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Title: Regarding grievances of EPF Pensioners.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN (KASARGOD): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir, for giving me this opportunity. I would like to draw the attention of the concerned Minister and the Ministry to the pathetic condition of the EPF pensioners in our country. There are about 4 to 5 crore EPF pensioners.

The first EPF Act was passed in Parliament in 1952. It is after a long time, that is 43 years after that, a new Act, that is EPF Act, 1995 has come into existence. Sir, sorry to say, according to this Act, most of the benefits and also facilities which the pensioners enjoyed earlier were denied and rejected. It is because of the stringent provisions really imposed in the EPF Act, 1995. So, all the trade unions have given representations to the Government. The Government is also fully aware of the fact.

I remember that in the 14<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha, the Standing Committee on Labour under the Chairmanship of Shri P.K. Vasudevan Nair, who is no more, had given a recommendation also to change this Act but no action has been taken. A large number of employees are getting very low pension. Many of them are getting only Rs. 200 or Rs. 300 as pension. I know, in my own State, there are about nine persons who are getting Rs. 10 and 64 persons are getting only Re. 1 as pension. The Ministers are well aware of the fact. It is because, there are stringent provisions in the Act. When the employees have to join the EPF under the EPF Act, 1995, they have to complete 10 years' service to get pension. It is not possible for many of them because though they have been in service for a long time, they were not in regular service. There was the other scheme, that is the Family Pension Scheme. The total pension period has to be counted but it is not taken into account. So, there are a number of anomalies. So the main issue is that they are asking or they are demanding Rs. 3000 as the minimum pension. Also, many other stringent provisions should be taken back. So the Government should take an action to review this Act. A new Act should be brought in because there are a large number of employees, about four or five crore employees are there.

So, I urge upon the Government to take this issue and amend the EPF Act of 1995 which is really against the interest of the labourers.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri P.K. Biju is allowed to associate with the issue raised by Shri P. Karunakaran.