any provision to protect the workers in that kind of a situation? Unless such right to worker is ensured, this Bill cannot serve the required purpose and the objective. I demand: The worker's right to consent or choose the mode of payment of wage should be incorporated in the Bill. Otherwise, you are taking away my Constitutional right. You have no right to take away my right. The Constitution has given me this right.

So, I request the hon. Minister to consider this and make necessary changes accordingly.

Thank you.

SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I, on behalf of my YSR Congrss Party and my President, Shri Y. S. Jaganmohan Reddy Garu, and on my own behalf, support this Bill. However, I would like to bring to the notice of the Government three issues which are very important.

I draw the attention of the hon. Minister to Clause 6 of the Bill. I would just read it. It says, 'All wages shall be paid in current coin or currency notes or by cheque or by crediting the wages in the bank account of the employee.' The only difference between the earlier section, which has been repealed and this section, which has been substituted, is that in the earlier section, there were reference to thousand-rupee-notes and five-hundred-notes, while in this section, it says 'current coin or current currency'. In view of the issues to which I could come later, what I could interpret from this is that even today the payment of wages can be made by way of cash. This is what we have interpreted. While proceeding further, I would read the proviso to this. I quote the last line, '....the wages only by cheque or by crediting the wages in his bank account.' So, the proviso says that it can be made only by way of cheque or by crediting the wages in his bank account, whereas the main clause, that is, clause 6 says that payment can be made either by current coins or current currency notes. So, there is a contradiction. The hon. Minister may kindly clarify it. Then, in the last line itself, it says, '...wages in his bank account'. It gives an impression that it is applicable only to the male workers. So, according to me, this has to be slightly amended. It should say, '...in his or her bank account' This is what I feel. Please correct me, if I am wrong, Mr. Minister.

3.00 P.M.

There are three other issues. Only twenty-seven per cent of the villages in India have got banking access within five-six kilometers. If the objective of the Act is to make the payment only by way of cheque or to be credited into the bank account of the employees, how it is possible to credit the amount in the bank account of the employee where the banking facilities are not available, as 75 per cent of the villages do not have banking facilities. Therefore, I request the Government to first create the banking infrastructure so that the Act can be implemented more effectively. Secondly, as the hon. Members have said, 90 per cent of the work force in this country is in the unorganized sector. Hence, I would request the Government to make this Act applicable even to the unorganized sector workers.

Sir, I really don't understand why the Government has opted to promulgate an Ordinance with regard to this particular Act. Of course, the hon. President of India has got every right to promulgate an Ordinance under Article 123 of the Constitution, depending upon the exigencies and, if the situation so warrants, if he feels that a law needs to be brought into force, he could promulgate an Ordinance. Nobody would say 'no' to that. Sir, may I bring it to your kind notice that Parliament was in Session from 16th November to 16th December, 2016. Probably one day before the closing of the last Session, on 15th December, this Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha. Subsequently, since that Bill could not be passed by both the Houses of Parliament, the Government opted to issue an Ordinance around the 28th of December.

So, I sincerely feel that instead of resorting to promulgation of Ordinance route, probably, hereinafter, the Government of India may directly introduce the Bill unless it is really warranted. So, this is the suggestion I have to make, Sir. My first suggestion is that the Government of India should make efforts to create banking infrastructure throughout the country. Secondly, promulgation of Ordinance should be avoided. Thirdly, the Act should also be made applicable to the workforce in the unorganised sector. Sir, my reference, particularly to the Clause 6 and also a proviso to that, which is applicable, according to my interpretation, only to male employees, may also be addressed. Thank you.

SHRI D. RAJA (Tamil Nadu): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, the purpose of this piece of legislation is to amend the original Payment of Wages Act, 1936. Sir, Section 6 of the original Act talks about wages to be paid in current coin or currency notes. There, it says, "All wages shall be paid in current coin or currency notes or in both." This is what the original Act, 1936 says. This Act was amended in 1976 by inserting one clause, that is, "Provided that the employer may after obtaining the written authorisation of the employed person pay him the wages either by cheque or by crediting the wages in his bank account." This is what the Amendment says.

[Shri D. Raja]

Now, we are trying to amend this Act further. The present Amendment says, "All wages shall be paid in current coin or currency notes or by cheque or by crediting the wages in the bank account of the employee—Provided that the appropriate Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, specify the industrial or other establishment, the employer of which shall pay to every person employed in such industrial or other establishment, the wages only by cheque or crediting the wages in his bank account. Sir, while discussing this Amendment, we should keep in mind certain other factors also. The Minister must clarify whether it is applicable to only organized sector, or, it is also applicable to the informal sector or the unorganized sector. The Minister should make this clear. If it is applicable to the unorganized sector, then, what is the preparedness? Are we in a position to implement this Amendment? Parliament can pass this, but Parliament should be realistic. Can it be implemented at this given point of time or in the coming period? Why I am asking this because, now, the banking sector is in crisis. What is the condition of rural banks? You please tell us, Sir, what the condition of rural banks is. Are rural banks effective? Do they have network across the country, in rural parts of our country? Please tell us. Please try to convince us. Convince the Parliament because you have taken the route of Ordinance. Maybe, the Constitution allows this. But, at the same time, we have a very vibrant Parliament. Parliament is supreme. You must take Parliament into confidence. Maybe, you are in power today; tomorrow, somebody else will be in power. But, Parliament should be taken into confidence. Parliament represents the collective will of the people. So, I am asking, when you propose this Amendment, do you think it can be implemented now? Then, why are you proposing this Amendment? It is because of the condition of the rural banks. They are in crisis, and the employees are agitating all the time. They cannot function effectively. The cooperative banks are also in crisis. They don't have adequate capital. In the entire banking sector, there is no adequate recruitment. What is rate of recruitment of employees in the banks? Without adequate bank branches across the country, without adequate number of bank employees, how can you impose this, how can you implement this? This is one thing, Sir.

The other is, if it is applicable to unorganized sector, there are problems. One is of agricultural workers. There is a demand. It is an old demand. I repeat it. The demand is, the agricultural workers want a Central legislation so that they get identity, they get all social security benefits, everything. But we don't have a Central legislation for agricultural workers. How long can we continue like this? There is no legislation to cover a substantial working population of our country, the agricultural workers. Look at the living conditions of agricultural workers in this country! I

am not bringing other social factors. I am bringing the economic factors. What is their wage, what is their pension, whether they have homes, houses to live in, and what social security have they got? So, why can't you think of bringing a Central legislation for agricultural workers?

Now, I am raising another issue which is related to migrant labourers. They move from one State to another. My colleague from Uttar Pradesh was mentioning that Uttar Pradesh workers are migrating to other States. But I keep seeing workers from different parts of the country – from Odisha, from Bengal, from Bihar – working in Tamil Nadu, Kerala and several other parts of the country. Now do these migrant workers have adequate protection? Sir, the unorganized workers don't have identity cards. That itself is a problem. They shift from one job to the other job according to the availability of job; they move from one profession to other according to availability of that employment. They are 'migrant labourers', Sir. They are not even able to exercise their right to vote because they don't have their proper 'migrant worker card', identity card. The Labour Ministry must have come across this problem. I keep meeting several social organizations, civil societies. They all raise this issue. What is the identity card? Now after a big struggle, in some States, the 'construction workers' get that identity card as 'construction worker'. What about other sector workers like bidi workers or head-load workers? There are problems. Sir, some unions give it. I know when we organize them, when we organize the unorganized workers, we give identity card that he or she belongs to this 'union'. But, as a Government, how do you address their problem, this identity problem? It is a big problem. Without that, how can they have access to banking system? You may say, 'bringing people into banking system is a lofty goal'. Yes, people should come into banking system. But how can they come into banking system? That is what I am trying to ask. On one side, you don't have bank branches. There is no bank infrastructure spread over the country. On the other hand, the workers are not recognized as 'workers' and given their identity cards. Sir, they are 'Scheme workers'. What is this 'Scheme worker'? They are not treated as regular workers. They are just 'Scheme workers'. People are demanding that let these Scheme workers be treated as regular workers. What is the hurdle? I am asking the Labour Minister. What is the hurdle? What is the difficulty in treating them as regular workers? I am asking it, Sir. They are workers. They are 'Scheme workers' because they are in particular Scheme implementation. They are all Government schemes. After all, they are all Government workers. Why can't you treat them as workers? You don't treat people working under the Mid-Day Meal Scheme and the *Aanganwadi* workers as regular workers. These are some of the problems.

Now, let me take up one or two other issues. You were talking about minimum

[Shri D. Raja]

wages. Do you review the implementation of the Minimum Wages Act in different States at the national level? What is the present situation? Otherwise, why should Comrade Rangarajan or the trade unions demand raising the minimum wages to ₹ 18,000? On the one side, there is inflation and price rise and on the other, various economic factors which affect the living conditions of the workers. They ask for ₹ 18,000 as minimum wages, but the Government is not considering their demand. The Government is not taking up such issues at labour conferences or while talking to the trade unions' management. Why can't they accept this demand of having ₹ 18,000 as minimum wages for the workers? In the same way, in the case of pensions, there is a demand for moving towards a universal pension scheme. We talk about several schemes, but we do not discuss having a universal pension scheme. Sir, you must be aware of the Arjun Sengupta Committee Report. It was the first effort to address the concerns of workers in the unorganized sector. That Committee said that there should be a universal social security cover for all those working in the unorganized sector. What efforts has the Government made to consider this? Why not? After all, they are all our citizens. Why do we want our economy to grow? Let me put this simple question: Why do we want our economy to grow? Why do we want a cashless economy and a digital economy? For fun! Why do we want the economy to grow? It is, after all, to meet the needs of our people, to improve the living conditions of our people and to help our people.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): Now, please conclude.

SHRI D. RAJA: That is what we are trying to do, Sir, but what is the Government doing? What is the purpose of this amendment? They say, pay it in cash, cheque or through credit in the bank. My simple question is: where is money in the hands of workers in the unorganized sector? You give them money. I am not asking you to pay the workers out of charity or pity. They are working. Ensure their minimum wage. Let the workers have money in their hands. Let the workers have the purchasing capacity. Then, if you ask them to transact through banks, I can understand the rationale. But now, without money in their hands, if you ask them to go to banks, it is irrational according to me. That is why I am questioning the very timing of this amendment. How can you implement this amendment without taking into consideration all these factors?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): All right. Please, conclude now.

SHRI D. RAJA: Hence, I appeal to the Government and the Labour Minister

to have a comprehensive approach. This *ad hoc* approach would help neither the Government nor the economy. There should be a comprehensive approach. This is what I thought I should point out at this point of time. There are other issues concerning workers.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): Some other day!

SHRI D. RAJA: Yes, Sir; some other day. We should discuss the working and living conditions of the working class of this country. Perhaps if not now, some other time, we should discuss the conditions of the working people in this country.

Thank you, Sir.

श्री बसावाराज पाटिल (कर्णाटक): माननीय उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, आदरणीय बंडारू दत्तात्रेय जी ऑर्डिनेन्स की जगह इस अमेंडमेंट बिल को लाए हैं, जो लोक सभा में पास हुआ है। जैसा अभी डी. राजा जी ने कहा, इससे पहले कॉइन्स से बैंक में या चेक से या किसी भी प्रकार से पैसे जमा करने की जो पद्धति थी, उसमें एक छोटा सा परिवर्तन ऑर्डिनेन्स के माध्यम से किया गया। इस परिवर्तन में एक विशेष बात यह है कि पहले उनसे ऑथराइजेशन लिया जाता था, अब यह ऑथराइजेशन नहीं रहेगा। इसकी यह एक सबसे बड़ी विशेषता है। दूसरी बात, जहां तक मैं समझता हूँ, यह पूरा ऑर्गेनाइज्ड लेबर्स के बारे में है, क्योंकि इसके अंदर खुला-खुला बताया गया है कि जहां पर एस्टेब्लिशमेंट्स एंड इंडस्ट्रीज हैं, और उनके नाम का भी उल्लेख किया गया है, ऑथराइजेशन नाम की इस एक प्रॉब्लम के कारण कई बार मालिक उनके एकाउंट्स में पैसे जमा नहीं करते थे, सैलेरी नहीं देते थे, उसके लिए इसमें एक सीधा-सीधा रास्ता बनाया गया है। इस दृष्टि से किसी विशेष परिस्थिति में, किसी लिटिगेशन के कारण, अन्यान्य कारणों से जो पैसे को रोका जाता था, अब इस अमेंडमेंट के बाद उसको रोका नहीं जाएगा, उनको देना ही पड़ेगा। इस नाते से इस बिल का अपना एक महत्व है और मैं जहां तक समझता हूँ कि अभी कृषि इत्यादि इसमें नहीं आएंगे। इसके बारे में सरकार अलग से सोच सकती है, क्योंकि कई बार पार्ट टाइम काम होता है, कई बार फुल टाइम काम होता है, कभी एक दिन का काम होता है, कभी एक महीने के बाद होता है, तो यह एक अलग चीज है। यहां पर यह खुला कहा गया है — *specify certain industries or other establishments where the employer should pay his employees only by cheque or by crediting his wages to bank account*. इस बात को लेकर माननीय मंत्री जी श्रमिकों के हित में, एस्टेब्लिशमेंट्स के और इंडस्ट्रीज के हित में यह जो अमेंडमेंट लाए हैं, यह बहुत उत्तम अमेंडमेंट है। इससे उनका पैसा तुरन्त उनके पास जमा होता है और जहां-जहां यह एस्टेब्लिशमेंट्स और इंडस्ट्रीज होती हैं, वहां पर ऐसी कैशलेस पेमेंट की समस्या बहुत कम पैदा होती है। इस दृष्टि से यह उत्तम परिवर्तन है, मैं इसका समर्थन करता हूँ। जय हिन्द।

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY (Andhra Pradesh): Thank you, very much, for permitting me to speak on this issue. While many people may consider this as a continuing process of demonetization and its effect on the country, and the ruling Government may pat itself on the shoulders thinking that they are actually going to

[Shrimati Renuka Chowdhury]

get more TRP ratings because of this step that they have taken. It shows a growing intolerance and, unfortunately, an egoistic attitude towards the common men. For a Government that claims that they worry about the ordinary citizens, this Bill shows a shocking lack of empathy where our workers are concerned. There doesn't seem to be a reality check on what the real life issues are for the employees in this country at different wage hierarchy. All this looks lovely on paper. On black and white, it looks innocuous, unthreatening and assumedly a responsible step to take.

[MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN *in the Chair.*]

But is that what it really is? What was the overriding compulsion for this Government to bring in an Ordinance despite the fact that Parliament was in Session? First, they arrogantly bypass the Parliament and its democratic processes, then they bring in an Ordinance like this and now they slip in this Bill and demand that it should be passed and accepted. Sir, what is rising alarmingly is the absolute disconnect between the citizen and the reality checks. Sir, as Mr. Raja had rightly pointed out, is there any concept and awareness of what working conditions are in this country? Obviously, they are not. You take away the right of the citizen and the employee by saying that you will be paid only by cheque. Are you aware as to how long the banks take to process a cheque? How many days' delay an employee faces in clearance of a cheque? How long does he have to do without cash? Sir, the 'without cash syndrome' is carrying on even now. To date, as a citizen, I have no right to go to the bank and take out the amount of money that I want and the money that I have earned and which I have, in good will and trust, deposited in the bank. The banks are making money on my money, but I have no right to access my own money. I am curtailed, my rights are infringed on and the Government continues to carry on this steamrolling of our rights.

If an employee has to be paid by cheque, please give me these answers. How do you propose to do it in the unorganized sector? Where are your banking facilities? Do you have enough bandwidth for e-commerce and e-money? Are you able to actually access the citizens in the remote areas? In what distance, are the existing banks? Do you have adequate branches? Do you have a method by which you will facilitate the citizen to reach a bank? Sir, in rural and co-operative banks, the saddest State of affairs is that the people, who get a posting in the remote area, spend all their time and energy to get out of that posting and go somewhere else. The reality is that once in a week, maybe the bank will operate in rural areas. What happens to the employee then? Where does he go? You give us the alternative, give us the checks and balances, and then say, "You follow this or else..." But, you can't make

sweeping reforms of what you think as reforms and, in one stroke, take away all the rights of a citizen. We are living in an era of absolute uncertainty. Even if the Prime Minister of India today says something, citizens are not in a position to accept or believe it because the next day, the rule changes. During the initial period of demonetization, Sir, in 50 days, 68 rules were changed. Every day, we see people on television from the ruling party, including the Prime Minister, who threatened, intimidated, told us of terrible consequences. This is a democracy - by the people, for the people, of the people. These are the fundamental principles of democracy and this House reflects that democracy. Unfortunately, the Government doesn't seem to understand that. By bringing in this without laying down the infrastructure in the related areas, who is going to mitigate the misery of an employee when he will be without any money in his hand for the next so many weeks? Sir, regarding Anganwadi teachers — of course, it is an honorarium; it is not a wage — does this Government actually believe that the State Governments actually pay straight? Money devolved from the Central Government, which goes for payment of wages, is quite often not devolved on monthly basis, but it is actually clubbed together and delivered once in six months. How do you expect citizens to live? Can't you actually visualize that? Sir, through you, I appeal to the Minister that what he needs to look at is the option of paying by cheque partly and giving some part payment in cash. You can't do what is proposed here. It is an illegal thing what this Government proposes to do. If you take away the right of a citizen and then enforce a law which says that if this is not done, you will be punished, that cannot happen. It makes a mockery of democracy, as well as what Mr. Raja has said about agricultural workers. As it is, this demonetization has affected agricultural workers. They do not go and purchase food and grain and keep it in their houses in tens or twenties of kilos. They buy a kilo or a half of a kilo, make do with that, and, next time, when they have the cash, they go and buy the rest. They don't have cards to swipe and pay because there is no existing bandwidth in any of the villages to start with. So, what happens to these people? Who cares about them? They do not count except for votes. Is that the attitude that we are going to collectively take in this esteemed House? Is this how we treat the people in the remote areas and villages of India? Is this the consideration for them when they are sick or when they need something that we are going to tell them, 'No, bad luck, your salary will come through cheque'? Who is going to fix the banks' accountability and ensure that the banks will encash their cheques in an optimum time period? Nothing is defined here. The banks can take their own sweet time, earning interest on my money, and they may not even issue my money for five days, seven days, and, if God forbid, bank holidays come in, then all those holidays will be added. What happens to me as a citizen? Who empowers me? Who looks after my needs? I may have a crisis at home; a dying parent, a

[Shrimati Renuka Chowdhury]

sick child. I may need medical attention for which I need to have my money. This is not endowing on me any kind of property of the Prime Minister or his Ministers or the Members of Parliament. This is not from their personal accounts that they are giving us benefits. It is my right, Sir. I have rightfully earned this money and I should have a right to choose as to how I need to take my salary and how I wish to spend it. As it is they have decided that unmarried girls are not entitled to keep that much gold as a married woman can keep. How bizarre and distorted is that to start with and to believe that there should be discrimination between an unmarried woman and a married woman or any citizen for that matter? This Government seems to have lost direction. There is an arrogance of belief that 'might is right' and that you will by-pass Parliament, bring in Ordinances, steamroll citizens and get praise from the people. Who do you care, he who praises you. Who are these people who are praising you? Are these the people who are connected with the remote corners of this country and the citizens of our nation? Sir, as public representatives, we face them. We go into the remote areas. We represent the voice, the thought and the heart of the citizens of this country. What I am saying is not my belief system, Sir. This is what has been asked for by every citizen in the remote area. They are in a fine state of panic. They believe that their wages will not be paid on time. The banks will not clear it. They do not have savings. They have no ability to feed themselves for the time lag that the banks may take. Will the Government give direction to the banks, Sir?

Sir, in all this, so much talk and loud voice has been made about the benefits of demonetization, which will reflect very soon in the next five State elections. We will see the results and the Government will then begin to understand how this demonetization has helped them. Sir, I want to ask a question. What are these so-called benefits that this Government is talking about? As far as the money that came into the banks is concerned, so far we have no clarity or knowledge about how much black money, as they called it, came into the banking system. Bank Managers were found wanting. You had the Prime Minister of India going to Lok Sabha and talking the way he did the other day. It is a sorry state of affairs that he did not answer any of the questions. Which bank has this Government taken action against?

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH (Karnataka): He will speak today here.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: I know, I am waiting. Which bank did he take action against? Which bank manager has been hauled over the coals for the moneys that have been given away? Which bank is going to be accountable and how will the Government ensure that they remain accountable in clearing cheques in optimum time? Which fora do the citizens go to if the bank is harassing them

and not cashing their cheques because they are busy clearing the cheques of the ruling Government and their colleagues? Which bank remains accountable to the citizens? How do you propose to ensure that rural and cooperative banks actually have the money and you will have officers sitting in those areas delivering to the people? All these questions go unanswered and only contribute to absolute madness and mayhem. Sir, unfortunately, this Government believes that by appearing on television, by talking irresponsibly, by using the might of mathematics of their numbers in Parliament, they can subvert democratic processes. But the beauty of India's democracy, Sir, as this Government will soon come to realize after March 8th, is that the fundamental principles of 'by the people', and that is an expression on other forums, an answer to this kind of arbitrary, unthought of legislations that they bring about and torture the citizens in the name of right and might. (*Time-bell rings*) Sir, I am concluding. It is this that we need to look at. Mr. Raja had raised a very relevant point about migrant labour. Is this Government aware that our citizens in Jorhat go across to China to work for wages and come back? Do you not care? Do you believe that you can stop them? Will you give them jobs otherwise? Will you ensure social security for them? None of these questions are even addressed, never mind answering, Sir. And if this is how the Government is going to conduct itself, they must look back at the history, the history where they claim nothing was done for so many years. Sir, if world-class institutions are there, if ISRO is launching satellites today, if every sixth citizen of India is a citizen in the world today contributing to international economies, if you think this is nothing, then after March 8th, Sir, they will understand that if nothing else — every citizen has been empowered by this democracy, and empowered by the Constitution — we come with the rights that have been given to us. Taking away our right is going to cost you very heavily. Thank you very much, Sir. Jai Hind.

SHRI P. BHATTACHARYA (West Bengal): Sir, with your kind permission, I would like to bring certain matter for your consideration. Hon. Minister, in the Statement of Objects and Reasons, said that the Payments of Wages Act, 1936 states "the payment of wages of certain classes of employed persons..." May I put a question to the hon. Minister? What do you mean by 'certain classes'? Do you want to say only the permanent workers, or do you want to say the casual workers, or do you want to say the contractual workers, or do you want to say the migrant workers or whatever it may be? What exactly is your clarification? That has to be ascertained very clearly. Otherwise, I feel this Ordinance, which has already been promulgated and now it has been placed here to make it an Act, apparently looks a very good Act. But, Sir, I feel that the hon. Minister, possibly his officials, did not go into the details of the problems. What are the problems that will crop up?

[Shri P. Bhattacharya]

Number one, if migrant workers, who are working in West Bengal, move to Bihar, in which banks would they operate their accounts? Who would decide that? Suppose, some workers from the State of Jharkhand are coming to Birbhum, Bardhaman and other districts of West Bengal; suppose, they have their bank accounts in Ranchi or some other place in Jharkhand; would you ask them to open new bank accounts in West Bengal in their respective districts? How is it possible? There is no provision in the Act. The Statement of Objects and Reasons, very simply, states, “However, proviso to said section enables the employer to pay the wages to an employee either by cheque or by crediting the wages in his bank account after obtaining his written authorisation.” What does ‘in his bank account’ mean? If a migrant worker leaves his present place of work and moves on to another one, Mr. Minister, could you clearly tell the House what he should do? What would be the banking arrangement or system? Are you going to change the banking law? Let us suppose, I have a bank account in Jharkhand; I am an agricultural labourer. If I go to U.P., do I have to open another bank account there, or do I operate my previous account? How would it be possible? Would it transfer automatically? All such questions, which are pertinent, are cropping up. I would like the hon. Minister to reply. It is very clear that if I am a labourer, I have to labour and, as a result, I will get my wages. The Payment of Wages Act, 1936 has been changed so many times. But, Mr. Minister, I would like to know three things from you. Suppose any worker feels that he should leave the job and change his profession, how would his payment be made? How would they go about doing this? What would be the process? Can you clarify this? In Bengal, there are several jute industries; many jute industries have closed down now. Workers who had been working there are now unemployed. They are moving from one place to another, trying to get into some other employment. Now, tell us, Sir, how would they get their wages? I know of a particular case where a jute mill worker left the job and joined work at another place, but there he didn’t get proper wages. Then, he went to the Labour Directorate. The Directorate said that it depends on the present management; if they think that his payment should be less than what he got in his previous employment, he has to accept it, because there is no law in this regard. Hon. Minister, when you are amending the Payment of Wages Act, why are you not giving any pay protection to the workers? The existing provision says that if a worker who is getting paid at a job in a particular place goes to some other place, he would get the same wages there. Why have you not said anything about that here?

This is a very simple and pertinent thing. So, my earnest request to the hon. Minister is that before going into details and passing this Bill, kindly clarify all these things. It is very clear and it has been very clearly stated by Shri D. Raja, and I

fully support his stand point in regard to the constitutional problems. If I work in a particular area, and shift to some other place, and if I do not get my wages there, that amounts to a serious violation of the Constitutional right, my personal right to get the wages. The Minister is not clear on this point what exactly he wanted to say and what exactly he wanted to do.

Sir, another very important thing is this. In this Bill, if you go in details, you will be surprised to see that the Government has not set any implementation authority who will look up and search the entire thing. I know the condition of the Labour Ministry in the Government of India. I know that he has no staff. He knows it very well how much staff he has. He knows how he is functioning. He knows how his conciliation Machinery is working, and the power of the conciliation machinery is known to the hon. Minister. Nobody bothers about the verdict of the CLC or DLC or whatever it may be. So, in this regard, I have a very simple question to the hon. Minister. If somebody violates Act, what steps are you going to propose? Kindly clarify this thing to this hon. House. What action are you going to propose, employers do not pay proper wages to the workmen? He will give the reply, go to the conciliation machinery, DLC or CLC or SLC. But, hon. Minister, you know it very well what is their power. If your DLC writes a letter to the Director of a company to come, he sends a subordinate officer who has no power to take any action or any decision. Suppose, the management is not coming. In this regard, my humble submission would be, take some steps so that you can protect the workman. You have said it that however, the proviso to section enables the employer to pay the wages to an employee, either by cheque, or, by crediting the wages in his bank account, after obtaining his written consent. That is good. But, hon. Minister, would you kindly tell me one thing? Suppose, I am an employee in a particular area, and I am getting my wages by coins or by cash. If I go to some other place and say, "No, I will not authorize anything, I will be getting my wages again by cash." So many things are there which are to be clarified properly. Otherwise, Sir, my feeling is that after passing this Bill, the workers will be in soup. Apparently, they will be feeling very well. "All right, I will go to the bank; open an account in the bank, and my cheque will come; my cheque will be given to the bank online, or whatever it may be." But, what exactly will happen? You know the character of the Indian managements. I am not saying that all the managements are bad and corrupt. But I know some of the managements who are corrupt. I know that some managements are not paying the amount to the labour class. What will you do about them? I would like to have your opinion in this regard.

Sir, before concluding, I would say a couple of important things to you. On building construction workers, Mr. Raja and other Members spoke. But, Sir, a very

[Shri P. Bhattacharya]

important part of it is, suppose a building worker dies, what will you do? So, all these things need to be taken into consideration before passing this Bill. I hope, in your reply, you will clarify all these things. With these few ideas, I would conclude. Thank you very much.

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK (Goa): Sir, I would like to speak.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Already your party has taken more time. I can allow you for five minutes, if you adhere to that. Your party has taken 19 minutes extra! I was very liberal today.

SHRI P. BHATTACHARYA: You were extraordinarily liberal today, at least, to me!

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: At least you accepted it! Thank you. Mr. Shantaram, you can speak for five minutes. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK: Sir, the Payment of Wages (Amendment) Bill is a piece of legislation regarding payment of wages, cashless payments. But, it covers a wider ambit. Therefore, the ambit started from 8th November, according to me, although the Government says that the process of demonetization started two months prior to 8th November. But, nobody was informed! Even the RBI took the decision on 8th November at 5.00 p.m. I don't know when the report was submitted to the Cabinet.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Speak on the Bill, please.

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK: Sir, therefore, I began by saying that though it refers to wages, it refers more to cashless economy. Therefore, it takes us to demonetization. In fact, after demonetization, all the time, the Prime Minister was talking about cashless economy only. He forgot about demonetization and was speaking about cashless economy, 'Everybody should pay by cashless modes of payment.' This is a subject which has a wide ambit and, therefore, I am saying it. So, now, payment of wages will be by cashless modes, according to the PM. This process started on 8th November officially and unofficially two months prior to that.

Sir, to my Starred Question yesterday, the Finance Minister replied the whole thing—two supplementaries—in two minutes! It never happens. A question of such a magnitude was covered by the Finance Minister in two minutes! Then, there were three-four more supplementaries, one minute each. Why is the Government treating this aspect of economy in such a casual manner? Therefore, this Bill also will be treated in a casual manner, according to me unless you become serious about the cashless economy.

In your own State of Goa, which is administered by the BJP, how did you deal with this? The BJP Government in Goa announced that it was the first State going cashless. It was front-page news in many newspapers. Thereafter, the BJP workers themselves had to meet and pass a resolution and request their own Government to withdraw that notification regarding cashless economy. This is how you began with the cashless economy. Secondly, the point is that we wanted to know — because what was to be told to us by the Prime Minister, who assumed the role of the Finance Minister as to how the process started — whether the letter was written under Section 7 by the Government of India to the RBI or RBI *suo motu* took a resolution under Section 26(2). This is what we are entitled to know. This aspect is a part of this Bill. If you are saying that you are transgressing, you are going astray of what I am saying — all these questions are related — then, we wanted to know whether Section 7 was adopted or Section 26(2) was adopted. Secondly, after this cashless economy came into force and everything you say is fine, केंद्री अच्छी चल रही है। क्या फिगर्स आ रहे हैं? Today I got an Unstarred Question and the figure was that in Goa the tourist inflow has increased. This is incorrect. This is the reply I got that tourist inflow increased after demonetization whereas everybody knows that most of the hotels get 20 to 30 per cent occupancy. This is what the hotel owners told me. This is the case with every hotel. If there is inflow of tourists in Goa, why has that percentage decreased? Why have you given a different reply in Parliament? Therefore, I don't think you take this matter seriously. ...(*Time-bell rings*)... I will take one more minute, Sir. I was talking about unemployment. How much unemployment has been created after this demonetization? How many people have been retrenched, laid off or dismissed? Can anybody give figures? MoS Finance is not there. I don't know MoS Sitharamanji knows it. These things are linked to both the Ministries. You should also know those figures. The Labour Ministry, of course, is dealing with one aspect, but you are dealing with so many things like Start-up, Make in India, etc. Everything is with you. Therefore, these figures of layoffs and dismissals should be with you. You must acquaint us with those figures. Secondly, everybody knows as to what was the fate of contract labourers. The employers did not wait even for seven days. All of them were asked to go home. They said, "We will call you when needed." Thousands and thousands of workers lost their job in first 15 days. ...(*Interruptions*)... In 15 days, lakhs of people lost their jobs.

श्री नीरज शेखर (उत्तर प्रदेश): इन्हें हंसी आ रही है। ...(*व्यवधान*)...

श्री शान्ताराम नायक: आपको बाद में रोना पड़ेगा। ...(*व्यवधान*)...

एक माननीय सदस्य: अभी रोना स्टार्ट कर दीजिए। ...(*व्यवधान*)...

श्री शान्ताराम नायक: आज प्राइम मिनिस्टर हंस सकते हैं, हमारा मज़ाक उड़ा सकते हैं क्योंकि फिगर्स उनके पास हैं। जो फिगर्स वे बताएंगे, वे हमें सुननी पड़ेगी। ...**(समय की घंटी)**... आप इस पर विचार कीजिए और इस बिल का सच्चा उपयोग कीजिए।

SHRI ANANDA BHASKAR RAPOLU (Telangana): Sir, allow me for a minute.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You have not given your name. ...*(Interruptions)*... No, please. ...*(Interruptions)*... You did not give your name earlier. This is not the way.

SHRI ANANDA BHASKAR RAPOLU: Your kindness. ...*(Interruptions)*... Your kindness. ...*(Interruptions)*... Just one minute. ...*(Interruptions)*..

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: One minute. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI ANANDA BHASKAR RAPOLU: Respected Deputy Chairman, in specific I would like to point out about the powerloom sector tragedy following the demonetization. The cash crunch, as created, and with this Bill, I can understand the intentions and ulterior motives of the Government to divert the contract employment and unrecorded employment which is the order of the day. Underemployment is there throughout and lakhs of powerloom workers have lost their livelihood after November 8th, 2016. Even after that, they wanted to hold some mela and show some fancy wherein they did not address what exactly is ailing the powerloom sectors, the money transactions and wages. But after knowing all these inadequacies and the tragedy and trauma, the Union Labour Minister who is dearer to the weaker sections is coming out with this type of a proposal! It shows that they are just unconnected with the people and they are going to get disconnected with the people. Thank you very much.

SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY (West Bengal): Sir, with your kind permission, I would just invite the attention of the Government and the House only to one legal angle of this Bill, if you kindly permit me. I won't give any speech.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay.

SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY: Sir, in the Statement of Objects and Reasons, it has been stated that "Section 6 of the Act provides that all wages shall be paid in current coin or currency notes or in both. However, proviso to the said Section enables the employer to pay the wages to an employee either by cheque or by crediting the wages in his bank account after obtaining his written authorisation." But there is no mention about the written authorisation by the employee in the Amendments that have been made in Section 6. Normally the employees render service and in lieu of that he gets the wage. So, without his written authorisation which was earlier in the proviso of Section 6, this has been deleted. So, the object of this Amendment

4.00 P.M.

is not only to change from currency or coins and but also through bank cheques. It has also deprived the workers of their legitimate...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Maybe there is an omission. The Minister may react.

SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY: I am inviting the attention of both the Government and this House to this.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, please give the reply to this also.

SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA: Hon. Deputy Chairman, Sir, first of all, there were 14 Members who spoke about the Payment of Wages (Amendment) Bill, 2017. I compliment all of them and I wish to thank them all. I have keenly observed their very interesting commitment to the lives and welfare of the workers. I respectfully submit to the House that all Members are welfare-minded towards the workers. My Government, led by Narendra Modiji, is very sensitive towards the poor, working labourers. For that only we have had that vision. That is why the Prime Minister said "श्रमेव जयते". We feel that our worker is not only a worker, we feel that he is "श्रम योगी" and that he is a "राष्ट्र निर्माता". That is why we are very sensitive towards the workers' issues. The main purpose of the Amendment is that exploitation of workers is going on regarding minimum payment and also a cut in the payments and there is no transparency and no proper functioning. That is why we have ensured the payment of statutory minimum wage also. Particularly, I am stressing that all the Members were interested in compliance of social security. Compliance of social security is very, very important which I will explain later on after a few minutes. Sir, hon. Members pointed out why this has been brought through Ordinance route. For this, I only submit that I had already introduced this Bill in the Lok Sabha in the last Winter Session. But, unfortunately, both the Houses could not function. So, in the interest and welfare of workers, we have issued this Ordinance. I will explain it a little bit later. As I said, there are a number of complaints and enforcement issues regarding payment of wages which are very important. That is why I have come before you to consider replacing this Ordinance with Bill and ultimately make it an Act. Sir, I also take into consideration views/suggestions made by hon. Members.

Secondly, I wanted to make it clear that this Bill contains a very small insertion and a proviso. It says and I quote:

"All wages shall be paid in current coin or currency notes or by cheque or by crediting the wages in the bank account of the employee.

[Shri Bandaru Dattatreya]

Provided that the appropriate Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, specify the industrial or other establishment, the employer of which shall pay to every person employed in such industrial or other establishment, the wages only by cheque or by crediting the wages in his bank account."

It means, all the existing current coin or currency notes or cheque have to be credited in bank account. That is why there should not be any apprehension. As I said, this will improve the compliance to labour laws.

There is one more important aspect which many senior hon. Members expressed here. Secondly, this applies to organized and unorganized workers. It is not just for organized workers. I am happy that our senior hon. Member, Shri Mistry, comparing my face with him and says that both our faces are similar and familiar. आपकी तरह लोग मुझे भी बोलते हैं कि गुजरात के एक एम.पी. आपके जैसे हैं ...*(व्यवधान)*... आप विषय पर काफी विस्तार से बोले, लेकिन मैं आपको अपील के रूप में एक बात बताना चाहता हूँ कि इस सरकार के आने के बाद बहुत से नए initiatives लिए गए। आपने रिकॉर्ड्स के बारे में बताया, रजिस्ट्रेशन के बारे में, कांट्रैक्ट लेबर के बारे में, outsourcing of labour के बारे में और construction worker के बारे में बताया। सर, सारे वर्कर्स के बारे में हमारा मंत्रालय काफी बेहतर तरीके से चेंजेज लाया है। मैं उस बारे में भी आपको थोड़े में बताना चाहता हूँ, लेकिन एक विषय पर हमारे आदरणीय सदस्य ने कहा कि हमारे द्वारा वर्कर्स के राइट्स लिए जा रहे हैं। In no way we are taking away the rights of workers. But, on the other hand, we are strengthening and giving wages in a more transparent manner. It is going to strengthen his hard-earned wages. Hon. Members have mentioned that there is no increase in the minimum wage in the last eleven years! This Government, led by Narendra Modi, has increased the minimum wages of the unskilled workers, agriculture workers, 'C' category workers, by 42 per cent. The wages of non-agricultural workers have also been raised to ₹ 350. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him complete, please. ...*(Interruptions)*... He is not yielding.

SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA: The subject of 'labour' falls under the Concurrent List. Many hon. Members have spoken here. I heard them very patiently. Since the subject of 'labour' is under the Concurrent List, you can very well understand my limitations. Many advisories have been sent by my Ministry. I have written many letters to the Chief Ministers and the Labour Ministers. A formal mechanism for enforcement has to be built.

Our Government is serious about the Bonus (Amendment) Act also. This Government, led by Narendra Modi, has increased the bonus of workers from ₹ 3,500 to ₹ 7,000. Their coverage has also been increased from ₹ 10,000 to

₹ 21,000. So, the minimum wages, the bonus and the maternity benefits have been enhanced. The maternity leaves have been increased from 12 weeks to 26 weeks. So, this is a very sensitive Government.

There are many other issues. But due to paucity of time, I would not like to go into much detail. But, the labour sector, which is unorganized sector, constitutes 93 per cent of the workforce. There are approximately 40 crore such labourers. We are all concerned about the construction workers. There are four crore and seventy lakh construction workers in the country. Therefore, we have shifted them from informal sector to formal sector. The registration of all the construction workers is going on in the country. All the things have been planned. The agriculture workers and also the *bidi* workers are being enrolled with the banks. Our Government is going to take one more initiative because our hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, has specifically said that our concern should be more on the social security of workers. That is why, we are going to give a unique card to all the unorganized workers, including the agricultural workers. This card will be a portable one and will serve as identity card also. It will help the workers in availing all the social security benefits. So, this is going to be a major change. We are going to give identity cards to all the workers. We are also thinking to bring the skilled workers, Anganwadi workers, Asha workers, mid-day meal workers into the social security network. Sir, there are many other issues which have been put forth. Recently, during demonetisation period, after this Ordinance has come, I, my Labour Ministry, took a review meeting. After that, I ordered all my officials, the EPFO and the ESIC officers, to go to all the States to talk with their respective State Governments. Sir, I am happy to inform you that all my officers went to all the States to have a review meeting with their respective State Governments. Now, we have started the work of opening bank accounts. As far as camps are concerned, we have conducted 1,46,711 labour camps, where bank accounts were opened. In EPFO and ESIC, 48,58,699 new bank accounts have been opened during the demonetisation period. We did that because I want my workers to get their wages through a transparent manner. That is why, I am very happy to announce this. Sir, I went to Assam. One hon. lady Member from Assam spoke on this Bill. All the officers went to the farms, where accounts of all the tea plantation workers and of all the tea garden workers were registered. When I was there, approximately, 1,80,000 farm workers and tea garden workers were registered. That is why, Sir, I feel that if the will is there, the Government can do it. So, we need the cooperation of all the State Governments. There are some other initiatives that were also taken. Some of the Members mentioned about the enforcement agencies. Shri Madhusudan Mistry mentioned about inspection and other things. In this regard, Section 20 is there, according to which if anybody violates the rule, definitely, he or she will be punishable with imprisonment for a term for

[Shri Bandaru Dattatreya]

one month, which may extend up to six months. So, the penal provision is there. Even for the enforcement agencies, a new inspection scheme has come. Some other time, I will, definitely, take the opportunity and explain about that.

As regards the inspection of factories, under the Factories Act of 1948, an appropriate officer under this Act can enforce this Act. So, I, once again, submit to the august House that I have noted down whatever important issues you have mentioned. I have also noted down all your suggestions. If any necessary changes are required, I will do that. But the point is, it is a very simple thing. In Section 6, only two small additions have been made. This is going to fulfil the vision of our Prime Minister and also of hon. late Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar who dedicated his life for the workers' interest. At the same time, it will also fulfil the dreams of our late Dattopant Thengadi whose entire life was also dedicated to the cause of workers. So, I feel that if we pass this Payment of Wages (Amendment) Bill, it is going to benefit the workers.

So, I once again request the hon. Members to pass this Bill and as had been case in the Lok Sabha, irrespective of all parties, the Members wholeheartedly welcomed and supported it. So, here also, I request you to pass this Bill wholeheartedly.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. ...*(Interruptions)*... No, no. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY: Sir, just one thing. Out of most of the State Governments which have created the 'Construction Labour Welfare Fund', five hundred crore rupees are lying with the Gujarat Government alone. There are a number of States which have this money lying with them which amounts to thousands of crores of rupees, which has not been spent by those State Governments for the welfare of the construction labourers who should get the benefit out of that. So, I request the Minister to take this up especially for the welfare of the construction labour of the entire country.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Would you like to react?

SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA: Yes, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay. Consider it. Take it up with the State Governments.

SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA: Sir, there is one clarification which I will make. As he says, not only Gujarat, in the entire country, the cess amount which is collected by the respective State Governments is about ₹ 26,000 crores.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You can take it up with the State Governments.
...(Interruptions)...

SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA: The cess amount is with the State Governments. The thing is, they spent only ₹ 5,690 crores. A PIL was filed in the Supreme Court and the Supreme Court directed us to take it up. We are conducting regional conferences. I had meetings with the Labour Ministers twice. We are very seriously taking it with them by saying that there should be no misuse of the construction workers' money and it should go to the workers' benefit and workers' welfare only. We are going to all regional conferences. I am conducting six regional conferences in the country. Last year also, I have conducted these conferences and this time also I have already conducted two regional conferences. I will definitely see that it should go to the workers.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay. He is at it. You can take it up with the Chief Ministers also. Thank you.

Now, the question is,

That the Bill further to amend the Payment of Wages Act, 1936, as passed by Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration.

The motion was adopted.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We shall now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

Clauses 2 and 3 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA: Sir, I move:

That the Bill, be passed.

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: See, yesterday, the discussion on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address was not concluded. Now, one speaker was left out. I am calling that one speaker, and, after that, the hon. Prime Minister will reply. Now, Shri Anand Sharma.
