

SHRI A. K. PANJA : I tell the hon. Member, that when you are elected from your constituency and from your State ; and when you have become elected, you are a Member of Parliament.

DR. V. VENKATESH : Why this disparity ? What about the steel plant for Karnataka ?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : It is all right now. We are taking up Bonded Labour Bill.

AN HON. MEMBER : You mean to say that they are all bonded labour ?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : No. We are abolishing the system of Bonded Labour.

DR. V. VENKATESH : What about the steel plant to Karnataka ? The hon. Minister has not said anything about it.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : He appreciated that Karnataka Government is doing very well.

Now we resume discussion on Bonded Labour System (Amendment) Bill.

13.13 hrs.

BONDED LABOUR SYSTEM (ABOLITION) AMENDMENT BILL

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : We now resume discussion on the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Amendment Bill. Dr. Venkatesh.

DR. V. VENKATESH (Kolar) : This Bill seeks to add an explanation under section 2, in Clause (g), of the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976 to the effect that such contract labourers and inter-State migrant workers who fulfilled the conditions of the bonded labour system, namely, debtor-creditor relationship, loss of freedom of movement and less wages, etc. come under "bonded labour system".

Here, after thirty-eight years of Independence, we have reached a stage where we require a law, not merely a law which was passed as back as nine years ago. This shows how lethargic has been the administrative machinery as far as emancipation of the bonded labour is concerned. It is really a failure of the Congress Government in the past.

Bonded labour is an institution which is a by-product of a major institution, the major institution being the institution which is called a feudal system. If you want to redeem the labour and bring an end to the bonded labour system in this country, then the main thing should be not only to eradicate the system of bonded labour to redeem the people under the bondage, but to try to cut the basic roots of feudal system that is still prevailing. Otherwise the Government cannot eradicate effectively this evil system, the bonded labour.

The feudal system is an institution, is a socio-economic institution, which has bred the evils which are prevailing today in India. The feudal system is a system of land-ownership. Almost 80 per cent of the total cultivable land in the country is in the hands of a few people in this country. Again, out of that more than 50 per cent of the total and is still in the hands of 20 per cent of the people of the country.

And it is the so people who are actually controlling, managing and manipulating the system of bonded labour today.

If you want to eradicate the system of bonded labour, at the end of this century, you should bring to an end this feudal system. Today this system is very bad. It is a totalitarian system which is against democracy itself.

Today, the landlord is the main culprit, the landlordism is entity of the institution of bonded labour in India, which is deciding the fate of the majority of the people, of this country. The majority of the people will be remaining in absolute and total permanent destitution and permanent bondage created by this feudal system.

So, the Government should come out with proper legislative measures to end this feudal system in this country.

The present system of bonded labour is a modified form of the slavery that prevailed under the feudalism during the middle ages. Since the middle ages the bonded labour system has been in operation in the society in various forms. After the end of the slavery, we have now slaves in the form of agricultural and other labourers. The real farmers have become landless which has led to the creation of a new system of slavery in rural areas. It is evident that among bonded labour 61 per cent belong to Scheduled Castes and 17 per cent to the Scheduled Tribes. The others are backward communities

This price of legislation will be effected only when land reforms will be implemented and job opportunities for rural Indians are created.

13.15 hrs.

[SHRI ZAINUL BASHER *in the chair*]

International labour organisation has taken a decision twice about the system of bonded labour. This decision is contained in the ILO Convention No. 29 of 1930 and ILO Convention No. 105 of 1957. The Government of India has accepted these ILO Conventions. But the present amending Bill has not been framed, in that light, on the basis of those accepted ILO conventions.

The Supreme Court has already given the verdict that those workers who are not provided with the minimum wages and minimum amenities, should be treated as bonded labourers.

Amendments to legislations, even though they are good, are useless if they do not bring the real benefits to the people. That is what to stress upon the hon. Minister.

Article 23 of the Constitution of India prohibits forced labour system. Besides, the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976 is also there,

But those persons who are responsible for forcing people into bonded labourers are not being given stringent punishment under the law.

The real problem is of detection and rehabilitation.

Therefore, a proper detection and rehabilitation machinery needs to be set up in this country.

The root cause is unemployment problem that is prevailing in rural India. The rise in unemployment has been 60 per cent in the last five years. Unless it is tackled with firm determination, we are not going to get the desired results.

The people who are working as bonded labour are not living like human beings, but they are living under sub-human conditions. They are always at the mercy of persons who employ them, whether it is accommodation or food or clothing. They are in complete bondage.

I strongly believe that this is not only the concern of one political party but this is the concern of the country as a whole. That is why, it needs to be removed at the earliest opportunity.

The living conditions of the inter-migrant labour are worse than those of even slaves of the last century. A large number of labourers from States like Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Kerala, Orissa, etc. are taken as migrant labour to various other States. There they are engaged in works like mining, stone-breaking, road building dam construction, etc. Their working conditions are very bad, if not worse than those of the slaves of the last century. They are suffering from chronically occupational hazardous diseases like silicosis, tuberculosis long and skin cancer in addition to mal-nutrition. They are dying prematurely every day. They are the real builders of this nation.

Mere addition of this explanatory clause will not give the required protection to the inter-State migrant labour and contract labour. Unless some suitable measures

[Shri Zainul Basher]

are taken for recording their employment in service records and a copy of the record is sent to the Labour Department and concerned worker, this Act cannot be implemented effectively. It is not enough to identify and free the bonded labour from bondage. The most important aspect is their rehabilitation. If that is not done, then there is every chance of their going back to bondage once again.

This Bill also mentions about minimum wages. In the Minimum Wages Act there are certain loopholes. I would, therefore, suggest some suitable amendments to the Minimum Wages Act. There is no job security at present. I suggest that if there is contravention of this Act by any employer, prosecution should be launched by the State officials or social workers or trade unions. There should be effective vigilance committees for liberation and rehabilitation of bonded labour. There should be some sort of monitoring to see that the provisions of this Act are being implemented. There should be a time bound programme to eradicate this problem of bonded labour. The Government should have a monitoring cell to see that the organisations created under this Act are functioning properly and discharging their duties and responsibilities according to expectations.

As for as Karnataka is concerned, we have already initiated action in this direction. The persons who have been freed from bondage have been provided with rehabilitation measures. We are rehabilitating those women who conceive. We are giving them proper relief. We also tell them not to go for work.

Throughout India there lot of people who are suffering under this system. Why cannot the Government come forward to rehabilitate them in such a manner so that they are not forced to come under the bonded labour system? Thank you, Sir.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI (Deogarh) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have the pleasure to participate in this debate and I welcome this piece of legislation, this Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Amendment Bill, 1985.

As you know, this is a very simple Bill and only one explanation is added to it to remove any suspicion that may be arising in the mind of the implementing machinery, that is, how will the contract labour and the inter-State migrant workmen be covered under this Act and under what conditions they would attract the provisions of the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976. While supporting the Bill, I would like to observe that the implementation of this Act has not been as speedy as it was expected to be. Rather it has been tardy. This is evident from the simple fact that in our commitment to human rights and freedom, we have abolished this bonded labour system which is a social evil, and the sooner it disappears from this great country, the better it is for all of us. The existence of this system in our country beings a slur on the good name of our country which has a very rich cultural heritage. But although the Bill was passed in 1976 and the work of identification of bonded labourers and rehabilitating them has started, but in some States in has been vigorously pursued, it has been implemented with seriousness, whereas in some other States it is not so. What I say is that it took about a decade to detect that there is some doubt with regard to this Act and, therefore, they have now come forward with this Bill which is before us. Anyway, it is better late than never. But at the same time, the accusation or the allegation made by the hon. Members from the other side that the Government is not serious, is not tenable. I want to illustrate one thing. I would like to quote the answers given by the hon. Minister, to the questions on bonded labourers. In the answer given on 28th February 1985, that is, the end of February 1985, it is said that the total number of bonded labourers identified was of the order of 1,77,062, out of which 1,34,802 have been rehabilitated. This is the figure as on 28th February 1985. But only after four months, on 30th June 1985, the number of bonded labourers identified rose from 1,77,000 to 1,82,000. About five thousand labourers were added to it. And with regard to rehabilitation this figure of 1,34,000 and odd was raised to 1,39,335. Within four years, about five thousand new people had been identified. But about seven thousand bonded labourers were rehabilitated. So, the work is progressing, but there is a

doubt that was creeping in the mind of some officers about the contract labour and the migrant labour and this explanation which has been added here is welcome. Wherever there is debtor-creditor relationship and wherever there is loss of freedom and the question of less wages paid to this type of labourers in there, then they attract the provisions of this Bonded Labour Act. The Supreme Court has also held that those who were not provided minimum wages and minimum amenities should be treated as bonded labourers. In this Amendment also this has been made amply clear that under these circumstances these labourers would be called bonded labourers and that they would attract the provisions of this Act and relief will have to be provided to them. But there are some loopholes in this and they need to be plugged. The question is why some labourers become bonded? It is because they are absolutely poor; they do not have anything to fall back upon and they do not have in many cases even a place to live in. Such people are given some allurements by some contractors and profiteers who take them to different places. Then they are quite helpless and they are not even capable to think about themselves. Unless full protection is provided to them or a sense of confidence is created in them, they will not be able to come out of it. They cannot come out voluntarily or put in an application before the concerned authorities that they are bonded labourers and that they should be freed. In many cases, it is more difficult for them because there are no proper service records with the contractors. And in such a situation if there is an allegation, the contractor or the employer denies that such and such people are under his employment. So, what I suggest is that maintenance of records and service condition of those who are employed by the contractors should be there so that this can be regularly checked and the erring employers are not allowed to escape.

As I pointed out earlier, the bonded labourers who claim to get benefit under this Act do not get the rights required and whenever they come before the concerned authorities seeking relief, such people are immediately retrenched or their employers do not engage them. So, security of service has to be ensured.

What is required is that those who give correct statement before the concerned authorities to seek relief should be given protection in the matter of security of their service.

Sir, with these remarks I would like to conclude, and I give my wholehearted support to this Bill with a request to the Minister that there should be a monitoring cell in his Ministry. As I said, Sir, this is another form of slavery and we are a country, Hindustan, having a proud culture and cultural heritage. It is a slur on this country and this puts our heads low and therefore, the earlier it is implemented fully and successfully and the system as it is *in toto* thrown out completely, from the soil, the better it is for all of us. So, there should be a monitoring cell and the Minister himself should personally supervise this work in different States. The main responsibility lies with the States about identification etc. I would congratulate the Government because they are supplementing the efforts of the State Governments by giving them financial help and launching different antipoverty schemes that are being carried on in the country. The rehabilitation scheme should be properly linked up with that so that better benefits accrue to those bonded labourers. Once they are identified, they can be regulated so that once they are released from bondage, in no case they return to the system of bondage.

[Translation]

SHRI HARISH RAWAT (Almora): Mr. Chairman, Sir, just now, one of our friends from the Opposition was saying that the Government is not taking effective steps to abolish bonded labour system, but he, perhaps forgot that if any political party attacked this evil system, it was the Congress Party and also its Government. More than once in this connection motions were passed at Congress Party level and the Government showing its determination took all the possible practical steps to abolish this system. If today some isolated case comes to light, it is only because of the awareness which has arisen among the people.

[Shri Harish Rawat]

Recently the Supreme Court delivered a judgement in connection with bonded labour in Uttar Kashi district of Uttar Pradesh. I would like to urge upon the hon. Minister that the condition of the migrant labour, migrating from Bihar and Eastern Uttar Pradesh to other parts of the country, is quite miserable. It is not that only the conditions at their working places are to be seen, the conditions prevailing in the places from where they come for work also need to be looked into. What happens is, their employers, who are sub-contractors, help their families in many way and in turn get a sort of pledge from them that they will work with them for not only one year, but for entire life. Therefore, merely by enacting law, this evil cannot be abolished. To root out the system, it is necessary that the problem of bonded labourers, should be solved at the place from where they are recruited and the labourers should be provided some alternative employment there itself. Unless we provide them employment at the place of their residence, they will go on migrating to Punjab, Western Uttar Pradesh or other parts of the country and wherever they go for work, whether it is a dam site or any other place, big contractors will always exploit them. I therefore, urge upon the hon. Minister that the Government should think of providing alternative work to the contract labour at the place of their residence.

Secondly, though you have enacted the law, but so far as some machinery to implement it is concerned, I am one with those of my friends who have expressed their doubts about this. I would, request the hon. Minister that he should, taking the State Governments, into confidence, ensure strict enforcement of the law through them. Unless these laws are enforced strictly, the purpose of enacting these laws is not going to be achieved.

Sir, it has often been seen that the people who engage bonded labour know that they can be exposed. They, therefore, maintain a fake register in which attendance etc. is shown and they destroy the original register so that their deeds are not exposed. Mr. Chairman, Sir, though you I request the

hon. Minister to arrange some regular monitoring of these things. A system should be evolved whereby regular monitoring is ensured.

Sir, so far as the hon. Minister's will and power are concerned I welcome them, because he has come more than once before the House with labour laws. Your enthusiasm is commendable. But if the other concerned officials, Government machinery do not show the same enthusiasm in implementing these laws, these are not going to bring results. I, therefore, request the hon. Minister to kindly get these laws enforced with strictness.

***SHRI B. N. REDDY (Miryalguda) :** Mr. Chairman, Sir, this bonded labour system had been in existence earlier also in its primitive form. Shri T. Anjiah, who hails from my State, Andhra Pradesh, knows this fact too well. There was a revolution against this primitive form of bonded labour system in the Telangana region of my State 40 year ago. This revolution against drudgery was a part of a revolt against the Nizam Govt. and its feudal system. Shri T. Anjiah knows this fact very well. The Communist Party of India played a major role in that movement. Other political parties had also participated in that movement and I think Shri Anjiah had also taken part in it. This bonded labour system which existed in its primitive and crude form is existing in a different form today. We cannot forget the fact that the serfdom or the bonded labour system in its primitive form has got sufficient encouragement under the rule of the feudalistic and capitalistic rule of the Congress party. With the encouragement it received from the Congress Party it is now existing under a different garb. It is the naked truth. Many poor people, especially labourers are victims of this evil practice. This practice is still continuing even after the Bonded Labour Abolition Act came into existence in the year 1976. It is an indisputable fact that this system could not be abolished ever since. The Govt. could not achieve its goal to abolish the bonded labour system through enacting that legislation.

***The Speech was originally delivered in Telugu.**

But Sir, I Welcome this Amendment Bill. It deserves to be welcomed, although the Govt. took considerable time to introduce this Amending Bill. The Constitution guaranteed certain fundamental rights to every body right to work is one of them. The Constitution of India came into being in the year 1950 while the Act abolishing the bonded labour system was enacted in the year 1976. The Supreme Court, gave its decision in 1982 that the contract labour system in whichever form it may exist should be considered as bonded labour system. Yet this Amending Bill is being introduced in 1985. Keeping all these facts in view, we can come to the conclusion that there is an inordinate delay in bringing this amending legislation. It shows that the Govt. has awakened from its deep slumber very late.

Sir, in this connection I want to point out that this amending Bill is not covering certain important points. Certain basic issues have been ignored in this Bill. One of them is that of 'Right to work' as enshrined in the Constitution. Another point is that nothing has been said about 8-hour work—in this Bill. The International Labour Organisation had declared that the working hours should be only 8 hours. This amending Bill is not covering this stipulation regarding the working hours. These two important points have been ignored in this Bill.

As far as the operation of the Act to abolish bonded labour system is concerned. I must say that it has failed miserably to eradicate this evil practice. I want the hon. Minister to realise this fact. It is a naked truth that this system is prevalent throughout the country even this day. This is an issue related to the socio-economic conditions of the teeming millions especially the rural poor. Very recently Swamy Agnivesh, deposing before the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations said that there are at least 10 crores of bonded labourers still existing in this country. The Indian Express reported, quoting Govt. agencies, on 8th February 1985, that there are 20,000 bonded labourers, working in various manufacturing industries in U.P. especially look, welding and hardware units in that State. This is Govt. information. A Committee consisting

of members from U.P. Govt. and Aligarh Muslim University conducted a survey and reported that, atleast 30,000 bonded labourers, must of them children, are still existing in that State. As per report published in the Economic Times on 10th May 1984 there are 5 crores 40 lakhs of agricultural labour and another 3 crores of marginal farmers in the country. 10% of these 8 crores 40 lakh people are bonded labourers. This is the truth revealed by Economic Times. I am quoting all these statistics to show that still there a good number of bonded labours in the country existing even to this day. Though the Govt. claims to have liberated 20 lakhs of bonded labourers it is not prepared to disclose as to how many of them were rehabilitated. Some time back, the Govt. claimed to have rehabilitated. 16 lakhs of them. I want the Govt. to check up the figure once again. So what I want to say is that, whatever Govt's claims may be, there are millions of bonded labourers who are being crushed under the iron boots of feudals, landlords, capitalists and other rich sections of the society. We are in year 1985. Still there millions of people leading a miserable and sub-human life as bonded labourers. So the Government should realise that more enactments will not serve the purpose. Past experience shows that there will hardly be any change in the conditions of bonded labourers even after passing this Bill. I want this hon. House to realise this truth. This piece of legislation will not wipe out bonded labour system.

For the success of these legislations for eradicating bonded labour system, I want to make a few suggestions on behalf of the Communist Party of India—Marxist, for consideration of this hon. House and the Government. They are: (1) The Right to work This is a fundamental right enshrined in our Constitution. But it is only a directive principle but not mandatory. The right to work should be made mandatory. (2) The 8-hour work as prescribed by I.L.O. should be adopted as a part of this Amending Bill. (3) The Redical land reforms should be implemented. The land should be distributed among the poor. Every one should be provided with employment. These steps will help everyone to stand on his own legs. Then only the aim of this Bill succeed. (4) There should be a tripartite Committee

[Shri B.N. Reddy]

consisting of representatives of Govt. employees and labourers. This Committee should have executive powers to oversee the implementation of this Act and to advise the Govt. regarding the implementation. The Govt. machinery should be geared up for this purpose. There should be a perfect machinery to implement the Act. In the absence of adequate machinery, the act can never be successful. Past experience reveals this truth. Since there is no sufficient machinery to implement the Act to abolish bonded labour system, steps should be taken to see that an effective machinery is created for purpose. Then only the objective of the Act can be achieved.

I hope the hon. Minister will consider these suggestions. Thanking you for giving me an opportunity to speak, I conclude my speech.

[English]

SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMA-CHANDRAN (Cannanore) : Sir, I wholeheartedly welcome this Amendment to the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976. It is a matter of Shame that bonded labour still exists in some parts of our country, although the legislation seeking to abolish it is almost a decade old. While replying to a debate the other day in the Rajya Sabha, the hon. Minister for Labourers has made it specifically clear that many State Governments are lagging behind in eradicating the menace of bonded labour. I remember, the hon. Minister has stated that there still exist 40,000 to 50,000 bonded labour in our country. The Minister has also made it very clear that in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orissa and Karnataka, the stigma still persists. The Minister has also pointed out that the highest number of bonded labour is in the State of Karnataka. I want to know from the hon. Minister why this stigma still persists even though the Act abolishing it came into force in the year 1976. The unofficial reports are always different. According to the official report, 40,000 to 50,000 persons are still in bondage. But according to the latest information supplied by an voluntary organisation, more than three million people

in our country are still there as bonded labourers. My personal experience also goes to show that in a progressive state like Kerala there exists bonded labour, in one way or the other. In certain parts of my State Kerala, it is still there.

The callous as well as negligent attitude taken by certain Governments have made the issue more worse and that is emply clear from the allocation made for the eradication of the bonded labour in the 6th Five Year Plan. Out of the amount of Rs 25 crores that had been allocated for the eradication of the bonded labour in the 6th Plan, do you know how much money has been spent by the respective State Government? It is seen that Ra. 10 crores are still to be utilised by these Governments. It is a matter of utter shame.

Of course, amendment and legislation alone will not serve the purpose. There is a fear in the minds of the bonded labourers. That fear must be eradicated first. They are living under the shadow of fear.

There are so many instances where the landlords are still scaring the weak and vulnerable sections throughout our country. It is my humble submission that the Government must come forward and see that these erring landlords are punished in a vehement way.

One thing is clear that either due to fear or due to ignorance, these poor bonded labourers are not coming forward and ventilating their grievances to the authorities. So, it must be the duty of the Government, Political Parties as well as the entire social organisations of this country to educate the poor men with regard to the evils of the bonded labour and also they should create an awareness and consciousness among the people regarding this evil.

Sir, I feel that the main reason for the continued existence of the bonded labour is the failure on the part of the State Governments to speedily implement the land reforms throughout the country. Of course, some of the States have completed their land reforms programme in a befitting way. But many of the States are lagging behind in the matter of land reforms. It is my humble

request that the Government should come forward and persuade these States who failed in their attempt to bring about land reforms to do it in a befitting way.

I understand that mere emancipation of bonded labourers from bondage is not the only problem facing us. With regard to their rehabilitation activities we should pay very serious attention.

In this connection I would like to narrate a startling instance from my State. After this Act had come into force, about 750 adivasi bonded labourers of my State in the district of Wynad have been rehabilitated under the famous Sugandhagiri Cardomom Project. Do you know what is the latest budget of this Cardomom Plantation Sir? About Rs. 7 crores have been spent by the Central Government as well as the State Government for the last seven years to give them employment opportunities and make them come above the poverty line. But despite the serious efforts on the part of the Government, the poor Adivasis who are living in an area of 1500 hectares are still in abject poverty.

What is the reason for this state of affairs there? It is nothing but the indifferent as well as callous attitude of the officials who are in charge of this project. Rs. 7 crores which has been spent during the last seven years only for 750 Adivasi families has been swindled by these irresponsible officials. What action are you going to take against these officials? It is my humble suggestion that without bringing about a change in the social environment there cannot be any sort of progress with regard to the bonded labourers.

Sir, I do not want to prolong my speech. Before I conclude it is my humble plea that Government must come forward with stringent measures to punish those erring officers and also persuade the State Governments to implement the abolition programmes under the bonded labour system immediately.

[Translation]

DR. G. S. RAJHANS (Jhanjharpur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are having a discussion on bonded labour. This reminds me of a story. Once when the people in Rome went to King's palace with their demands, the King asked his Minister about their demands. The Minister replied that they wanted bread. The King said that they were foolish. If they could not get bread, why did they not eat cake? The problem of bonded labour is somewhat similar. You want to bring about improvement their condition, but I say that these people require at least one meal a day. They have no other option. If you provide food to them and let them remain bonded, there is no harm in it.

I have studied the problem of bonded labour in detail and have seen with my own eyes as to how people become bonded labour. I invite you to accompany me to the northern Bihar in the foothills of the Himalayas. In the months of December and January in the severe cold, they do not have any clothes on them and any food to eat. In such a situation, the touts come to them from Delhi, Haryana and Punjab and ask them to accompany them. They lure them with a wage of Rs. 30 per day, provision of woollen clothes and other comforts. The poor people think that if there is heaven on earth, it will be there. The touts bear their rail fares and they migrate to Delhi, Haryana, Punjab and Tehri-Garhwal. On reaching there, instead of Rs. 30 they get only Rs. 3. They are made opium-addicts and are treated like animals. Recently you might have read in the newspapers that the labourers from Bihar were being treated like animals in Tehri-Garhwal. Their photos were published in the newspaper which you might have also seen. We are entering 21st century. 21st century is quite far off. First you will have to liberate the people from their life of beasts. Why do people take to bonded labour? I have studied it in depth. The landlords commit atrocities on them. They are ignorant people; they are not literates. Their thumb impression is taken on a piece of paper and when the father dies, they are told that their father had borrowed Rs. 50,000 and they would have to live in bondage throughout their life. ~~Me~~

[Dr. G.S. Rajhans]

is prepared even for this, but when atrocities are committed against their womenfolk, they are forced to fall in the trap of agents and reach there. Therefore, this problem of bonded labour is mainly an economic problem. You enact any legislation, but it will not be enforced, because you will not be able to provide alternative jobs to the people. You provide them employment, provide them bread and a place to live, then only you will be able to solve the problem of bonded labour.

14.00 hrs.

As has been said by other hon. Members, it was Indiraji who had first paid her attention to the problem of bonded labour. She had said in 1976 that this problem should be solved. Thereafter, it was decided that fifty per cent of the expenditure on rehabilitation of bonded labour would be shared by the State Governments and the remaining 50 per cent should be borne by the Centre. The State Governments were asked to identify the bonded labour in their respective States. I am distressed to say that the Governments of Bihar, U. P. and some other States have not extended their cooperation in this endeavour, because this system suited them most; where could they get such a cheap labour? And what can these poor labourers do; if he goes back to the village, he will again fall into their clutches or else he will face starvation. There they get at least one meal a day. This problem is not going to be solved through legislation. This is an economic problem. A serious thought needs to be given to it. Measures will have to be evolved to rehabilitate the people. It will also have to be seen that they are not forced to become bonded labourers. I want to tell you that this problem is not a recent phenomenon. I have made a detailed study of the problem of bonded labour. When Britishers came to India, the labourers from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh were herded to Mauritius like animals. They were taken to the British Guinea and Fiji? They were the labourers from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and these labourers are leading a life of beasts even

today in this country. You may just laugh it away taking it for a joke, but let me tell you that this situation is not going to last for long. The labourers of Bihar and Eastern U. P. have raised a Volcano. If a timely solution is not found to it, it will pose a danger for the country. Therefore, I say that you should peep into your conscience and think it over. It has happened a number of times that the labourers from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh were killed in Delhi when the mines where they were working caved in, but nobody knew about it. Labourers from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh are killed in Faridabad, but the incidents are never reported. Today, we talk of the welfare of the bonded labour. These bonded labourers are the poorest and lead lives worse than the beasts. So grave is this problem that it cannot be put off easily. Why are there different *senas* in Bihar today, such as, Lorik Sena, Kunwar Singh Sena and numerous other *senas*. It gives us a great pain when we go through such reports in the newspapers. What kind of *Senas* are these, why have they been formed? Have you ever tried to find out sociological and economic reasons behind them. There is helplessness among the people, they are facing destruction and are fighting against these *Senas* to protect themselves. Those who are able to come out of it are leaving from there; those who cannot, resign to their fate and are being destroyed in the process. The people are leading a barbarous life in the country even today.

The synonym of Bihar is bonded labour—you have to give this problem a serious thought. The situation is very grim. You will not be able to solve this grave problem with these piece-meal legislations. I have said it earlier also and repeat it today that there are two classes of people in this country. One is named India which believes in conspicuous consumption. They lead a life of luxury, maintain two cars and earn black money, there is nobody to harm them. The second is Bharat who work in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh as bonded labour. They migrate to Delhi, Haryana and Punjab and die there. This is high time to consider this problem seriously and to find out a solution,

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY (Hanamkonda) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, today we are having a discussion on bonded labour, but I have not been able to grasp its definition so far. It is called "Kattubadi" in Telugu. Bonded labourers are found mostly in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar and it is because of them that this Bill has been brought forward in the House. As a matter of fact, the number of bonded labourers in Andhra Pradesh is very small, but with a view to inflating this number, the provisions of the Bonded Labour Act are applied to the farmers also. The farmer employs a worker with him and pays wages to him for a year in advance. He pays Rs. 3,000 which is more than what is required under the Minimum Wages Act, but when a new I.A.S. officer and a Deputy Collector takes over, they get the farmers arrested and register cases against them with a view to inflating the number of cases of bonded labour. If all the workers of a village submit an application, the farmer is taken into custody. I want to ask Shri Anjiah whether they are actually bonded labourers. You see as to how many cases have been registered by the officers in Andhra Pradesh in this way. They are only concerned with spending of the funds received from the Central Government, but, in fact, there is no bonded labour as such. They register cases against the farmers just to inflate the number of cases. I can give you a number of such instances. If a farmer having 5 or 10 acres of land employs a worker with him, he pays him Rs. 3,000 in advance in addition to bonus. In what form does he pay bonus? If he grows chillies, he gives him two bags of chillies, if he grows maize, he gives him paddy or wheat. In Telugu, it is called 'Pettubadi' and in English it is called 'bonus'. If one person makes a complaint, cases are registered against all the farmers of the village. But they do not give the money required for the rehabilitation of the bonded labour. If a farmer employs a servant with him, will he be called a bonded labour? Going by this logic, the person who serves water at the residence of the hon. Minister is also a bonded labour. He stays with the hon. Minister and serves water (Interruptions). There is none at my residence and I offer water myself. I may view, if somebody gives a loan of Rs. 5,000 and employs the loanee as worker in lieu

of the interest amount, he can be called a bonded labour. There are many such cases in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar but so far as Andhra Pradesh is concerned, the persons who crush stones come from Madras and Kerala, the butler and cook preparing idli at a hotel come from Kerala. If a person makes a complaint, a case is booked against the hotel owner or the contractor. Will you call it bonded labour? The contractor pays wages to the person engaged in stone crushing or digging on the basis of cubic feet of cubic metre. The wages are paid as per the rate settled.

I want to tell you that in all the projects under construction in Madhya Pradesh, the labourers from Mehboobnagar are working. The hon. Minister is aware of it. You can go there and see that all the contractors in these projects are from Andhra Pradesh. They pay wages on the basis of cubic feet and cubic metres. 100 cubic metres make one unit and they pay according to that. How that can be called bonded labour? If somebody lodges a complaint with the collector, a case is registered against the contractor that he has kept a bonded labour. The bonded labour is one who is forced to work within a four-wall and is not allowed to go out of it even if he wants to do so. If a quarry worker or a person engaged in stone crushing willingly works there, he cannot be called a bonded labour. If a contractor refuses to pay money to a political party, a complaint is lodged against him that he has kept bonded labour. I shall give you an instance of Hyderabad. Quarry workers in Hyderabad come from Madras and Palamau. I am aware of such cases. Please get all the cases of misuse of Bonded Labour Act in Andhra Pradesh inquired into. I support the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act. I am distressed to hear what the hon. Member from Bihar has said. Such is the situation even after four decades of independence. We are going to enter the 21st century, but the Congress Government has failed even to provide bread to the people. This is what it shows... (Interruptions) This legislation has been enacted just to hoodwink the people. We know how you win elections..... (Interruption).

MR. CHAIRMAN : You speak on your subject.

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY : You know the disease from which the patients is suffering, but in spite of that you do not want to provide him the treatment. Of course, the patient himself leave the hospital as soon as he is cured. The Congress Government want to keep the poor under its influence. He will not vote for you if he comes out of it and, therefore, he is permanently kept in such a miserable condition so that he can vote for the Congress and listen to what it says. My colleague from Bihar has made all things clear. I want that a committee should be formed at divisional level. There are big people in the Congress who have their influence in the Police Stations and, therefore, no case is registered against them. It is not proper to depend on I.A.S. officers. I know the condition of quarry workers around Hyderabad. I know that the persons who refused to contribute to the election fund were booked under Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act. I would like the term 'bonded labour' to be defined clearly....*(Interruptions)* Loan for 100 hens is given but is not enough.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI T. ANJIAH) : Keep hens and consume eggs...

(Interruptions)

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY : Who will provide chicken feed.....

(Interruptions)

14.14 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the chair*]

If a bonded labourer is to be rehabilitated, the Government shall have to pay Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 20,000 ; because Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 3,000 is not adequate. I would, therefore, like the Government to constitute a non-official committee at divisional level. Depending solely upon I.A.S. officers is not good ; cases are not registered against influential persons, but only against the poor. I would like that all such cases should be looked into. You would come to know about everything, if such an enquiry is conducted. You are aware of the number

of bonded labour in Andhra Pradesh and, therefore, on receiving the results of enquiry the definition may be changed.

With these words I support this Bill but also warn at the same time that it should not be misused in a way which may cause problem for the illiterate farmers. There is need to bring an amendment in this regard.

SHRI RAMSWAROOP RAM (Gaya) : Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, I rise to welcome the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Amendment Bill 1985 which has been brought forward to further amend the Act of 1976. Besides, I want to draw the attention of the hon. Labour Minister to a few points. Of our total population, 303 million people are still living below the poverty line. They are those people who do not have two square meals a day, are without a roof over their heads and cannot afford medicine if their children fall sick. The less said of education, the better. I want to impress it in no uncertain terms that these 303 million people of our country who are still living below the poverty line are bonded labour in the real sense.

The Government had got a census conducted through Gandhi Peace Foundation in 1980 and it had revealed that 26 lakh people were engaged as bonded labour in the country. I would like to submit that a person who is living below the poverty line will become bonded labour either today or tomorrow, it is just a matter of time. Bonded labour was never a question of debate till ten years back. But even now the Opposition members have failed to understand that bonded labour is that exploited man who works in villages and at brick kilns as best of burden and as agricultural labour in tea plantations and farms.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Mr. Ramswaroop, I request you to be brief and help others, because the Minister is going to reply at 3. O'clock. There are 8 members who have given their slips. They are also to speak. You will be given five minutes. Please try to be very brief.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMSWAROOP RAM : When everybody has been given 15 minutes, why only 5 minutes to me. I would try and conclude within 10 minutes.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Now only, I got the information. After five minutes, I will ring the Bell and you have to stop.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMSWAROOP RAM : O. K. Sir, I agree. I was submitting that the attention of the Opposition Members has not gone to the plight of bonded labour who are working at brick-kilns, in tea plantations and in the farms. The attention of our late Prime Minister Shrimati Indira Gandhi was drawn to the plight of these 26 lakhs exploited and oppressed workers who were leading a life even worse than the animals in villages and she said that till their plight is improved, we cannot imagine an egalitarian society in the real sense. With the help of a legislation and 20-point programme, she tried to improve their lot. The situation improved thereafter and as you may be aware over 17 lakh bonded labour have been rehabilitated so far. The Government gives financial assistance worth Rs. 2,000 to the bonded labourer for rehabilitation, but I feel that it is not adequate. This amount would force him to bondage again after two years. I would, therefore, like the Government to help in the rehabilitation of bonded labour by way of providing them assets so that they can get a regular income and which may be a fruitful occupation so that they are not forced to work as bonded labour in future. There are two major reasons for bonded labour system. One is the feudalistic system and the other is unemployment. This is increasing in the number of bonded labourers in villages. In the feudalistic system even if a landlord lends Rs. 100 to a poor man, he forces generations of that man to work in his house to repay that debt.

The centre has entrusted this responsibility to the States. It had allocated Rs. 6 crores for the rehabilitation of bonded

labourers during the Sixth Five Year Plan, but only Rs. 5 crores were spent. Now Rs. 20 crores have been left unutilised. The Centre genuinely want to rehabilitate the bonded labour, but the State Governments have to play an important role in the implementing this programme.

Sir, I would like to draw your attention to a judgement of Supreme Court on 16th December, 1983 which states :

"(2) The workers who are not getting minimum wages, may be treated as bonded labourers. Therefore Sir, have the Government agreed to treat such workers as bonded labour? I believe that 43 per cent of workers in the country are not getting minimum wages today. The judgement further states :

"The employer of bonded labourer, instead of being bailed out immediately, should be produced before a judicial magistrate for seeking bail.

(3) An immediate ban should be imposed on *Bhoomisena*, *Brahamrishi Sena* and the like, which have been constituted by the landlords in a bid to crush the just agitation of agricultural workers and to create obstacles in liberating bonded labourers."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, caste-based armies have been raised in Bihar today and if a poor man takes up cudgels for his rights, minimum wages or land ownership, these armies which have been provided rifles and arms without verification, attack them, suppress them and force them to toil for the whole day in lieu of one seer of foodgrains. Sir, many such armies have been raised in Bihar today and you can yourself imagine the strength of these armies by the increase in the number of incidents wherein the Harijans demanded their rights, but had to face the bullets. Even today in Bihar in Harijan villages you will come to hear of daily riots. From this only you can guess the strength of these armies.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw your attention once again towards that judgement of the Supreme Court in which it has been stated that :

[Shri Ramswaroop Ram]

- “(4) The laws relating to land reforms should be implemented strictly :

(5) Only Akashvani and Doordarshan can be the media which can create awareness for the legal rights among the illiterate people in the farflung rural areas.”

The awareness has been developed. They have come to know as to how much minimum wages they should get and when they demand it, they get the bullet. Some time, Sir, they are murdered, branding them as Naxalites.

Sir, as my friend Shri G. S. Rajhans said the law is not being used. Psychology says law and anger are always used against the weak. Whenever someone becomes angry, he will be angry, with a weak person. Similarly the law too will be applied to the weak. This is the reason that if some poor man is arrested under section 107, he will be sent to jail and if some big man is arrested even under section 302, he will not be sent to jail.

About Bihar I want to say something. In Bihar even today system of slavery exists and male and female slaves are exchanged by Bhumihars in Bihar. In North Bihar, certain areas of Madhya Pradesh and Eastern Uttar Pradesh, landlords, in marriages of their daughters, send some girl from the family of the bonded labourers to their daughter's in laws' house where on the pretext of doing domestic chores she is made victim of sex exploitation. In North Bihar it is called *Vidh* system. At some places, it is called *Laundi-Bandi* system.

In Arunachal Pradesh the entire solung tribe is the slave of particular caste. They did as slaves. They can neither be owners of anything, nor can they do any type of business. For marrying solung youths the employer purchases a solung girl from somewhere else.

It is a matter of great shame for us that such systems exist even today in independent India. I do not want to give it any political colouring. We should take it as national

issue that if a population of 30 crores 30 lakh, present and future bonded labour, is not protected, then I think a big chunk of our population will become rotten and the country will not make progress.

The legislation which you have brought forward, is a welcome step, but the question is of its implementation. It is to be seen as to what extent it is implemented? I demand that a tribunal should be set up. Setting up of the tribunal by sitting in Delhi or in any district will not do, it should be set up at tehsil level and the responsibility of the District Magistrate be fixed to report on a certain dated as to how many bonded labourers have been assisted and resettled. To ensure that even after this resettlement the bonded labour does not again become bonded labour, he should be provided at least property worth at least 10 thousand rupees so that he may start his business and make progress in his life.

With these words I support this amendment.

*SHRI SODE RAMAIAH (Bhadra-chalam) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I and my party support this Amending Bill. But I don't believe that you will succeed in wiping out the bonded labour system nor do I think any hon. Member is under such an impression. But I feel, by implementing this Act, we can atleast solve the problem to certain extent:

Many legislations were made earlier to put an end to bonded labour system in the country. There was a 5-point programme. Then there is a 20-point programme. In all these programmes this problem was given a topmost priority. The State Govts. vied with each other to claim the release of bonded labourers every day. But as a matter of fact not even 1% of the bonded labours claimed to have been released by State Govts. were released. There are millions of such labourers who are leading the worst kind of life. I want to stress one point in this connection. 99% of bonded labourers in the country are harijans, girijans and other backward people. Many legislations were

*The speech was originally delivered in Telugu.

made in the past to rescue them and help them. But all these acts remained on paper. There was hardly any change in the living conditions of these people. If they liberate 10 bonded labourers another 20 persons join the rank. Thus it is one step forward and two steps backwards. What is the reason for increase in the number of bonded labour in the country? Unless this reason is probed into it is no use making many legislations. How is that many of the harijans, girijans and others are being forced to be bonded labourers? The main reason is that they have no livelihood. They have no land of their own to till. Now the entire land is concentrated in the hands of a few rich landlords. It may be true that the Govt. had enacted Acts to impose land ceiling and to distribute the surplus land to the landless. But were these acts enforced anywhere in this country? Who is there to implement these land reforms? So, until the surplus land is distributed among these poor people and help them to stand on their legs, this problem is not going to be solved.

How is that even liberated bonded labour are returning to the old system. They are forced to become bonded labourers once again as they have no means of any livelihood. They do not have even a cent of land of their own. They have no work. Hence there is no other go for them except to become bonded labour once again. The Govt. are interested only in liberating them but not showing any alternative employment. The Govt. claims that it is providing Rs. 4000 to each bonded labourer at the time of their liberation. But we know very well how much of this amount is reaching their hands. The amount passes hands of various corrupt people and finally when it reaches the hands of poor labourer it will be too negligible. Even assuming that the entire amount of Rs. 4000 is paid to them, is it possible with that paltry amount to start a new life? The Planning Commission has suggested that this should be increased to ten to fifteen thousand rupees. I request the Govt. to accept the suggestion and implement it.

The contract and migrated labour are just part of this bonded labour. Now they are being recognised as such through this Act. These people too are leading as miserable a life as the other bonded labour

are. Many a legislations were made for their welfare. Yet there is hardly any change in their life.

Another incident came to light very recently. A hundred labourers were locked inside a room. All these are working in the construction of a public sector undertaking. This incident should make our heads hanging in shame who wish to take the country to 21st century. Even in the quarries at Faridabad and other places around Delhi there are thousands of bonded labourers working in them. They are leading a very miserable life. It is all happening before our very eyes. It is strange that the Government are not coming forward to help them.

So what I stress is that it is not enough to make laws to abolish the bonded labour system. These legislations have to be implemented sincerely in order to wipe out this system.

Sir, I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity and conclude my speech.

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH RATH (Aska): I rise to support the Bill. This bonded labour system was in vogue during British period. It is only the Congress Government which took up the matter in right earnestness and freed from bondage many people. The intention of the Act is not only to free them from bondage but also to rehabilitate them. Each State is assisted with heavy amount to see that the bonded labour is freed from bondage and rehabilitated. A sum of Rs. 4000 is given at the first instance to the persons who are freed from bondage. But the problem is that the allocations made to different States in this behalf are not being utilised properly. Sometimes, they are not spent even. I request the Minister to look into the matter and see whether the allocations made to different States have been properly utilised. If not, why not? In many of the States the amount given for this purpose has been diverted to some other purpose. This is the crux of the matter. We should not see evil in everything. Whenever a Bill is brought before the House, howsoever welfare looking it may be, my

[Shri Somnath Rath]

colleagues from the opposition always see something evil in the Bill. That should not be the attitude. If there are some loopholes, those should be pointed out so that they can be plugged. Not that we should criticise everything for the sake of criticism. We are at liberty to criticise for better implementation of the Act. Not that we should always make wild allegations. I know that whenever any atrocity or harassment is done to labour is brought to the notice of the Labour Minister or his Ministry, prompt action is taken by them. In this connection I would say that there are many construction companies in private and public sector, here in Delhi, which are engaging parivate contractors as sub-contractors and the labour is harassed. One such instance was brought to the notice of the hon. Minister in November last. The Ministry took stringent action and from a contractor who was occupying a room in a hotel, 146 passports along with huge money were seized when the matter was reported to the police. But what has been happening in the investigation, nobody knows. So, it is not the Labour Department alone which can implement or help in implementing the programme for the benefit of labourers; it is for the other departments also to cooperate, more so, the police department. If no action is taken or the accused, who has committed an offence under any Act or under the labour laws, is made to go scot free, then whatever sincere efforts may be made by the Labour Department, the labour cannot be helped. My colleague on the other side has referred to Sivakasi in Tamil Nadu. Not only in Sivakasi but in Uttar Pradesh also similar things have happened. There is an observation of the Supreme Court also. But I will quote another instance which was brought to the notice of the Labour Minister also. There is one company called Continental Construction company, here in Delhi, which has engaged some labourers in Himachal Pradesh and those labourers there are crying for help. Hundreds of labourers were taken from Orissa by this Continental Construction Company to work in the Sanjay Vidyut Pariyojana, Bhaba Unit, Village Kafun,

District Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh through its sub-contractor. As per the agreement, these labourers were to get Rs. 30 per cubic metre of boulders and for their coming and going, freight and fair was to be paid. But that is not paid. Only half the amount is paid. They are still to get Rs. two lakhs or more from that construction company. They are not allowed to leave the place. I am happy that after I brought this to the notice of the hon. Minister, he is going to take action. Similarly, it is for us, whenever we find that any labour is being harassed, to bring it to the notice of the Ministry of Labour so that action can be taken. This racket is going on here in Delhi itself. The villagers are allured to leave their villages, more so from Orissa. They are brought here on the assurance that they will be sent abroad. Their passports are managed by getting money from them. For sending abroad Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 15,000 is being collected. This racket is going on at least since 1981. I have got some documents with me which I have shown to the Minister also and have given him a copy Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 15,000 is being collected from them but still they are not sent abroad. These companies are making them to work in India and they are not paid their due wages also. These sub-contractors who are not authorised under the Act to recruit them, share the booty with these construction companies. If the passports are seized, the amount is seized, nothing could be done to contractors as they go scot free. God alone can help the labourers. So, I request the Labour Minister—copies of the documents are with him and more documents will be supplied to him—let a CBI enquiry be made of this racket. I demand that a CBI inquiry in regard to this racket exploiting the labourers with the hope of being sent abroad is held. A huge amount is being collected and many important persons are involved in this racket. Not only the Managing Directors, but their relations are also involved in this racket. I do not want to name them, but their relations are also involved and crores of rupees are being collected from the labourers. I request that the Labour Minister may take appropriate action.

[Translation]

*SHRI A. C. SHANMUGAM (Vellore) : Hon. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me this opportunity to say a few words on behalf of my party the A. I. A. D. M. K on the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Amendment Bill. Though I extend my full support to this Bill, yet I am constrained to say that it is really unfortunate that we should discuss a Bill of this nature even after 35 years of Independence. There should have been no necessity to bring forward such a legislation. The bonded labour should have been abolished from the country long ago. The Government should have taken vigorous steps much earlier for the eradication of bonded labour in the country. I do not also know whether there exists still bonded labour in the country mainly due to the fact that effective rehabilitation steps have not been taken in the case of those who have been freed from bondage. Probably the freed bonded labour has reverted back to bondage. If we do not give them job opportunities and if we do not provide them with basic minimum necessities of life, naturally they will prefer to go back to bondage. I am compelled to talk in this fashion because of the fact that the Government have not been able to spend fully the allocation of Rs. 25 crores in the Sixth Five Year Plan. This is what the hon. Minister of Labour, Shri Anjaiah has stated. Out of Rs. 25 crores of allocation, Rs. 10 crores could not be spent for this purpose. I would have welcomed if the allocation of Rs. 25 crores had been increased to Rs. 50 crores or Rs. 100 crores. On the other hand, we could not spend Rs. 10 crores out of Rs. 25 crores allocation. This does not speak well of the Government's action programme so far abolition of bonded labour is concerned. I want that the Government should show greater awareness and deeper understanding of the problem of bonded labour and must act with grit and gumption to get rid of bonded labour.

*The Speech was originally delivered in Tamil.

The hon. Minister has stated that the State Governments have been advised to form Vigilance Committees at the District level. So far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, such Vigilance Committees have been constituted in all the districts. I know that in many States such Vigilance Committees have not yet been constituted. This should be looked into by the hon. Minister. Tamil Nadu has been adjudged as the best, along with Maharashtra, in the implementation of 20-point programme. It is worthwhile to mention that bonded labour abolition is one of the points in the 20-Point Programme. Under the dynamic leadership of our Chief Minister, Dr. M. G. R., remarkable achievements in this field have become the order of the day in Tamil Nadu.

As I stated at the outset, unemployment problem should be solved. If unemployment problem is to be solved; then population control should be given proper attention. Tamil Nadu has become the beacon light in population control measures. Tamil Nadu has received the award of Rs. 1 crores for this splendid performance. It is regrettable that in this process Tamil Nadu has lost one Member of Parliament. The reduction in the growth of population has led to the loss of one M. P. constituency. It is not enough that such States are given a reward of Rs. 1 crore. Special assistance should be given to the States performing well in family welfare schemes. Such incentives will alone ensure ceaseless and continuous efforts in the direction of population control.

We have about 22 crores of agricultural labour in the country. It is really astounding that even today they get Rs. 2 or Rs. 1 as daily wage in some parts of the country. Though we have the Minimum wages Act, the agricultural labour is denied the minimum wages. There is no effective monitoring of the implementation of Minimum Wages Act. Those landlords who own 1000 acres, or 5000 acres, who do not give minimum wages to their agricultural labour, should be given deterrent punishment. They should be given imprisonment also for not implementing the Minimum Wages Act. The concerned laws should be amended to this effect.

[Shri A.C. Shanmugam]

Sir, the bonded labour system cannot be abolished unless the landless is given land. In 1982-83 the Tamil Nadu Government passed the Land Ceiling law and it was sent to the Centre for President's assent. Unfortunately this law has not got the President's assent. It is being shunted backwards and forwards. How can the State Government take over the surplus land and distribute it among the landless? Such dilatory approach towards the land ceiling laws of the States should be given up by the Centre.

If the proprietors give a loan of Rs. 4000 or Rs. 5000 to the weavers, they become the bonded labour. They do not have the wherewithal to repay such loans. The Government of Tamil Nadu has organised several Weavers Cooperatives Societies so that the weavers could come out of the clutches of the proprietors. The Sixth Plan target for Tamil Nadu in this matter has been exceeded. I want that the Centre should ensure loan facilities under I.R.D.P. to these weavers. Similarly, we come across allegations that the weaker section loans given by the Banks do not reach them; such loans are cornered by a select few in between. I demand that steps must be taken for ensuring that such loans reach the people below poverty line. Unless you uplift those below the poverty line, we cannot wipe out bonded labour system in the country. Effective steps must be taken in this direction also.

Bonded labour system is widely prevalent in construction sector. The contractors perpetuate this system. I want that the construction workers should be released from the bondage of contractors. Their rehabilitation should be the responsibility of the Government. Sir, another point is that the central public sector undertakings take workers to Iran, Iraq, Libya etc. for completing their foreign contracts. I know that no security is offered to these workers in foreign countries. They are worse than bonded labour in unknown and unfamiliar places. You must have known that in Libya about 1000 Indian workers went on strike seeking improvement in their primitive living conditions. Sir, it is necessary that

the Central Public Sector undertakings should set an example to others in giving all amenities to their workers. The economic progress of the workers must be ensured. Job opportunities must be created. Efforts should be made to uplift all those below the poverty line. Unless constructive steps are taken, we cannot eradicate bonded labour system from the country. I am sure that our dedicated Labour Minister will see to it that bonded labour is eradicated from the country for all times to come.

With these words I conclude my speech.

[English]

SHRI N. DENNIS (Nagercoil) : Sir, while supporting this Amendment, I wish to make the following remarks.

Section 2 of the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act defines bonded labour. It appears that contract labour or inter-State migrant worker is not covered by this Act, I mean, the original Act of 1976. An additional explanation by this Amendment rectifies the loophole in the original Act. This merely is an explanation or clarification of the matter. It is a matter of shame that even after 38 years of our Independence this social evil is not eradicated from our country and it has to be eradicated as quickly as possible. Poverty, illiteracy, ignorance and landless condition and unemployment of the people and other social and economic handicaps are the reasons for the victims to submit to the terms and conditions of the employer, however severe and illegal they are. It is felt that they are morally bound by the terms of the agreement on which they enter into service. The root cause of this evil is unemployment. When an employee claims a higher rate or a minimum wage, there is no security of employment. He may be thrown out of employment and there is no security of job and so he has to submit to the terms and conditions of the employer. So, they have to do long hours of work for poor wage. Even basic amenities are not provided to them. Their health condition is also very much affected and they have to live in unhygienic condition. No compensation is given when they meet with an accident at work. They get food only when the

master serves and so also clothing. They have no land to put up their houses. The victims are minly Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, poor people and backward classes.

Similarly, the contract labour and inter-State migrants are also living in bad condition. They are also facing lot of difficulties. This amendment would be useful, if only the provisions of the Act are strictly implemented. Those who violate the provisions of the Act should be strictly dealt with. Then only, the purpose of the amendment would be served.

The process of implementation of the Act is, detection, release and rehabilitation of bonded labour. The labourers who are released should be protected well and rehabilitated. They should be provided with alternative employment opportunities. Otherwise, they will again prefer to go in for bonded labour. Therefore, they should be protected well and rehabilitated.

The State Government is primarily responsible for the rehabilitation of bonded labourers. The Central Government supplements the work of the State Government with financial assistance, matching grants of 50 : 50 for the rehabilitation of bonded labour. Since, it is part of the 20-point programme, a number of amelioration scheme have been started. Reviews of such schemes should be taken strictly and effectively. At least, in the Seventh Five Year Plan, this evil should be completely eradicated. There should be permanent rehabilitation programme. These bonded labourers should be provided with employment opportunities. The programmes of the State Government in this regard should be integrated with the IRDP, NREP and also special component plan in the tribal sub-plan. Voluntary agencies and social groups should also be—involved in this rehabilitation programme.

[Translation]

SHRI KALI PRASAD PANDEY (Gopalganj) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I support the Bonded Labour Amendment Bill, 1985 presented by the hon. Labour

Minister. Not one, but many hon. Members have expressed the view that the problem of the bonded labour is not confined to our country alone, it afflicts other countries as well. The bonded labourers who reside in India can appeal here, but what is being done to liberate the Indian children who in the name of adoption are taken away by the foreigners and are made to work like bonded labourers.

In this House several Bills have been brought forward about the bonded labour and we all hope that you will definitely solve this problem. With the presentation of several Bills the bonded labourers thought that their problem will be solved. In the 20-point programme launched by Shrimati Indira Gandhi, one point related to liberation of bonded labourers, but you go and see in the villages, where 75 per cent people of the country reside. They cannot raise a slogan in support of their demands and in the absence of financial resources, they cannot approach any leader.

Today, in independent India, the labour of the country is living in bondage. How will you secure their liberation? You can see it yourself in the villages. If any owner gives four or six *kattas* of land to a labourer, the labourer wants to get rid of it. The position is that where should he go with his children. As long as you do not raise the limit of the amount, the problem of bonded labour will continue in the country. You may enact hundred legislations, this problem will go on escalating. This is the position in Delhi where the Prime Minister and the Labour Minister are living. The proverb 'nearer to the church, farther from heaven' fits well here. There are some people here who allure the labourers and send them abroad. The labourers comes to Delhi after selling his 2 to 4 *kattas* of land, but here in Delhi, there are many 'Natwarlals' swindlers. Not one, thousands of 'Natwarlals' are engaged in this illegal business, I have no words to describe their deeds. In the temptation of sending the labourers abroad, they are taken to Varanasi and Patna and are left there. You can see as to how labourers are exploited in Faridabad and around Delhi. A labourer is paid Rs. 5 to Rs. 10 for a day's work. Next day, when he feels hungry, he goes to find work, but

[Shri Kali Prasad Pandey]

the owner refuses to give him work saying that he will be paid only Rs. 5 or Rs. 3. Does a rural labourer know what laws Government are enacting for him? As long as we do not make them aware of their rights, there is no use of enacting legislations. You might have seen that a person who had adopted hundred children was nabbed in Palamau. The Government certainly helped in that case and as a result thereof, the children were liberated. As long as the labourers are not aware of these laws, even one hundred laws would not suffice to liberate them.

15.00 hrs.

SHRI DAMODAR PANDEY (Hazari-bagh): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Bill. Just now, Kaliji has rightly said that there is no use of enacting legislations unless they are actually enforced. He forgot one thing. The laws do not come into force merely by their passing by the Government. These laws cannot be enforced merely through the speeches made by the representatives of the people in the House. It is our as well as their duty to see that the laws which are enacted here are actually enforced. Through this legislation, the Government have expressed their intention to liberate the society from exploitation. We are trying to plug some loopholes which had been left in the Act made earlier and if required another comprehensive Bill will be brought forward. Many legislations were enacted in the past and they did not prove successful. In case the present legislation also meets the same fate, our efforts will be frustrated and no improvement can be brought about. I am personally of the view that the bonded labour is exploited in society, you may give him any name—migrant labour, casual labour or contract labour, all of them are in betters and all of them meet the same fate: exploitation of man by man. Our Government is committed to liberate them from exploitation. Exploitation has many other forms. In big industries, there are big contractors, so much so that there are some organisations in our area duly recognised by Government, namely, Gorakhpur Labour Organisation, about which you might have heard, Mr. Deputy

SPEAKER, Sir. In our Uttar Pradesh, the poor people used to be taken to the mines forcibly, they were made to work for 11 months in appalling conditions, they used to be beaten, such was their exploitation that the people are horrified at those memories even today. All of them were liberated in one stroke and they are living as free citizens, not that they are leading an easy life, but at least they are leading a life of a human being; they are free workers now. This indeed is a tremendous achievement. Similarly, the organised contract system in the public sector has mostly ceased to exist, although a bit of it is still there. Today, a part of it has already been identified. You yourself have seen the tumult by the Bhatti quarry workers in Delhi. The plight of the quarry workers, which are engaged in the manufacture of chips and are spread from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and from Dwarika to Puri, is very miserable. These are very small quarries and their owners run away after closing them down. The result is that there is no end to their exploitation. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am of the view that Government should organise them, wherever they are, and should liberate them this exploitation. A feeling of organisation should be infused in them and the public representatives have some responsibility towards them and it should be our endeavour to see that labourers are not misused anywhere.

Today, we see that it is being misused at many places. Many farmers think that well, their labourers are working with them. They themselves get a report lodged with the government through their agent that a bonded labour is working with them and on the other hand, they tell their labourer to go and get himself declared a bonded labour. Afterwards, when he gets Rs. 2,000 from the Government, the farmer keeps Rs. 1,000 out of it and the rest Rs. 1,000 goes to the labourer. I want to say that this is how this law is also being misused. Who will stop it? We feel that it is the duty of us all and we should work in this direction unitedly. If we go ahead determinedly, we shall be able to stop the exploitation which brings us bad name and we shall be able to liberate these hapless people who are looking forward to us with great hope,

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA (Pali) :

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Constitution guarantees a life with self respect to every citizen. At the same time, if Government could give guarantee to employment to every person through a legislation, then only this problem can be rooted out. Otherwise, as long as this custom of exploitation of man by man continues, it is a blemish on the country. The constitution of India provides that every person has a right to live with honesty and every person has a right to live with dignity. On the other hand, when we view the judgement given by the Supreme Court on 16th December, 1984 concerning Rajasthan, through which some persons were liberated, we saw that nobody offered them even water, nobody gave them food and shelter after they came out of the bondage. They did not get any work either. A women named Jamuna died immediately after that and when another woman came back, her son also died. This is what has happened in our Rajasthan. Therefore, poverty is a curse on a person whom you call bonded labour and this poverty compels him to take to this work. I want to say that although some hon. Members have said so, our State Governments do not provide even Rs. 2,000 as financial assistance. The Central Government did announce that they on their part will provide Rs. 2,000 and another Rs. 2,000 will be provided by the State Governments. I do not know what as to is the position in Tamil Nadu. What happens in Tamil Nadu. The Central had allocated Rs. 25.822 crores during 1982-83, but the state Government spent Rs. 36.091 crores As against a target of Rs. 28.8 crores in 1983-84 only a sum of Rs. 17 crores was spent. Similarly, the amount allocated for 1984-85 was Rs. 31.326 crores, but only a sum of Rs. 18 crores was spent. That is way Shri Anjiah has said in his statement that—

[English]

—in the last Plan Rs. 25 crores were allotted for freeing and rehabilitating the bonded labourers. But the State Government had not spent Rs. 10 crores out of this,

[Translation]

—This is the position of State Governments and they say that their plight is miserable while it is they who are to blame, for they do not utilise the entire allocated funds. If you go through 'India Today' issue titled 'Labour' of November 30, 1985, you would find that—

[English]

Ganga Parmar, at 70 has 30 years of contract labour behind her.

[Translation]

Sir, I would like to emphasize that Government will have to guarantee employment to end exploitation of labour, otherwise this exploitation will continue.

***SHRI G. S. VASAVARAJU (Tumkur).**

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Amendment Bill. This bill is for the amelioration of bonded labourers. Therefore, I welcome this amendment Bill and express my views on this.

Bonded labour system is a slur on our society. Unfortunately this system is prevailing in our country even after 39 years of independence. The Central Government and the State Govt. should look at this problem with humanitarian outlook.

The bonded labourers work day and night like slaves. But the upper class people who get the work done by these poor people to a mass wealth. These upper class people exploit labourers, extract maximum work and treat them like animals. They do not care even to pay them minimum wages. This is the tragic fate of poor bonded labourers in our country. It has become very difficult to root out this inhuman system from our country. This system is continuing generation after generation.

Our late lamented leader Smt. Indira Gandhi had introduced various programmes for the upliftment of bonded labourers. In fact abolition of bonded labour system from

***The speech was originally delivered in Kannada.**

[Shri G.S. Vasavaraju]

our society is an integral part of the 20-point programme.

In Karnataka our late Chief Minister Shri Devaraja Urs had done commendable service for the amelioration of the down-trodden. During his time the problem of bonded labour had been solved to some extent. But unfortunately, the present Govt. of Karnataka is not taking keen interest to solve this problem. There are no programmes before the Karnataka Govt. to abolish the system of bonded labour. Rich people are drawing loans from the banks in the name of poor people and they are leading luxurious life. The amount allotted by Central Govt. is also not being used for these poor people. The State Govt. is keeping quiet without taking any action against such people who are exploiting the poor masses.

If a labourer gets loan for his marriage from a rich person, his son has to work as a slave to repay the loan. Sometimes his grand son also will have to work to repay that loan. In most of the cases bonded labourers work for paying the interest of the loan and the actual amount of loan remains as it is for two to three generations.

If firm stops are not taken to wipe out this evil system from our society I am afraid that the system may continue for another 100 or 200 years.

Lakhs of labourers are engaged in the construction of dams. Lakhs of acres of land is brought under irrigation. But the poor labourers do not get even a single acre of land. The labourers work in brick kline and in many other places. They toil as quarry workers. They sweat day and night. Therefore, it is the moral duty of the States and the Centre to rehabilitate such poor labourers. They should be given an opportunity to live like other human beings. I support the bill and hope that our hon. Minister would do his best to free the bonded labourers from the clutches of slavery. I thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak and conclude my speech,

SHRI RAMASHRAY PRASAD SINGH (Jahanabad) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to submit on the discussion on the Bonded Labour (Abolition) Bill that on the one hand we boast of entering the computer age and the 21st Century, but on the other hand we are still having a discussion about the abolition of bonded labour.

So far as bonded labour is concerned there are two types of workers in the country — the organised and the unorganised. The unorganised workers fall in the category of the bonded labour. Lakhs of workers are employed in stone quarries and crushers and they are exploited very much. No compensation is paid to them by the employers even if they die. Nobody cares for him. Bonded labourers recruited from outside places are working in all the brick-kilns. They have to face inhuman treatment. This is the situation in our country today. The law which is proposed to be enacted in this respect should be practicable. Most of these laws are not implemented properly. Unless the economic condition of these people is improved and feudalism abolished, there is no use to frame laws because these cannot be properly implemented and bonded labour cannot be abolished.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI T. ANJIAH) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the problem of bonded labour is a very serious problem. There is no provision for conciliation or Industrial Tribunal in this respect and the bonded labour do not have the same privileges as industrial workers. The trade unions do not work for bonded labour. Irrespective of the party to which these unions may be affiliated they only work for the privileged class, i. e., the industrial workers.

The Government has appointed 800 honorary workers to identify bonded labour in the country. I do not have the state-wise figures. They are paid Rs. 250 as allowance to work for them. The trade unions are also welcome to help the Government in this matter. I am sorry to say that the desired progress has not been achieved so far in this regard and all the trade unions, irrespective of their affiliations, fall in the same category.

I am distressed at the progress made by different States in this respect during the last 6 months. The target of Karnataka for rehabilitation of bonded labour was 9,250 persons, but they could not exceed 1,233 persons. The progress is very slow there. The work of rehabilitation was nil in Madhya Pradesh. I am giving the figures for last 6 months and not for 5 or 10 years. Whatever might have been the target for Maharashtra, it has been able to rehabilitate 36 persons only. Orissa had a target of 7500 persons, but could rehabilitate only 2,500 persons. The target of Rajasthan and Tamilnadu was 2,580 and 2,194 respectively while they could rehabilitate just 260 and 11 persons respectively. The target for Uttar Pradesh and Bihar was 4,000 and 501 respectively and they rehabilitated 320 and 250 persons respectively. If the State Governments are not able to achieve even the targets set by the Centre, how can we help them? There was nil in Haryana. Nothing has been done there in this respect. The same is true of Gujarat. Only Andhra Pradesh has been able to exceed its target. The target was 2,000 while they achieved 2,050. Unless the State Governments take interest and participate actively in rehabilitating bonded labour, it will remain to be an impossible task.

Bonded labour exists where land reforms have not been properly implemented and there is lack of irrigation facility and there is no industry or cultivation. The farmers of a State which does not generate power, cannot think of making progress, because without irrigation and power the farmer cannot produce anything. The agricultural labour of Andhra Pradesh and Punjab get maximum wages, because land reforms, power and irrigation supply have reached these States and without these the system of bonded labour cannot be abolished.

So far as financial assistance for rehabilitation of bonded labour is concerned, the Centre gives Rs. 2,000 and the State too has to give an equal amount. In this way the bonded labourer gets Rs. 4000. I do not say that it is sufficient. They have been able to spend only Rs. 15 crores out of Rs. 25 crores during the last few years. Rs. 10 crores still remains unutilised. May be that there is some misuse of funds. I went to Andhra and I was told by the people that

they catch hold of somebody and then after declaring him as bonded labour, they pay him some money. I was submitting that there is always a little misuse here and there in all the good schemes, because wherever there is God there is Satan also(*Interruptions*) Wherever there is Rama, there is Ravana too, but that does not mean that there is something wrong with the system. Some people have observed that this system has done no good. That is not true. A lot of work has been done under Shrimati Indira Gandhi's 20-point programme. When the question of bonded labour was brought within the purview of 20-point programme, the concerned people apprehended that they might be arrested if somebody reports of their having kept bonded labour. But the fact is that a sizable number of bonded labourer had been liberated at that time.

Secondly, as Mr. Rath has submitted that the condition of those people who go abroad, is also very miserable. People are being cheated and are taken abroad and whether they get employment or not, we do not, we do not know. We have received many complaints that the people are forced to live on the roads and left to their own lot. Therefore, we are considering this matter also as to how we should take action in this regard. There are several private agencies which are misusing the provisions of this Act. That is why we are thinking of enacting a law shortly providing for the appointment of labour Attache. If we appoint a Labour Attache, he can provide us with the information, whether these people are getting employment there or not.

Recently we paid a surprise visit to a quarry, hardly about 20 kms. from Madras along with Shrimati M. Chandrashekar. We saw there that whereas a cooperative society was paying Rs. 15 per day as wages to a worker the contractor was paying only Rs. 5. We also saw that the conditions in that quarry were hopeless—there were no arrangements for water, latrines and shelter. We told them that this should be closed down and that its licence should be cancelled. On this they gave us this assurance in writing that they were prepared to pay to the labour at the same rate at which the cooperative society was paying. What I mean to say is

[Shri T. Anjiah]

that unless the State Governments take interest in this regard, it will be difficult to implement the scheme. Legislations are enacted, but they are not implemented. There are a number of laws which are in existence. The responsibility for its implementation lies on the Executive Authority but there is no one to exercise control on them. The hon. Members should tell us about the condition prevailing in their constituencies then only we can ask the collector and the Chief Minister to take action in the matter. Rath Sahib had submitted a report, but no M.P. or M.L.A. has ever said that the problem of bonded labour exists in their constituencies. All the people show sympathy with the bonded labour, but no one puts practical suggestion before the Government. Whenever the matter is brought to our notice, we shall take action on it immediately. We shall remind the State Government that they have not followed the instructions which have been issued to them. Only day before yesterday we have told the labour Ministers that it is their responsibility and they should undertake this work. The Central Government cannot go to every village to see the things themselves. You all know that the officers as well as the States are not working according to the powers which have been delegated to them, to implement the scheme. At times, they say that they have not been provided with the funds. But if you go through the welfare schemes, you will find that sufficient funds have been allocated for this purpose. It is the responsibility of the State Government that they construct houses for the weaker section, rehabilitate bonded labour and get them employed. So far as the safety of the bonded labour is concerned it cannot be monitored from here. That is why, I am submitting only about 2 or 3 points. So far as child labour is concerned, they also work like bonded labour.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur) : What about bonded labour in the Political party ?

SHRI T. ANJIAH : This is a subject for your consideration. If you do nothing here, then what is the role of the Opposition. If you do not do such a little work here, then where will you work ? In Kashi or on the banks of Ganga ?

SHRI OWAISI (Hyderabad) : There is no bonded labour in the Opposition.

SHRI T. ANJIAH : I cannot say whether they are in the Opposition or not. But they are not in the ruling party because we believe in democracy. A number of hon. Members have raised the matter that the work was not undertaken by the Government of West Bengal or by the Congress Government. This is not so. This is there in every State. Instead of making political capital out of this issue, we should consider the matter seriously. We are extending help to voluntary organisations and can even provide more help in this regard. At least we should get reports in this regard. If you undertake this job in your constituency, the votes will be happy with you. Do not make it an issue involving a political party. The issue should be taken up keeping in view an overall situation prevailing in the country.

SHRI OWAISI : There are a large number of bonded labour in Andhra Pradesh.

SHRI T. ANJIAH : The Latest Report does not contain any adverse remark. According to the Report, they have spent a lot of amount.

SHRI OWAISI : Many excesses are being committed in Andhra Pradesh. You should take some steps in this regard.

SHRI T. ANJIAH : This is a separate thing. This is a political issue. What I am saying is another thing. I have placed before you the Report as it is. Many hon. Members have suggested that a Committee may be set up for the purpose.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : I would like to submit that the verdict of the Supreme Court regarding the bonded labour has not been implemented. You have admitted this fact in the meeting of trade unions. Kindly exert some pressure to get the work done.

SHRI T. ANJIAH : You know about the trade union leaders. In order to get the order implemented, voices from among the public should be raised. The Supreme Court has delivered many verdicts in favour of workers. They are very good verdicts,

Whenever they deliver such verdicts, we welcome them. There is nobody to provide leadership to these poor people with a view to helping them. It is difficult for them to get any help. I am of the view that so far as the bonded labour is concerned, a committee should be formed on taluka level and the concerned people should be prosecuted.

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL VYAS (Bhilwara): I would request the hon. Minister that he should kindly get a sum of Rs. 25 crores released to the State Governments which has not been paid to them.

SHRI T. ANJIAH: When they are not interested in drawing the funds, the question of giving it does not arise. They neither take the money nor do they work. An amount of Rs. Ten crores is lying unspent. The State Governments have not utilised it. Unless they undertake some work, who will give them money. Do you also pay money without any work?

With these words, I request that the Bill may be passed.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill to amend the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act 1976 as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The Motion was adopted.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House will now take up clause by clause consideration of the Bill. The question is:

"That clause 2 stand part of the Bill."

*The motion was adopted.
Clause 2 was added to the Bill.*

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

SHRI T. ANJIAH: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

15.30 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTION

[English]

Tenth Report

SHRI NANDLAL CHOUDHARY (Sagar): I beg to move,

"That this House do agree with the Tenth Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 18th December, 1985."

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That this House do agree with the Tenth Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on 18th December 1985."

The motion was adopted.

15.31 hrs.

NATIONAL HIGHWAYS (AMENDMENT) BILL*

[English]

(Amendment of Section 5)

SHRI K. RAMAMURTHY (Krishnagiri): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the National Highways Act, 1956.

*Published in Gazette of India Extraordinary, Part II, Section 2, dated 20.12.1985.