

for Lunch and to meet again at 3 p.m.

13.57 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till Fifteen of the Clock.

1504 hrs.

[English]

The Lok Sabha reassembled after Lunch at Four Minutes past Fifteen of the Clock

(MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

PAYMENT OF GRATUITY
(AMENDMENT) BILL

As Passed by Rajya Sabha

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: We shall now take up Payment of Gratuity (Amendment) Bill. Shri P.A. Sangma.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P.A. SANGMA): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration".

As the hon. Members will be aware, the Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972 provides, for a scheme for a payment of gratuity to the employees employed in factories, mines, plantations, oil fields, ports, railway companies, shops and certain other establishments and for matters connected therewith. The payment of Gratuity under the Act is, at present, restricted to the employees drawing wages not exceeding Rs. 3,500 per month.

Under the Act, gratuity is payable in the event of superannuation, retirement or resignation from service subject to completion of five years service. The completion of five years service, however, does not apply in the case of termination of employment due to death or disablement. The employees in the non-seasonal establishments are entitled to gratuity at the rate of fifteen days wages for every completed years of service or part thereof in excess of six months, while the employees in seasonal establishments are entitled to seven days wages for each season. The payment of gratuity is further subject to a ceiling of Rs. 50,000. total emoluments. The trade unions have also been representing for removal of the wage limit and also for suitable enhancement in the ceiling on the maximum amount of gratuity.

The various suggestions/recommendations have been considered and it is now proposed to carry out the following amendments in the Act:-

- (i) The wage limit for coverage under the Act is being removed altogether. This will make all the employees legally eligible for gratuity, irrespective of their wages;
- (ii) The existing ceiling of Rs. 50,000 on the maximum amount of gratuity is being raised to Rs. 1 lakh.

These are, in short, the important amendments proposed in this Bill. I hope, the hon. Members will welcome the proposed amendments which are of non-controversial nature.

With these few words, I commend the Bill for consideration of the House.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That the Bill further to amend the Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972, as passed by Rajya Sabha be taken into consideration."

The time allotted to this subject is two hours and I request the Whips of the political parties to send the names so that the Chair should not be embarrassed by receiving the individual slips.

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: Sir, actually this Bill is so non-controversial that it could be passed even without discussion.

AN HON. MEMBER: No, Sir, discussion is a must.

[*Translation*]

SHRI KARIYA MUNDA (Khunti): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Gratuity Bill, 1993, brought forward was formulated in 1972 for the people who worked in factories, oil fields, gardens, rail companies and shops etc. This was formulated with an objective of giving some financial relief from the Government to the employees who had rendered a service of 25-30 years of their lives. At that time, their wage limit was Rs. 2500. Later on, the Government considered it and suggestions also poured from different people that the wage limit should be raised. It was, then, raised to Rs. 3500. Then it was said that the amount of Rs. 50,000 for the payment of Gratuity was very little because the prices of different commodities had increased twenty-fold and also that this amount was decided some twenty years ago. The workers do not get the required benefit from this in the present circumstances.

In this connection, a convention of

Labour Ministers was held in 1983. In that convention, it was suggested that the wage limit of Rs. 3500 be abolished and the amount of Gratuity, that was Rs. 50,000, be enhanced.

Today, the Government has come out with an amendment. Better late than never. It is a commendable step. But raising the amount from Rs. 50,000 to Rs. one lakh is in a adequate keeping in view the present inflation and the rising prices of essential commodities. I urge upon the Government to further increase this amount.

The Government formulates many schemes and laws for the workers and the employees but they do not get the benefits of these schemes during their lifetime. They can not avail themselves of these facilities well on time. I request the Government to bring out such a law as provides for giving full benefits to the workers. The people for whom the Government is going to pass this legislation should be paid the money at an appropriate time.

With this, I conclude.

[*English*]

SHRI A. CHARLES (Trivandrum) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I stand to support the Payment of Gratuity Amendment Bill. This has only a limited aspect. Firstly under the existing regulation only those whose salary comes upto Rs. 2,500 are eligible for gratuity. Now we are taking away that limit so that everybody in the organisation gets the benefit of gratuity. That is a welcome change. And the second thing is that the maximum gratuity that was eligible for an employee was Rs. 50,000 and we are now raising it to Rs. one lakh. In view of the present economy and the devaluation of the rupee and the enhanced cost of living. I

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think, Rs. one lakh is a fairly good amount because, after all, it has been doubled. I congratulate the hon. Minister for introducing such a Bill so that an employee, who has spent all his life in an organisation, at the fag end of his career, when he has nothing to depend on, is getting Rs. one lakh. These two changes are welcome.

But in this connection I would like to highlight one or two salient features of this Bill. There is no guarantee that this amount of Rs. one lakh will be given to the employee at the time of retirement. I know several instances where employees have to wait years together because of one reason or the other. If some higher officer has a prejudice against an employee, he will create such a situation that this gratuity will not reach him for one or two or three or even four years. Several complaints have come. At that stage they come to us. If we write to the bureaucrats, then it will be taken as political interference. We come to the picture when there is some injustice. For just cause we need not write.

I would request the hon. Minister to look into that aspect and ensure that within a time-frame, say at least within three months of the retirement, every employee should get this minimum benefit.

We have recently passed the legislation-Interest on Delayed Payments Bill. When a payment is delayed, interest has to be paid. Though we have passed that Bill, I do not know whether anybody got anything because the moment he goes to the court of law to get it, the whole business will be over.

And they will not pay. These are all sad facts of life. Any way, at least there is a legislation. So, I want the hon. Minister to

ensure that every employee should get this benefit within a limited period after the retirement and thereafter if it is delayed, he has to be paid a minimum bank interest. If such a provision is made, the organisation will be very careful in seeing that the employee who has retired will actually get the benefit. If not, his successors or his heirs will get the benefit. But he may have to face undue hardships because of the delay. That is one side of it.

Sir, What is the industrial climate of this country today? There is a saying that the strength of a chain is the strength of the weakest link. In an organisation from top to bottom there is a chain and if there is one weak link the whole chain becomes weak. So, every employee should have a feeling that he is working not for himself, not for his family alone, but he is working for the nation.

Sir, what is the productivity? How much is being lost? We speak a lot about the public sector undertakings and these days, my friends on the other side say that we are surrendering our economic sovereignty, we are selling the country and we are disinvesting everything. I do not approve of all these changes that are happening. But there are constraints on our side also because of the changes in the global economy. We have to change some of the policies, but the change is in continuity. I am not speaking at length on that. What is the work culture of this country? It is a very said thing that for even minor things there are strikes these days. As you know, yesterday when somebody was speaking very proudly some hon. Member said that on the 11th of this month, that is, tomorrow, the whole banking sector will come to a stop and the country will be shaken. The bank employees are one of the sections who are the most richly paid, but we do not care for the man on the street.

Sir, in the Constitution of India, there is a provision that children below the age of 14 shall not be allowed to work in hazardous occupation. That is also coming under the Labour Ministry. It is really a sad thing that there are 55 million children in this country below the age of 14 who are engaged in hazardous occupation and out of that, 11 million children are on the streets. They are street children. I saw an article recently about that. They have no father, they do not know who is the mother and they do not know where to stay. They are under the open sky on the pavements. When this is the sad picture of our country, how are our organisations working? We all know that the public sector undertakings are white elephants.

SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR (Mangalore) : Who is responsible for that?

SHRI A. CHARLES: We are all responsible. I am responsible. As a dutiful citizen I am speaking from my heart. Please do not misunderstand that I am speaking as a Congress man and as a politician.

Sir, after the 10th Lok Sabha elections, on the first Joint Sitting of the two Houses of Parliament, the Rashtrapati, in his message, made a very heartening appeal that there shall be a total ban on strikes, bandhs and all sorts of lock-outs. But that was pooh-poohed by all the parties including the Trade Union of the Congress (I). I do not speak politics here. We should change. We have to create a situation wherein every employee should feel that it is his duty to work for the country.

Sir, in the Eighth Lok Sabha, I had the privilege of being a Member of the Estimates Committee. About Rs. 750 crore has been spent on the modernisation of textile mills alone because textile mills is

one of the major sectors of our economy. We visited various textile mills. In West Bengal, in one of the sick mills we visited, we had discussions and finally the officers came. I had very-very little knowledge about the working of the textile mills at that time. In Kerala we have the handloom sector which is a very vital sector there.

Then, there are power looms also. But I have seen one worker supervising four looms. But in that particular mill, when I visited, I saw, one worker supervising two looms. I asked the officer, "Is there any guideline as to what number of looms, one worker to supervise", there was silence. Then, he said, "Two years back, the position was one worker was supervising four looms." But then, there was struggle and the union demanded, because of hard nature of work, it was very difficult to supervise four looms by a worker. There was strike for some time. It went on. Then, the Labour Department interfered and there was a conciliation meeting. In the present of the officers of the Labour Department, it was agreed to that one worker need to supervise two looms only. He said, "So, we are working like that". So, the number of workers has been doubled. Who will pay for the workers? What can the modernisation help in such cases? Modernisation inherently aims at increasing efficiency and reducing the number of workers. I would say that the work culture should also be created in this country.

I understand that the Trade Union Bill was cleared by the Cabinet and we had the impression that the Bill would be presented in this Session of Parliament. But yesterday, from the notice given to us, it seems the hon. Speaker has referred it to some committee. How long will it take, we do not know. If seven workers of an organisation join together and have a reg-

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istration, they can paralyse the organisation of thousand employees. This is the sad state of affairs. In K erala, this is the situation. I do not know the position in other States. In one Party, there can be four unions. About 15 years back, the call in our State was. "One industry—one union." Then, it came to one union for one party. Now, even for one party, there are half a dozen unions because unions are for leaders and not for workers.

With due respect the hon. Minister. I am mentioning an incident which he was narrating in Public. He was invited for a meeting. He refused to go because it was his Question day in Parliament. But finally, the union leaders insisted that he must go. It was the Golden Jubilee celebration. They said, "If you do not come, the gold will not be there". The union leader said finally, "We will charter a flight. It is 15 minutes journey on one side; 15 minutes for staying there; and 15 minutes for going back. So, you can be here by 9 O'clock." Then, he said humorously: "You can charter the flight. But who will pay for that flight?" They said, "Don't worry, Sir, We will pay". Then, the Minister said: "You can do one thing. I am willing to come to inaugurate but with one condition. Immediately after the inauguration, I should be made the President of the union and I shall resign the Ministership because the President of the union is better than the office of the Minister of this great country!". This shows how the trade union function.

Sir, I request that the work culture should be there in this country. (*Interruptions*). Sometimes it is harsh to face the reality. (*Interruptions*). After all, you are a very good man. But unfortunately you are on the wrong party (*Interruptions*). Most of

the public sector undertakings are on loss. Even in the case of these undertakings, higher Officers used to stay in five-star hotels. In the Tenth Lok Sabha, in the Estimates Committee, Shri Manoranjan Bhakta was our Chairman. In the first meeting, I said that because of the present day economic crisis, we should show some example of austerity. So, the Estimates Committee of the 10th Lok Sabha decided that the Members of the Lok Sabha when we are on tour should not stay in five-star hotels. Also, one Ambassador car is provided for the use of each MP on tour.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR (Barh) : You should speak on strikes.

SHRI A. CHARLES: This is very much connected with labour issues. You may not understand because you have no relationship either with labour or with industry. Our senior colleague Shri George Fernandes is here. I am sure he will appreciate what I say because he was in the labour field for many years. Let him refute what I say. Austerity should be there. The public undertakings should also be made accountable. Members of Parliament should also set examples. In the Eighth Lok Sabha, one of the subjects taken up was Jawahar Rozgar Yojana and under that programme, Rs. 10,000/- is given for the construction of houses for Scheduled Caste families. Fifteen Members of Lok Sabha are supposed to be in one team. We visited Rajasthan, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Kerala to verify whether this fund is spent properly. Just imagine 15 Members going in 15 Ambassador cars and another 15 cars by the Officers, all in one convoy, to verify whether the Rs. 10,000/- granted for construction of houses for Scheduled Caste families is properly spent or not. We, therefore, decided that we should go in minibus on such tours. In all the four States,

we traveled in mini-buses. It was the most happiest occasion, the Members belonging to BJP, CPI and CPI(M) all travelling in the same bus. It was a great time of fellowship and we knew each other better. We have to set an example. (*Interruptions*). I am to say that for saying Rs. 1 lakh as gratuity to the workers, the Government should have money. We cannot print fake notes. We have to see that the productivity of the country is increased. (*Interruptions*). On this side, we are more concerned. We have the sense of responsibility. (*Interruptions*). It is easy to have a slogan. After all, what is there in a slogan? There is a slogan that right to work should be made a fundamental right as if job opportunities are not available because it is not a fundamental right! That is a hollow slogan because merely when right to work is included as a fundamental right, job opportunities are not being created. What we want is enough employment. We want to protect the rights of the employees. We have to earn money. Our industries should survive.

1530 hrs.

(SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTA CHARYA
in the Chair)

What about the private sector? Even in the private sector, more than 75 per cent to 80 per cent of the money is being given as loan by the financial institutions.

There again, the looting is that of the common man's money. I do not find any distinction between the private sector and the public sector. The only difference is who is looting? Is it the private sector that is looting or the public sector that is looting? This must stop. The accountability should be delayed beyond there. We have to improve productivity. We have to generate employment. Then, the rights of the em-

ployees will have to be protected. This is one measure brought forward by the hon. Minister to protect the rights of the employees at the far end of their career. Everybody says that mere passing of the Bill will not benefit most of them because there are several cases where the delayed payments are there. Justice delayed is justice denied. When somebody retires, he should get the benefit. I would, therefore, request the hon. Minister that when the subordinate legislation is made or instructions are issued, strict guidelines should be issued saying that this should be given immediately after the retirement of the employees. Under no circumstances it should be three months. If there is any delay, after three months, when it is paid it should be paid with bank interest.

With these words, I strongly support this Bill. I congratulate the hon. Minister for bringing forward this Bill which will go a long way in solving the problems of the workers on retirement. With these words, I conclude.

[*Translation*]

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES (Muzaffarpur): Madam Chairperson, this Bill has been brought forward in accordance with the decision taken in the Labour Minister's Conference. The hon. Minister has said that a decision of abolishing the wage limit of Rs. 2500 was taken in the Labour Minister's conference in 1983. It took 11 years to implement the decision taken in the State Labour Ministers, Conference under the Chairmanship of the Labour Minister of the Central Government. What does it connote? I am aware that there was a different Government for 10-11 months during this period and it is very perplexing to ask why so much of time was taken. They count a 10 months' tenure but turn a blind eye to 10 years time. Therefore, I am not going to raise a point here about the delay

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made by a particular Government. I only want to know why does the implementation of a Legislation meant to give relief to the poor and exploited take so much time, whereas you do not lose a moment to decide upon inviting the multinationals to India and giving them facilities. The hon. Minister should clarify his position over it.

Madam Chairperson, the second thing is that raising of Gratuity limit from Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 1,00,000 is meant for earning applause but this limit of Rs. 50,000 was fixed in 1987 and the inflation figures reveal that prices of commodities have doubled during a period of 5 years and now after 7 years, i.e. in 1994, the prices have increased four-times. Thus, you are not giving any relief by raising the limit of Rs. 50,000. This way, you are only pulling the poor man pushed down in the ditch up by a few inches and nothing more. Thus, to my mind, you are only felicitating each other by commending this legislation and talking of the world labour movement but, I do not think that it will be lauded by the person(s) for whom this legislation is brought. There are two-three points more I want to raise. I will cite an example. In keeping with the privatisation drive, you have handed over the work at the railway stations to the contractors. The employee get so many facilities alongwith the gratuity so far as he worked with the Railways. Laws are enforced and people get some relief where there is a permanent job and a permanent industry. The permanent industry particularly that of the Public Sector is being handed over to the contractors today. The work of the Bandra railway station at Bombay has been handed over to the contractors for the past two years and tenders have been invited for the same purpose for 83 railway stations. There is no need to give examples

in support of it because when the work is handed over is the contractors, then there is no security for benefits like gratuity. I do not approve of their policies, which provide for handing over the work to some other persons but do not provide for any security of the salary, D.A., bonus and gratuity of that worker. Another legislation in this regard should be brought before the House forthwith alongwith this Gratuity Bill. The present Bill should be amended in a way that privatisation should not mean paying a wage of Rs. 500 to an employee who is getting Rs. 1500 that way denying him the right to live and making his future dark.

Today, you are appreciating each other. There is this Bill here and much better needs to be done. Privatisation has brought in a new atmosphere in the country. Earlier the Government controlled the determination of salaries of higher officials in the private sector under the company law. That control has been lifted now. Some days ago, it was published in the newspapers that companies lure the freshers coming out of the Institute of Management with a job of Rs. 20,000 per month. There is no wage limit on this salary; so, how can we determine what amount of gratuity, bonus and share in profit will the higher officials get? But no law of yours will apply on them. There is no bonus law for the Managing Directors as yet. Today, you have declared that in India the Managing Director can get 10 per cent of the companies' profit. This is a practice in America and you have applied it here under the globalisation. You have created a situation where there is no limit on big officials' salaries and benefits. You are playing with the figures. You have raised the limit to Rs. 1 lakh. Suppose an employee, recruited at the age of 20 retires at 58 after rendering 38 years of service. He gets a gratuity of one lakh after 30 years, i.e. Rs. 3300 per annum. You have reduced the

wage limit of Rs. 3500. What difference does it make?

The employees may think that they all are entitled for gratuity but during their 30 years service they will get a month's gratuity of Rs. 3333 per annum. You are pushing us behind. The private industries in India are free to earn as much money as they can without any limit. This will generate more dissatisfaction in the country. This is a lame excuse that we incite strikes. Workers go for strikes when all the avenues have been closed. The leaders only guide them.

Things will deteriorate further due to the wave of dissatisfaction prevalent in the country due to your economic policy. You should have already sought solutions to such issues when you brought this Bill and in case of any amendment needed to be made in it consulted the House.

Madam Chairperson, I will conclude by making this last point. There is no gratuity and no facility for a wage earner of Rs. 10-12 per day in the Chhatisgarh area of Madhya Pradesh where there is the practice of engaging contractors. The workers there protested against this practice of contracting work under the leadership of one Shankar Niyogi and Demanded wage-increase. The man was killed some 3 years back. Neither were the assassins apprehended nor any relief given to the workers. There, 8,000 workers are on strike and on the streets even today. They have got no employment for the past 3 years. The hon. Minister of Labour and the hon. Prime Minister are aware of the matter. This matter also lies with the hon. Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh. I would request the hon. Labour Minister to treat these poor tribal people of Chhatisgarh area, who make their both ends meet by earning 10-12 rupees, humanely and take action for their cause be-

cause they too are human beings like us. Then you can earn our gratitude. We will not thank you for bringing this Bill.

[English]

SHRI AJAY MUKHOPADYAY (Krishnagar): Madam, the object of this Bill is very limited, but it is very important and urgent from the workers' point of view. I think that this Bill should have come much earlier. The delay in bringing this Bill actually deprived thousands and thousands of workers for years together. Anyway, at least, it has come now. There are two amendments in this Bill. One is, the eligibility ceiling is to be removed. It is a very good and welcome step. The trade unions have been fighting for its removal for years together and now you have accepted that.

That is good. But the proposed amendment of raising the ceiling of the maximum amount of gratuity payable to an employee from Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 1 lakh is not at all acceptable. Just now Mr. Fernandes was saying. I would also like to speak that Rs. 50,000 was fixed in the year 1987; now it is 1994 and the real value of Rs 50,000 is much more than Rs. 1 lakh. So the demand of the trade unions that either you remove the ceiling or you raise it further should be conceded. Rs. 1 lakh is not at all sufficient. If you want to cover wider sections of workers, you will have to raise it further. Either you remove the ceiling or at least you fix it at Rs. 2 lakh.

I would like to make another point. The quantum of gratuity payable is 15 days wages - that is in the Act - at the rate of wages last drawn for every completed year of service of a part thereof in excess of six months subject to a maximum of 20 months wages. So you should at least see that a subject to a maximum of 20 months wages.

[Sh. Ajoy Mukhopadhyay]

So you should at least see that a maximum number of workers get 20 month wages. If you calculate you will see that now an employee, a worker who is drawing wages more than Rs. 5000 a month will not be getting 20 months wages if you fix the ceiling at Rs. 1 lakh. He will be denied of this. Due to inflation and after so many wage revisions a Class III employee, a clerk, is getting more than Rs. 5000 a month. So he will not be able to get, according to this Bill, 20 months wages.

Moreover, in the Act the condition of eligibility for gratuity is five years minimum service. Five years service has been fixed is the eligibility for the gratuity. But due to your policy, factories and other establishments are being closed now and then and in that case if you stick to that point of five years service as the minimum service period required to get the gratuity, you will be doing injustice. I think that the minimum service period should also be reduce.

Lastly, I would like to point out that this Act was passed in 1972; it is high time that you should review the entire provisions of the existing Act; and subsequently you should bring one comprehensive Bill in order to make proper justice to the working class of this country.

I am in agreement with Shri Charles on one point. He was telling that we are enacting these legislation's. But, there are many instances where the employers do not care for these enactments. Yes, they do not give due gratuity to the employees, they do not deposit PF and ESI dues. There are many defaulters in this country. This is a social crime. There are many instances where the employers do not give gratuity to the workers when they retire. So, something

must be done. There is a statutory provision in the existing law whereby they can be punished; but they are not being punished; in fact, the workers are being punished. So, this delinquency should not be tolerated any more. After the amendment of this Act, you must see that it is properly adhered to; and the employers both in the private and public sector also obey the provisions. If necessary, some changes in the law would be necessary.

With these reservations, I support this Bill; and I hope that my amendment that removal of ceiling or raising of the ceiling will be accepted. With these words, I conclude.

[*Translation*]

SHRI KRISHAN DUTT
SULTANPURI (Shimla): Madam Chairman, I rise to support the payment of Gratuity (Amendment) Bill, 1993. I think that the hon. Minister had done a very commendable job by introducing this Bill. There is a provision for the payment of gratuity to workers in this Bill. It is good thing because many of our workers pass the last days of their life in pathetic condition as they do not get any gratuity. Madam Chairman, many cases of the payment of gratuity are pending with the Department of labour and private companies and big industrialists. They even grab this amount of the gratuity also and the Government has not taken any stringent step so far to stop it.

Madam Chairman, the labour have contributed to the nation-building. The labours, who are the architect of our country have much prospects for progress; but they can not, because they do not have unity. They are divided in their various unions so they cannot raise their voice properly. Hence, they are exploited.

Madam Chairman, this Bill has been brought for the welfare of the workers in India. The previous limit of gratuity which was Rs. 50,000 has now been extended to Rs. one lakh. I, therefore, congratulate the hon. Minister. I think that many people may have their own views about the workers. Be they workers of the Railways, factories or gardens, they are appreciated by all. The work by the Government for the workers is commendable. I think that with the adoption of this Bill the workers will be able to get these rights which they do not have so far.

15.57 hrs.

(MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

Mr. Speaker Sir, my submission is that the hon. Minister should take stern action against who exploit the workers so that the exploitation of the workers should be stopped and should get their gratuity properly. The number of small workers who are working in the factories, hotels or houses is very large. Though I do not have their figures with me, yet I know that they are in large numbers and they are being exploited. The Government should take effective steps to stop injustice being committed to them.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the opposition parties often allege that the Government does not do any good work. But the reality is that all commendable jobs have been done during the Congress regime. The opposition just alleged that nothing had been achieved during the past 11 years. They have not business other than criticising the Government. When the opposition party came in power, it did nothing for the welfare of workers. The Congress has always helped the workers in all the agitations started by them. The Opposition parties provoke them

for launching agitation, for closing markets, roads and stopping trains. They also instigate the workers for resorting to strike etc which cannot be said to be in their interest. Such deeds have caused the loss of property worth crores of rupees. Due to such activities the economy of our country deteriorates. But the opposition holds Congress responsible for all this. If we want to strengthen our economy it is incumbent upon ourselves to come forward for the help of the poor people so that the poor workers may get gratuity and other facilities.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, if voice is raised against big mill owners, someone from that side comes to their help. It is quite improper. The labours carry goods in big factories. The movement of goods in black-market is also carried out by those labourers. Therefore, if they are united and they have any organisation they will be aware of their rights so that they may get the goods brought in black market seized by the officers concerned.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, our Government has always stood by the workers. This is small Bill. We must support it. One of our colleagues from the Opposition also has supported it. The ruling party is already supporting it. My hon. colleagues from the Opposition are also requested to support this Bill because it is related to the welfare of workers.

I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister who has introduced this Bill and hope that after the Bill is passed, there will be no delay in its implementation. I also urge that the hon. Minister should take steps to plug the loopholes in the Bill so that the workers should be benefited. With these words I support this Bill and conclude.