

SHRI SUJEET KUMAR (Odisha): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

DR. FAUZIA KHAN (Maharashtra): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

**Need to issue notification enhancing the ceiling of gratuity to workers during the intervening period between January 2016 and March, 2018**

SHRI M. SHANMUGAM (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I am raising the issue of gratuity. Gratuity is a social security scheme and retirement benefit of Government employees. The Seventh Central Pay Commission has enhanced ceiling of gratuity to Rs.20 lakhs from 1.1.2016 for the Government servants. However, on persistent demand from the workers for payment of gratuity on par with Government employees, the Payment of Gratuity Act was modified by issuing the Notification only on 29th March, 2018 that the amount of gratuity shall not exceed Rs.20 lakhs, but it is done prospectively, instead of from 1.1.2016. Hence, for the workers who retired during this intervening period of 27 months, and whose eligibility of gratuity is more than Rs. 10 lakhs, their gratuity is restricted to Rs.10 lakhs. For earning a gratuity of Rs. 10 lakhs, the worker should be at least drawing a salary of Rs.57,777 and for getting up to Rs.20 lakhs, his salary should be above Rs.1,15,550 per month. Therefore, there will be very few workers or employees who would be entitled for gratuity ranging between Rs. 10 lakhs to 20 lakhs. Therefore, I demand that the ceiling limit of gratuity should be enhanced to Rs.20 lakhs during the intervening period of January, 2016 to March, 2018. It would also not impinge on the finance of the companies, since there will be very few people left. Even some employers are also ready to pay enhanced gratuity as they will get tax relief. Since the ceiling has been fixed, they are not able to do so. Hence, I request the hon. Minister of Labour to take the initiative by notifying the provision for the intervening period also. Thank you.

SHRI N. R. ELANGO (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI P. WILSON (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI M. MOHAMED ABDULLA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

DR. AMAR PATNAIK (Odisha): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

DR. SASMIT PATRA (Odisha): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI SUBHASH CHANDRA SINGH (Odisha): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

**Need to provide approval and financial assistance to Thiruvananthapuram-Kasargod semi-high speed rail corridor (K-Rail silver line project) in Kerala**

SHRI ELAMARAM KAREEM (Kerala): Respected Chairman, Sir, I would like to raise an important issue relating to the State of Kerala. Sir, Government of Kerala has proposed a semi-high speed rail corridor from Thiruvananthapuram to Kasargod called the Silver Line. This double lane rail will connect both ends of Kerala within four hours. The present duration of transport is 10-12 hours. Trains can run with a maximum operational speed of 200 km per hour by carrying around 80,000 passengers per day.

Sir, feasibility study of the project was conducted in 2019 and the Railway Board had issued in-principle approval for the project on 17<sup>th</sup> December, 2019. A Detailed Project Report of the Silver Line was submitted to the Ministry of Railways in June, 2019. Sir, preparatory work for land acquisition is going on.

SHRI K.C. VENUGOPAL (Rajasthan): Sir, people of Kerala are totally against this project. ...*(Interruptions)*... People of Kerala are totally opposing this project. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI ELAMARAM KAREEM: Sir, Silver Line is a green transportation project. It will reduce more than 2.8 lakh tons of carbon-dioxide per day. It will create more than 50,000 direct and indirect employment during the construction phase and 11,000 direct and indirect employment during the operational phase. So, I request, through you, Sir, the Government of India...