

[Sh. Ram Naik]

there is a healthy democratic convention that whenever Ministers visit places outside New Delhi for official work, the concerned Members of Parliament, Lok Sabha as well as Rajya Sabha belonging to the place of visit are informed in advance. This helps to keep better liaison between the Government, the people's representatives and the people. The people through their MP's bring various problems and issues to the notice of Ministers so as to enable them to have first-hand information. It also saves time and money of the people who are otherwise require to come to New Delhi.

Since this time-honoured convention was not being followed by all concern, attention of the Prime Minister was also drawn to this. In spite of this, the convention is not being followed, thereby depriving the common people of ventilating their problems, through their MP's. This is resulting in avoidable unrest amongst the people. I, therefore, demand that all Ministers follow this time-honoured democratic convention.

16.10 hrs

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS - (GENERAL)
1992-93 Contd.

Ministry of Labour - Contd.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House will now take up further discussion and voting on the Demand for Grant under the control of the Ministry of Labour. Shri Guman Mal Lodha was on his feet. He has spoken for nine minutes. He may kindly continue.

[Translation]

SHRIGUMAN MAL LODHA (Pali): Mr. Chairman, Sir, while analysing the Demand for Grant relating to Labour Ministry I pointed out to the House that unfortunately, 45 crore people in India are living below the poverty line, who do not have income of even Rs. 5 a day and out of them 20 crore people are the poorest among the poor who subsist with Rs. 2 a day. Such is the unfortunate situation in our country.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, if we assess, the progress made in this regard during the previous years, we will find that the situation has worsen instead of making any progress in this regard. In 1972-73, 51.5 per cent people were below the poverty line and it was 48.3 per cent in 1977-78, 37.4 per cent in 1983-84 and 29.1 per cent in 1987-88. Without mentioning the figures of other years, I would like to State that at present 53.8 per cent population of our country is below the poverty line. It is, therefore, a matter of grave concern, and Sir, it's reason is, as stated by the Minister of Finance in his Budget-Speech in paragraph 50 at the page 15 :

[English]

"Rural Development Programme in the Budget is Rs. 2610 crores which is somewhat lower than the estimates of 1991-92".

[Translation]

The population is increasing. The condition of the people living below the poverty line is deteriorating and our hon. Minister of Finance is stating that the provisions which he is making under the next year's budget will be less than the previous ones. This paradox, plight will increase the number of people living in below poverty line and it will be degradation and not progress of India.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, during his Budget-Speech in 1987, the then Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi made a commitment and stated that he was appointing a national commission on the poor agricultural labourers of India. That commission was appointed on 31.7.91. In the report of National Commission on Rural Labour, it was clearly stated that we should pay at least Rs. 20 per day to the rural agricultural labourer as minimum wages and further it was stated that this should be effective from December, 1990 and after 6 months it should be linked with the Consumer Price Index so that it might continue to increase. It was a very good suggestion. After this, instead of accepting those suggestions the Government of India appointed another 5 member Committee. After that Ramanujam Committee was appointed, and this Committee gave its report. Sir, there after Dr. C.H. Hanumantrao presented a report. He had recommended to continuance of I.R.D.P. The report said that the rural people should be given compulsory and free education. He stated a very important thing that right to work should be made a fundamental right. This was the report of the Committee. I will not like to involve myself in the controversy whether this is possible or not in our country. It is so because in the manner our hon. Minister of Finance is wandering all over the world with the begging bowl it may not be possible for him to give the right to employment but I would like to request that efforts must be made in that direction. Can't we make any efforts in this regard? Since we have accepted the lesser rate of price and we have stated that there would be free economy and under free economy there are so many industries in the Public Sector where more than one crore labourers are working and many of these industries will be closed because they are uneconomical and they are not viable. If they are not profitable will all the workers of those industries be retrenched? They will wander on roads, they will come back to their villages and starve.

Have we made any alternative arrangements? You might have found out in America that food-packets are supplied to the jobless persons. They are given unemployment dole and after it a compulsory provision is made for them in the old age. Thus there are several measures for social security. But what do we have here? It is unfortunate that provision made under the laws like Work man compensation Act, for social security evolved during the British regime are still continuing with some minor amendments even in the changed circumstances. If a person dies while working in a factory, he sacrifices his life and you will be surprised to learn that if a man dies in a plane-accident, he is given Rs. 4 or 5 lakh, if he dies in a train accident, he is given at least Rs. 50 thousand to Rs. 1 lakh as compensation. If a person dies in a communal riot, he is given Rs. 1 lakh. But if a man dies while manufacturing an engine or a labourer comes beneath a machinery while working or dies of electric shock in the factory, he is given only Rs. 20 or 40 thousand as compensation. We have a provision of Right of equality. What sort of equality is mentioned in the Preamble of our Constitution, and what sort of equality is being practised that if a poor labour sacrifices his life for the nation, he is, given only Rs. 20,000 and if an indulgent person dies in a plane-accident while going to celebrate his honeymoon, he is given Rs. 5 lakh. I would request you that our hon. Minister of Labour and the Minister of Finance should think over it and if any Indian citizen dies while rendering his duty, he should be given at least Rs. two lakh as compensation.

After the commissions report was presented, the Ramanujan Committee was appointed. You might have observed that yesterday a meeting of Labour Ministers was held a make recommendations for the approval of the Ramanujan Committee Report. There has been one committee after the other and after committee there comes the commission, after the commission, evalu-

[Sh. Guman Mal Lodha]

ation and after evaluation comes the implementation. Like this the chain goes on but, the implementation is never done. Even this amount of Rs. 20 i.e. the minimum wage; which is also called the living wage—I don't know whether it is living or not but—is not paid to them. You will be surprised to know that on 12.3.92 question no 2438 was asked in the Rajya Sabha and the Government admitted that there are such States like Andhra Pradesh where the Minimum Wages Act, which we have passed, is not being implemented even today and minimum wages fixed in that Act are not being paid. I regret to say that even in Andhra Pradesh from where our hon. Prime Minister hails minimum wages are not being paid which were fixed by the Government Commission appointed by Shri Rajiv Gandhi in 1987. In Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir, Nagaland, Tamilnadu and Maharashtra the rate of minimum wages is below Rs. 20 I would like to appeal to them to accept the minimum wages laid down under the law and constitute an enforcement machinery for its implementation.

Article 356 is referred to in such issues here which are not important and we think that we have this panacea, the magic lamp of Allauddin which can be applied anywhere. The poor labourers, distressed, tortured and downtrodden are being exploited for centuries but nothing is done to give the minimum wage to them.

The Indian Workers Association has demanded raising of the minimum wage to Rs. 40. In the present times, the inflation is rising, the value of rupee is decreasing day by day. If a labourer, who has to support the family of 7 or 8 members, does not get Rs. 40 as minimum wages then workers of India will be going on treading very badly. Therefore, the minimum wage should be fixed at least at Rs. 40. The demand of the Indian Workers

Association should not only be accepted, but also a monitoring cell should be constituted to implement it.

I would like the Labour Minister to tell us about it. Government should implement the minimum wages Act in unorganised agricultural sector also through this cell. Nobody pays attention to the problems of these people today. Neither they have any right to call a strike, nor they can make any demand. They are uneducated; oppressed and downtrodden for centuries due to imperialism when there was the rule of the kings or the Zamindars. Even after forty-two years of Independence their condition is still miserable. I would like to make a demand the the Government should raise the minimum wages to Rs. 40 per days for these labourers.

Secondly, there is the question of unemployment. Our Finance Minister was in Jodhpur few days back. He made an announcement that employment would be provided to ten crore labourers by the end of 2000 A.D. I would like to know from him as to how would he achieve this target? The Government has not made any provision about it rather it has curtailed the expenditure through the Budget; there has been a drastic cut in plans and schemes; provisions for the welfare of labourers have also faced curtilment. Have you got any magic stick to achieve this target in such a short span of time? In the year 1991 the number of unemployed persons in this country was to the tune of four crores fifty one lakh and nine thousand. They are the persons who have got themselves registered with the employment exchanges. The number of persons who are ignorant about employment exchanges etc. may exceed this figure at least three times. For these unemployed persons, Employment Exchanges advertised vacancies only for three lakh, forty thousand persons and even out of these advertised vacancies, employment was provided only to a total number of one lakh and eighty-six thou-

sand persons. This is a very grave situation and it should be given a serious thought.

MR. CHAIRMAN: How much time has been taken for this?

SHRIGUMAN MAL LODHA: One year, they could provide employment to one lakh eighty-six thousand people in 1990. I am quoting these figures from the annual report. This does not reflect on any single political party. Different political parties are in power in different States. CPI, BJP or J.D. are in power in different States but the unfortunate thing is that a ban has been imposed on filling up vacancies. This ban has been imposed in many states. If at all any single vacancy is advertised a large number of people run for getting it. Even four thousand candidates apply for the post of single peon. Then recommendations from P.M.; Office to Chief Minister's office reach these for filling up the post. Secretaries, M.L.As. M.Ps. too send their recommendations. But the bureaucrats make appointments only by taking bribes; they do not bother for any body. In a very few cases recommendations work. In such conditions where will the poor people go? This is the actual condition regarding the state of employment and minimum wages.

Bachawat Commission has been constituted to look into the wage problems of working journalists. It has submitted its report. It recommended its implementation in 1549 establishments; but 1157 establishments did not implement it. Only four hundred establishments out of total 1549 establishments implemented the recommendations. If such is the state of affairs after spending so much money ever commissions and committees and if the law and the administration are so ineffective then what is the use of setting up Commissions or Committees?

Sir, in West Bengal where our Communist friends are in power 417 newspaper establishments are functioning. 413 out of

the total 417 establishments did not implement these recommendations. I want to inform you that these are the people who call themselves leaders of the poor, the Messiah of the poor. In West Bengal the recommendations are not being implemented in 413 newspaper establishments out of total 417. In Bihar 135 establishments out of 140 establishments have not implemented the recommendations. I do not want to go into the reasons for this situation but it is gross injustice towards the working journalists who toil hard to publish small newspapers.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the need of the hour is that the recommendations or the report of the Commission or Committee, if constituted by the Government should be implemented. Moreover, on 30 May, 1990 a bill named Workers Participation in Management Bill had been introduced in Rajya Sabha. Before its introduction, labour conference may have been held, commissions may have been set up, Committees, and Select Committee may have been appointed. Seminars must also have been organised. Detailed discussions etc. would definitely have been held in this regard and after deep analysis of the views expressed in the matter, the workers' participation in Management Bill had been introduced in Rajya Sabha on 30 May 1990. The Bill is still pending there and the same had not even been withdrawn because if it is done, the working journalists would say that the Government is not progressive, rather it is retrogressive Government which is reactionary and anti-labour. They do not implement it because it is not in favour of big industrialists with whom Dr. Manmohan Singhji has just paid a visit to Japan. They would all be angry if the Bill is passed because they are not in favour of labourers. The same Bill has been neither passed nor rejected. The fate of this Bill is still hanging in the air. The Bill is in a state of uncertainty. Neither we accept it nor reject it. We have neither power to accept it nor the power to reject it. This Bill had been introduced on 30

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May 1990 and now we are in 1992 though we have already added the idea of Workers' Participation in Management in the directive principles of our constitution yet no concrete steps has been taken in this direction. Mr. Chairman Sir, you might be remembering that at the time of 42nd Amendment when 20 point programme was implemented during the emergency period, it was pledged that the Government would bring constructive changes, provide employment to workers and make the workers equal to the owners in the management but now it is an open fact as to what has happened to the Workers' Participation in Management Bill. The Constitution has been amended. Then it was said that constitutional Amendment is only aimed of laying down an ideal and a directive principle. Even the Supreme Court said that it cannot implement it then the Government said that it would bring a legislation and the Bill was brought. Now the reality is before our eyes.

I would like to submit that when we talk of labourers, workers and employees, we should not forget about two crore child labourers too in our country and nothing concrete has been done to rehabilitate these bonded labourers. A legislation has been introduced and passed to provide equal wages to women workers but it was not implemented too. Most of the laws which has been passed for the purpose of bringing social security are dead letters. They have not been implemented, Government should consider all these factors.

I would like to submit that normally cut motions are moved by Members in respect of demands for any Ministry but against the tradition, I would propose maximum increase in the demands of the Labour Ministry. Government can have funds from the

Pachequer and spend it on the poor people for their welfare. It is the only point which would go a long way to help the poor sections of the society. It would improve the lot of poor people, provide them food and will make the country prosperous. I would like to emphasise that the Finance Minister on his own should not propose any cut in the allocations made to this Ministry. There is no point in making any cut in the allocations. Any cut in the allocations would mean that the lot of the poor has improved, poor has become rich. But is it true? No, certainly not. The Government has done much for the rich class of people. Government has changed the industrial policy. It has ended the system of quota, permit and licence. Criminal Prosecution has been withdrawn. Criminal Prosecution has been introduced in import-export trade. FERA and COFEPOSA are being withdrawn. Thus the administration has become the tool for exploitation of the poor people. I would conclude quoting a couple of lines from a poem in which the poet describing the state of poor people, labourer agricultural labourers, farmers has stated as to how even after forty three years of independence, the condition of the poor is miserable. I will read out those lines:-

"Unchi' dhoti, adhkhole paon, kandhe
par gaz bhar ka tukra

Sir par pagri, kar mein lakdi, tan ka
kapra chithra-chithra

Khane ko muthi bhar ane, thukrata mal
khazano ko,

Apni dhun mein almaston sa, hansta jag
ke deewano ko,

Apna sarvasva luta kar, apni kutiya mein
aata hae

Nankea bachehon ko nirakh-nirakh,
Dhrih meinaansu bhar lata hae"

[English]

THE MINISTERS OF STATE OF THE
MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH
MOHAN DEV): Is it parliamentary?

[Translation]

SHRI GUMAN MAL LODHA: Does not
this problem prevail in your state Tripura?

"Jo kuch rukha milta khata, do-do din ka
langhan karta

Apne tan mein ganthe de de, pashu
bachchon ka palan karta"

The M.Ps from Punjab have submitted
that Punjab provides food to the whole of the
country. The poet has expressed his views
on this in the following words:

"Jo jag ko anna pradan kare, jag usko hi
thukrata hai

Uski haddi ko noch-nonch, jag vaibhav-
bhawan banata hai

Woh charnon ko mastak rakhta, jag
thukra kar itrata hai

Uske chitdon main aag laga, jag han-
sta hai muskata hai.

Jag ki juthan ke thal bhare, chhitra kar
fenk diye jate

Roti ki khatir rib-rib kar uske hain bache
mar jate.

Uski tooti khatiya, bartan, kutiya, chhap-
par beche jate

Kaudi-kaudi ke sood arey, antandiyon
se khinche jate.

Darbhal tak khali hath chala, pida us se
milne aati

Sardi-garmi mein mazdoori thoda sa
sath nibha jati.

Bhari man hathon se thame dharti ka
beta chal padta.

Dug-dug bharta, rukta, chalta, firta
uthata, aage badhta.

Maati se itna pyar use, maati ke bina na
rah pata

Ab manati mein mil, fir na kabhi todega
maati se nata."

MR. CHAIRMAN: Lodhaji, you have
recited the whole poem. you could have
quoted a few stanzas.

SHRI GUMAN MAL LODHA: Mr. Chair-
man, Sir, the theme of this poem is related
with the labourers and agricultural labour-
ers. It presents their miserable condition.
Now I will conclude with the inspiring poem
of Shri Sohan Lal Diwedi. The poet has
written a full book on National upliftment and
freedom struggle. Whatever he has written
for the farmers and labourers touches the
heart. He has presented the real picture of a
farmer and a worker. His lines are as follows:

Main nabh-chumbi prasad bhakt, jin-
mein mohit mohak kancha,

ye chitrakala kaushal darshan, ye singh
aur toram, vandan,

Grah takrate, jinse vigyan, Grah-jinka
sab atank man,

Sir jhuka samjhte thamb pran, ye aam-
sham ye aabhi shaan,

woh teri daulat parkisan, woh teri mehnat
par kissan

who teri hinmat par kissan, woh teri
taqat par kissan

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ye Indraprasth ke rajya-sadan, patlipu-
tra ke bhavya bhawan

ye mayan, Ayodhya, rishiratan, Ujjain,
Avanti ke prangan,

Vaisholi ka vaibhav mahan, Kashi-
Prayag ke kirti-gaan,

Lakhnawi nawabon ke bitan, Mathura ki
sukh sampatti mahan,

woh teri daulat par kissan, woh teri
mehnat par kissan.

woh teri himmat par kissan, woh teri
taqat par kissan."

This last lines are:—

"Ye sinhasank, ye takhta-taj, ye qile
durg, garh shastra taj,

In rajyon ki-intein mahan, in rajyon ki
nivein mahan,

Inki diwaron ki uthan, inki prachiron ke
udan."

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

SHRI GUMAN MAL LADHA: He further
adds.

"Samant bhaag rahe bacha jaan, santri
bhayakul, lupt gyan,

Samant bhaag rahe bacha jan, santri
bhayakul, lupt gyan,

Senayen hain dhundhti tran, ud gaye
hawa mein dhvaj nishan

Maan ne tujh par asha bandhi, tu de
apne bal ki kandhi,

O malaya pawan ban ja aandhi, tujh se
hi Gandhi hai Gandhi,

Tujh se Subhash hai, bhawsan, tujse
moti ka badha maan,

Tu jyoti Jawahar Ki mahan, udta nabh
par apna nishan,

woh teri taqat par kissan, who teri
quwwat par kissan.

woh teri juryat par kissan, woh teri
himmat par kissan,

Tu madwalon se bhag-bhag, soye kis-
san, uth jaag jaag.

Nishtur shasan mein laga aag, ga
mahakranti ka abhay raag.

I conclude with these words. Thanks.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Reporters may have
been able to take down the poem. You may
please give them in writing.

[English]

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN
(Murshidabad); Sir, will this song go on rec-
ord?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Really there is no rule
on this. There is a convention given in Manual
on Business and Procedure (Page 63).

It says:

"While speaking, Members should not
sing in the House but can say the same
thing in the form of prose."

So, Shri Guman Mal Lodha was really
half way between singing and saying it in
prose. So, it was not really possible for me to
distinguish between the two.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN:
Actually he was singing without dhol.....
(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: It was said in such a pleasant voice that I really did not have the heart to interrupt him.

Shri Kaliaperumal.

SHRI P.P. KALIAPERUMAL (Cuddalore): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to express my views on labour. I rise to support this Demands for Grants.

Sir, industrial peace is inevitable if the factory wheel must roll on. Industrial warfare, industrial dispute, paralyses production and spoils the life of toiling masses. And ultimately corner the consumers. In our country industrial warfare is incessantly raging. The weapons of strikes and lockouts are indiscriminately deployed. Our developing country cannot afford this. Millions and millions of mandays have been lost year after year. Hence, it is imperative on the part of this Government to preserve industrial peace and to stop the industrial warfare which is destructive of development.

We have to ferret out the causes of industrial warfare and fracture them at the sprouting stage. We are in the age of satellite television. The audio-visual media dazzles the eyes and fill the ears of the toiling masses of the remote villages, the lifestyles of the latifundists, business tycoons and industrial magnets. But, on the other hand, our toiling masses are struggling for reasonable needs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member, please do not show your back to the Chair.

SHRI P.P. KALIAPERUMAL: What does the labour want? They want living wage. They want decent standard of life. They want right to live with human dignity. But, these

rights are not available. They want to be the effective partners of process of production. These are not unnatural aspirations or illegal demands. But, these aspirations are thwarted systematically and these expectations are frustrated. Schematically by the *Status quo ante syndrome* of the management and employers. So, when the demands for the reasonable needs and the legitimate rights are denied, tension and dispute arises. Industrial warfare is raged. Toiling masses are also human beings with minds and hearts and they are not marketable commodities. So, when their demands for basic needs tuned with changing times are denied, industrial warfare is inevitable. If their aspirations and expectations are satisfied, industrial peace will be maintained and ultimately international peace will be maintained. There is no scarcity of labour legislations. There is no scarcity of constitutional guarantees for labour. But, what is the result and what is the achievement? The petty done and the undone vast.

Safety measures in mines are not sincerely enforced. There are no safety measures in the mechanised agricultural sector.

The Centre of Biomedical Engineering of IIT, based at Delhi, reports that mechanisation of agriculture is causing agriculture related accidents. It has estimated the annual deaths at 5,000 to 10,000, amputations at 15,000 to 20,000 and injuries at 1.5 lakhs to 2 lakhs. The major culprits are tractors, thrashers and combined harvestors. What are the safety measures for the agricultural labourers employed in this mechanised agriculture? Similarly, there are no safety measures in mines.

Wherever labour disputes arise, the labour legislations should immediately intervene. There are inordinate delays in the disposal of labour-related disputes. Speedy remedy is a distant dream. About 1,000 cases are pending in the CGIT-cum-Labor

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Courts. About 8,000 disputes are pending before the CRIM. Hence I plead for speedy disposal of labour cases and disputes.

Further, effective participation of workers in the process of production is imperative. I feel pleasure to note that a Bill in this regard has been introduced in the Rajya Sabha. I plead for early discussion and enactment of this Bill.

So also the offences under the Working Journalists and Other Newspaper Employees (Conditions of Service and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1955 Act are not cognisable. Because of this, very many working journalists are put into trouble by filing private complaints. Hence I beseech this Government to amend the Act suitably to make the offences cognisable.

There are 967 newspaper establishments which do not implement the Bhagwati Wage Board's recommendations. I plead for early implementation of the recommendations of this Bhagwati wage Board.

We feel proud of the assistance to the handicapped job-seekers. But what is the achievement? The number of handicapped job-seekers in the Live Register of Employment Exchange is about three lakhs. The percentage of placements in employment is only a pathetic 0.7 per cent. There are Employment Exchanges, Special employment Exchanges, Special Cells, Special Employment Officers for the handicapped. I do not know what these machineries are doing for the handicapped. Indigent handicapped job-seekers are begging in the streets. They are not able to purchase jobs in the job markets.

What about the educated women job-seekers? The number of women job-seekers is 73 lakhs. The percentage of women

employees in total employment is estimated at 13 per cent. Our sisterhood is the better half of our society. But our sisterhood's share in the total employment is only one-eighth. Is it equal opportunity for employment? There is no gender justice. Many government departments are not even maintaining the statistical data regarding their women employees. For example, the gamin banks are not able to furnish the number of their women employees and my Unstarred Question regarding this data was answered accordingly. This is the status of our interest in the welfare of our women folk.

The promises of assistance of employment to physically, socially and economically weaker sections including Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe are sugar-coated promises and eye-wash assurance. There is wide gap between promises and performance. I plead for 50 per cent reservation of jobs for women and thereby to render gender justice. I also plead for provision of jobs for all the educated handicapped job-seekers on war footing.

I now come to rural labour. Rural labour force in India is estimated at 15 crores. They are being socially snubbed and economically impoverished. They are unemployed and under-employed. The rate of unemployment is rising year after year. They are half-naked, semi-starved and shelter-less. They are illiterate. Their children are out of school due to poverty. We are scheming to provide non-formal education to the children of rural labour and formal education for the rich landlords. Is it equality of opportunity for education? No. They are born in poverty, they live in poverty and they bequeath the poverty.

They want right to life; they want right to work with living wage. They want equality and dignity. The new international economic order demands rising the level of employment but the maximised mechanisation of

agriculture displaces human labour. It is an insult to injury. India is a country where labour is abundant. Capital is scarce and land parcels are small. India is a country where rural labour are eking out their livelihood by ploughing, transplanting, harvesting and thrashing for wages. We have introduced and encouraged tractors, transplanters, combined harvesters and threshers. Where is the need for human labor in rural areas? So the acceleration of agri-related machines decelerates rural employment opportunities and thereby the rural poverty has been aggravated. In the interest of the rural labour, I plead for minimisation of mechanisation of agriculture. There is no proof that mechanisation leads to economy scale. Mechanisation or agriculture shall not interfere with the employment opportunities of rural labour.

In order to increase the employment opportunities, labour intensive crops are to be encouraged. Industries should be started in the rural areas. ANTHYODAYA approach is to be adhered strictly in the implementation of I.R.D.P. and J.R.Y. Land reforms should be implemented strictly. Exemptions in the land ceiling act are to be withdrawn. Absentee landlordism is to be abolished.

Irrigation facilities are to be stepped up. In order to increase the employment opportunities for rural labour, irrigation tanks are to be silted immediately. The linkage of rivers envisaged in the peninsular river development plan is to be materialised in the earliest possible time. The provisions of minimum wages act are dead letters. There is no effective implementation machinery. The agricultural labourers are not being paid the minimum wages. In the district of East Godavari in Andhra Pradesh 50,000 tribals who are working in the forest areas are being paid much less than the minimum wage. The beedi leaf collection workers are also being paid less than the minimum wage. The concept of equal wage for equal work is not

materialised. The Equal Remuneration Act is a paper tiger. Women workers are being paid at the rate of Rs. 5 per day. It is the situation in Tamil Nadu. Immediate steps are imperative to implement the Equal Remuneration Act. The minimum wage fixed in various States is neither a fair wage nor a living wage. The rural labour wants minimum wage at the rate of Rs. 45 per day. Labour from the poor without payment of minimum wages is a forced labor prohibited by Article 23 of our Constitution. This is the *Obiter Dictum* of our Supreme Court. By and large rural labour are voiceless. Even if they raise their voice occasionally, their voice for legitimate rights is silenced by our Police force in a ruthless manner. Hence I plead for necessary instructions to the State Government to protect the rural proletariat from the police atrocities and thereby to remedy the malady.

Sir, the conditions of handloom weavers are precarious. Seventeen million people are depending on handlooms. Non-supply of raw materials has rendered them unemployed. They are in the grip of starvation. Our effort to earn foreign exchange should not expose our weavers to unemployment and starvation.

Rural labourers are houseless persons. They are to be provided with house sites and houses. They are to be conferred with ownership of their house sites in which they are living. Right to shelter is a basic human right and hence I plead for provision of accommodation for all workers either in private or in Government sector on a war footing.

In had an opportunity to go through the report of the National Commission on Rural Labour constituted by our late lamented leader, Shri Rajiv Gandhi. The recommendations of this Committee are laudable. This report is really a revolutionary charter for rural labour. I request that this report may be studied speedily and its recommendations may be implemented without any hesitation. Our

[Sh. P.P. Kaliaperumal]

Constitution itself is a socio-economic revolutionary charter. There is no need to re-write our Constitution. What is needed is political determination to perform the promises enshrined in our Constitution.

Finally, I wish to ask a question in the words of Dr. Ambedkar: "How long shall we continue to deny equality in our social and economic life?" Further, I wish to warn with much humility in the words of Dr. Ambedkar: 'If we continue to deny it for long, we will do so only by putting our political democracy in peril.'

Further I quote Shrimati Indira Gandhi and conclude: 'When peaceful change is thwarted, violent upheaval occurs. The earth belongs to us all. Let us cherish it in peace and true brotherhood based on the dignity and equality of man'.

SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADYAY (Krishanagar); Sir, I rise to oppose the Demands for Grants of the Labour Ministry.

Sir, today the working class of this country is under a savage attack which is unprecedented in the post-Independence India. Virtually a total war has been declared against the entire working force of this country by the present Government.

17.00 hrs.

They have undertaken an ugly operation. I would call it, the 'Operation Fund-Bank'. The real aim of that operation is to serve the interests of the exploiting classes by even compromising our economic sovereignty. The Ministries of Finance, Commerce and Industry in particular, have been put in sole charge of this operation. Naturally, the Labour Ministry has been reduced to almost a non-entity. The role of Labour Ministry has become so insignificant that the Prime Min-

ister does not even feel it necessary to appoint a full-fledged Minister for this Ministry. This reflects their attitude.

Sir, since independence and particularly after the Constitution of free India came into being, struggles have been going on far a justified and a balanced approach towards those who toil, but for whose untiring labour and boundless sacrifices, the growth in production and wealth which the rulers of our country after boast of, could not have been possible. But what did they get in return? The reward they got is ruthless exploitation, abject deprivation and unbearable neglect. On the other hand, abundance of handfals has surpassed all imaginations. There is no surprise in it. This is the inevitable outcome of the policy which is being followed for the last four decades. The content of that policy from the very beginning was anti-labour and pro-monopolist. But, Sir, it also requires mentioning that during the regime of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and to some extent during Mrs. Indira Gandhi's regime also, the policy was not at least pro-imperialist.

17.04 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER—in the
Chair]

But, now the outlook of the Congress Government have come out in real colour. It has assumed the crudest form, the content of which is not only anti-labour or anti-people, but the elements of anti-national trends also are very much visible there. There is not an *iota* of doubt that a total denigration and dismantling of public sector, a massive and reckless privatisation and unrestricted invasion of foreign capital and technology are being allowed at the dictates of imperialist agencies.

Sir, the base of the self-reliant economy is sought to be weakened and ultimately destroyed. That will surely serve the interest

of the foreign multi-nationals and neo-colonialists. Yes, the interests of the Indian monopolists also will be served at least for the present. The affluent section of the urban and rural population will also be benefited.

But what about the working class? The grand offer which you have made to the working class is the exit policy. The foreign bosses, the money lenders are very much eager to see that the exit policy implemented peacefully. Hence the proposal to establish National Renewal Fund has come. What is National Renewal Fund and what are its implications? The concept paper on National Renewal Fund has already been circulated. If you go through that you will find the real intention. It says:

"An industrial undertaking may have the authority to restructure mainning of its units."

"Even in cases where no agreement has been arrived at between the labour and the employer, the employer is given permission to put through a reasonable restructuring scheme."

"At least, in the initial stage, the Fund should be looked upon as an instrument which would become available to industry to deal with the problems of retrenchment."

It further says: "The Fund will provide the resourcess necessary for assisting enterprises that have to be woud up". Is there any lack of clarity that this National Renweal Fund is an inseparable part of exit policy, and Exit policy itself is an integral part of the so-called structural adjustment. These are all phrases of the IMF and the World bank and our Government is talking in their language. Dr. Manmohan Singh, Mr. chidambaram and the Prime Minister, Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao himself are unhesitatingly and, of course, shamelessly showing the

workers and the employees of the public sector, private sector and those of Government Departments the way to exist. They are advising the have nots to sacrifice and to bear, if not the total, but the main burden of the so-called structural adjustment. What a patriotism and love for the poor;

The Department of public Enterprises has declared 98 public sector undertakings sick and out of that cases of 58, which are said to be chronically sick in their view have been sent to the BIFR despite serious objections raised inside and outside Parliament. The reason for sending the cases to BIFR is obvious. It is definitely not for their revival but to get some approval real of that body for their funeral rites. Thus, more than four lakhs of employees working in these units are going to be the first victims of your new industrial policy.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please conclude.

SHRI AJOY KUKHOPADYAY: Please give me some more time. You have dropped discussion on industry.

The next casualty will be the rest 40 sick industries with nearly another four lakh employees and workers. The matter, of course, does not end here. There are also a huge number of casual and contract labourers along with all those indirectly employed in these units. So, it is crystal clear that closure of these units will mean joblessness to about 20 lakh working people. The responsibility of this industrial sickness does not surely lie on the workers and employees or the trade unions. It is due to the wrong and irresponsible policy of the Central Government and inept handling and bureaucratic interference. An indepth study will also reveal that the causes of sickness are not identical in all cases but different in different catetgories of industries. A common yardstick or formula cannot be applied in deter-

[Sh. Ajoy KuMhpadayay]

mining sickness in all categories of industry, as has been done by the Department of Public Enterprises. Moreover, many of the units have been declared sick with ulterior motives. So, the versions of the managements and the Government cannot be taken for granted.

Not only the sick public sector units, the profitmaking units also are not being spared. Besides step-motherly behaviour and differential treatment to these units, you have started the process of privatisation by disinvestment of equity and by inducting private sector magnates into the boards of these the units. This process will ultimately lead to sickness to many of these profit-making industries also causing bigger disaster. May I know why do you consider privatisation a panacea? Please explain. Is it not a fact that out of those 58 units which you have identified as chronically sick, 46 were in the private sector and they were you have taken over in sick conditions? Can you also deny that in the private sector, sickness is not confined to hundreds and thousands, but it reached a colossal figure of 2,91,814 at the end of 1988? The assessment of national trade unions is, that the number has, by this time, reached about four lakhs. The magnitude of the work force involved can easily be imagined. And not only that, these four lakh units have locked up more than Rs. 7,000 crores of bank credit, besides the loans taken from other financial institutions. They are also in default of hundreds of crores of rupees of statutory dues on account of various Government taxes and the lawful dues duties of the workers including those of Provident Fund and ESI. But still, instead of taking drastic steps against them, you have preferred to put the future of our economy and the fate of our working class in their hands.

When millions of jobs are being attacked, when lists are being prepared in the

offices of the Central Government and Central Undertakings for abolition of lakhs of sanctioned posts, when attempts are being made for premature retirement of the employees from the service in different semi Government institutions, when advertisements are coming out in newspapers for sale of a number of State Undertaking, in some Congress and BJP ruled States, you want our country men in general and the working class in particular to believe that nobody is going to be thrown out on the streets. Is it not hypocrisy of the highest order.

Where is Shri Sangme, the Coal Minister? he has not yet come back.

In this connection, I would like to mention that in a two day workshop held at Delhi in December last, under the auspices of ILO and UNDP, it has been estimated and I quote:

"The structural reforms will result in the unemployment of 4—8 million people in 1992-93 and 4.—10 million more in 1993—94."

It is the assessment of the ILO and UNDP.

The Congress—1 election manifesto did not only promise to roll back the prices within hundred days which had proved to be a mockery, it had also promised therein that ten million new jobs will be created every year.

Sir, since the Coal Minister has come, would you wish me to repeat from the beginning?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Why do you take strain to repeat it? Please do not be so gracious.

SHRI AJAY MUKHOPADYAY: All right, Sir. Ten months have already passed. May

Ask you how many jobs have been created?
How many new employment opportunities
you have offered to the country?

In reality, the position is just the opposite. The number of job seekers on the live registers of employment exchanges had crossed 3.62 crores last year. Now it is more than that. So far as the rural unemployment is concerned, there is no machinery to measure the same, even after four decades of independence. Even a modest estimation would show that the rural unemployment has already reached a horrible figure of more than eight crores. The majority of whom belongs to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Now, the new economic and industrial policies have given a dangerous dimension to the problem of unemployment.

Sir, the galloping unemployment has already plunged the future of the entire young generation of our country into darkness. Their mounting despair is being utilised by evil forces for evil designs. If you look at the wage structure of the country, there is no parity anywhere. Everywhere there is discrimination. 44 years have passed since independence and no national wage policy has yet been evolved. So far as the wages of different sections of the unorganised sector is concerned, the plight is beyond description. There you will find anarchy of the highest order. Not only on the question of wages, but also not the question of Dearness Allowance. So many formulae of DA are there. Central DA formulae, industrial DA formulae and so many DA formulae are there. But the most striking fact is that you are not trying to evolve one single formula for the entire working class of this country. The most striking fact is that is the background of the galloping price rise, DA is altogether denied to crores of unorganised workers. This misery of more than 15 crores of such workers can easily be imagined. The condition of migrant and bonded labour is the most pitiable one.

As regards bonus and other social benefits, the same anarchy is there. There is no policy; there is no parity anywhere. A few days back, in reply to a supplementary question, the Minister of State for Finance was telling that they have set up a committee on DA. Why? DA formula is there. The Central Pay Commission had evolved that formula and you are following that formula; all the State Governments are also following that formula. Why then, a committee has been set up? I apprehend that on the dictates of the IMF and the World Bank, you are going to impound and gradually freeze DA. You have started the process already. The period of various agreements in public sector enterprises expired in last December, in most of the cases. But, from the Government, instructions have been issued that the authorities should not commit any new agreement.

The State Governments are also being the victims of your policy. The galloping price rise is there, DA is to be given; but you are not assisting the State Governments by way of giving funds, etc. So, the State Government employees, teachers and others who are guided by the State Governments are suffering.

Sir, what about the workers' participation in management? A Bill was introduced in Rajya Sabha by the National Front Government. But, you are totally silent on that. You are saying that you are very much worried about the poor. Human faces are always before your eyes. But you have forgotten that there was a bill which was introduced by the National Front Government. Discussions were also held that right to work should be enshrined in the Constitution as a Fundamental Right. You are silent over that also. The labour laws have become almost irrelevant. The labour laws are gasping on the Table of the Labour Ministry. The working class movement is being guided and controlled by the police. You are very much eager to pass LSMA and NASA. Different

[Sh. Ajoy Mukhopadyay]

State Governments are using ESMA against the striking employees. Against the legitimate struggle, ESMA is being used. Recently, the engineers are on strike in Rajasthan. The Rajasthan Government has promulgated ESMA. In Himachal Pradesh, the same thing has happened. The Central Government is also eager to pass such a law. You prepared the Bill. For the time being, you have not placed because of objections from different political parties and trade unions. But you have not abandoned that idea.

I say that you are trying to create illusion amongst the workers. A massive propaganda has been going on in favour of exit policy, golden hand-shake, etc. But I would like to cite one example. In MAMC, the workers, who have been given the golden Handshake, are yet to be paid their retirement and other benefits in full.

Lastly, I would like to remind you that the working class of this country will not accept all these measures which you are adopting. On 29th November last year, there was a countrywide industrial strike. But the Government did not take any lesson from that. The Congress Party and the BJP did not take any lesson from that strike. (Interruptions) The trade unions led by the Congress and the BJP were opposed to the strike but their followers joined the strike. This time again the workers are getting ready throught the country. They will not allow these things to continue any further because, you see, if the economic sovereignty of the country is compromised, then political sovereignty will be in danger. So it is high time that you should abandon that so-called new industrial policy which you have already adopted and are trying tried to follow in the forms of exit policy, national renewal fund, structural adjustment, etc., etc. You are trying to follow all these things. Do not do that. Please try to understand the reality. Do not go against the interests of, the working class and the working

people of the country, They are not silent spectators. In future, they will come to the streets in a bigger way to resist your anti-people and, to some extent, anti-national policy which they must defeat at all costs. I once agains oppose the Demands for Grants relating to the Ministry of Labour. I do not know what Mr. Sangma is, whether he is State Labour Minister or somebody else.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE
MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI P.A. SANGMA):
I am what I am (Interruptions)

SHRI AJAY MUKHOPADYAY: What you are assigned to do is something else. It is not the portfolio of the State Minister or something like that. I think you will try to understand the situation.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister for Agriculture may now make a statement regarding the Delhi Milk Scheme.

17.31 hrs.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Delhi Milk Scheme

[English]

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR): Some of the honourable Members had raised the issue of arrest of General Manager, Delhi Milk Scheme (DMS) and other related issues at zero hour on 24th April, 1992. I fully share the anxiety and the concern expressed by the honourable Members in this regard.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has registered a case under Section 7 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1968 on 13th April, 1992, against Shri Ram Singh,