

he made significant contribution in encouraging the workers to go on strikes and as a result thereof mills became sick and lock-outs declared. This has been his main contribution.

Sir, a 'Textile Workers Rehabilitation Fund' has also been set up under the Ministry of Textiles so that financial assistance could be given to the workers from this fund for a period of 3 years in phased manner. The sickness in jute mills is attributed to shortage of raw material and stiff competition with the synthetics. A Cell has been constituted under the Reserve Bank. This cell finds out the cause of sickness and makes efforts to sort out their difficulties to the possible extent. In this way, the Ministry of Labour tries to solve the problem of sick units by setting up a tripartite committee.

[English]

PROF. K.V. THOMAS: From the information given by the hon. Minister it can be seen that in Kerala which is one of the smaller States and which has got fewer industries, the number of mandays lost is to the tune of 1.8 million days. If you take the statistics of 1987, 1988 and 1989, it can be seen that it is on the increase. May I know from the hon. Minister the attitude of the present Marxist Government in Kerala, whether it is encouraging the workers to go on strike or whether it is interested to settle the issues?

[Translation]

SHRI RADHA KISHAN MALAVIYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the present Government in Kerala has neither encouraged the workers to go on strikes nor created condition forcing any lockout. As regards the question of mandays lost, I have already said in my reply that the workers resort to strike to get their demands accepted, the Ministry of Labour makes efforts to get the issue resolved through reconciliation between the concerned parties. As regards lockouts, I have already said that they resort to lock-outs when their units become sick or when they

are not in a position to run the units for one reason or the other or due to financial constraints. In so far as Kerala is concerned, he stated that he had got statistics with him. I also have some statistics in this regard. Your statistics are with regard to the matters which come under the jurisdiction of the State Government which is the appropriate authority to act in such matters on their own. So far the Central Government is concerned, it acts only when there is a strike or lock-out in any one of its central undertakings such as Mining, Food Corporation of India, banking which come under the jurisdiction of the Central Government. The figures which you are having are mostly related to undertakings which come under the jurisdiction of the State Government of Kerala and the State Government takes initiatives to deal with the problem.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Q. No. 229. Shri Ram Pyare Panika.

[Translation]

SHRI RADHA KISHAN MALAVIYA: This question is also related to my Ministry.

MR. SPEAKER: It is your day today.

[English]

SHRI RADHA KISHAN MALAVIYA: Labour Day.

[Translation]

You run the textile mills, but I am answerable if strikes take place.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Which Labour day?

Seminar on Child Servitude

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*229. SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA:
SHRI JAGANNATH PATNAIK:
Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether a South Asian Seminar on Child Servitude was held in Delhi recently;

(b) if so, the names of the countries which participated in it and the subjects discussed at the seminar;

(c) the suggestions made or Resolution adopted at the above seminar regarding measures to be taken to ban child labour in the region; and

(d) the reaction of Government of India thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI RADHAKISHAN MALAVIYA) (a) Yes, Sir. A Seminar was organised by a body called Bonded Labour Liberation Front.

(b) According to the organisation, participants from India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Thailand, Nepal, France and the Anti-slavery Society, London attended the Seminar and the problems of child labour in various countries of South Asia were discussed.

(c) A statement indicating the conclusions at the Seminar is given below.

(d) The Government have already formulated a National Policy on child labour in August, 1987 to tackle the problem of exploitation of child labour.

STATEMENT

The following decisions were taken at the Seminar:

1. To give top priority to the children in servitude, and to make fresh attempts to co-ordinate the efforts of the NGOs in South Asia, in this field.
2. To put emphasis on the liberation of child bonded labourers.

3. Every year, September 18, will be observed as a A Day For Children in Servitude, to create consciousness and increase awareness in the public. Governments will be asked to enact relevant legal provisions to protect the right of child and abolish child servitude and for their implementations in the countries of South Asia.
4. Exchange of ideas and experiences of actions will be promoted among countries with the objective to strengthen specially the hands of those activists and action groups who face organised opposition to their responses to the cruel conditions of children.
5. An Annual-Get-together of a Coalition of individuals and organisations devoted to the liberation of children in servitude, will be convened to share fresh information, evaluate the involvement and chalk out future strategies and programmes.
6. A specific case of children in servitude will be taken up to the Supreme Court in a country where it is possible to test the modalities of legal provisions. An accurate documentation and evaluation of such a Test Case will be done and findings shared amongst the member countries for model action.
7. A Conference of Jurists and Activists in South Asia will be convened to discuss the Constitutional provisions, the legislations and procedures in the region for the identification, release and rehabilitation of the children in servitude.
8. The Seminar calls upon all organisations to conduct investigations into the scale of problem of children on servitude in their surroundings.
9. A Delhi Declaration on the Charter

for Children in Chains was prepared during the Seminar for study and action by the all those concerned with inhuman conditions of children and creating a new future for them.

10. A Plan of action for future will be drawn up by each and every country in the Coalition, which will put emphasis on organisation of people for power. All children of South Asian countries should be provided with equal, free and compulsory education. The entire responsibility for their food, accommodation, and living expenses should be that of the governments of these countries.
11. The Seminar calls upon all Governments in South Asia to ratify the ILO conventions on child labour and the UN Charter on the Rights of Child.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA: Seven countries participated in the seminar organised by the Bonded Labour Liberation Front. The hon. Minister has admitted it and also furnished details of the conclusions arrived at the seminar. I would like to ask a question arising out of the following statement.

[*English*]

A plan of action for future will be drawn up by each and every country in coalition, which will put emphasis on organisation of people for power. All children of South Asian countries should be provided with equal, free and compulsory education. The entire responsibility for their food, accommodation, and living expenses should be that of the governments of these countries.

[*Translation*]

Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister the reaction of the Government

thereon because crores of children in the country and all over the world are being exploited through different ways. In the tenth point of the resolution, a responsibility has been laid on the Government to make arrangements for their food, accommodation, education and other facilities. I would like to know the views of the Government of India thereon and the steps taken so far in this respect.

SHRI RADHA KISHAN MALAVIYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, first of all, I would like to refute the statement of hon. Member, stated by him. I have not admitted anything as. There is a body named Bonded Labour Liberation Front which organised a conference in Delhi. 11 point resolution was adopted in that conference.

Neither any officer nor any Minister in the Ministry of Labour attended the meeting. Not only this, Ministry of Labour is not aware of the resolution adopted and deliberations made in the conference. They did not send a copy of the resolution to us. Nor it is available with us. How did you say that I acceded to the demands made in the resolution?

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA: I have not said that you acceded to the demands. I simply said that you also admitted the fact that a seminar had been organised.

SHRI RADHA KISHAN MALAVIYA: We collected information about the deliberations made in the seminar only after your notice of this question was stated for reply in the House and the information so collected has placed before you. Your last question was with regard to child labour. You wanted to know the steps being taken by the Government to check child labour. I have already made known the contents of their 10th point. I am not aware whether it has been further supplemented. Nor it is our concern. Their only concern was to organise a conference on child labour.

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA: How is it that you are not concerned? You are supposed to think about it

SHRI RADHA KISHAN MALAVIYA: There is an organisation by the name of 'Bandhua Mukti Shramik Sangh' which organised the conference. None of the officers of the Ministry of Labour participated in it. As regards the question as to the steps being taken by the Government of India with regard to child labour in concerned, I would like to submit that we have launched a project for the units which mostly employ children. Children upto the age of 14 years are imparted professional training there and they are also provided mid day meal so that they could get rid of child labour.

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA: As regards the seminar about which a reference has been made, in the year 1987 his department itself formulated a policy in regard to the exploitation of children. That policy also contained such provisions. In view of the fact that a large number of children below the age of 14 years are being employed in hazardous industries and being exploited, will the hon. Minister kindly tell us whether the Central Government is proposed to issue directions to the State Governments for effective implementation of the policy chalked out by the Ministry of Labour itself? In my own State of Orissa, Children have been engaged in carpet weaving industry and other professions. Even in trains going via Delhi, a number of small children are found to be selling newspapers etc. I am raising this matter purely on humanitarian ground and out of compassion only. It is a matter of happiness that the Government formulated a policy in 1987 which was appreciated by one and all. Will the Government propose to take some effective measures for the implementation of that policy?

SHRI RADHA KISHAN MALAVIYA: The hon. Member wanted to know the details of the positive measures being taken by the Government to educate child labour. in this connection, I would like to say that a technical advisory committee has already been constituted. This committee gives necessary advice to the units which employ child labour and persuades them not to engage children below the age of 14 years in hazard-

ous work. Child labour has been banned in our country in hazardous industries like factories, mines, Bidi or cigarette industry, motor vehicles work-shops and shops establishments etc. In order to root it out completely, a number of stiff laws have been enacted.

SHRI JAGANNATH PATTNAIK: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has said just now that a Technical Advisory Committee on Prohibition of Child labour has been constituted and some of their recommendations have been accepted by the Ministry of Labour. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the national policy formulated in 1987 is considered to be adequate to implement those recommendations or whether some sort of amendments are required to be made in the policy?

SHRI RADHA KISHAN MALAVIYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the reply to the point raised by him has already been given by me while answering the point raised by Shri Panika. We have enacted laws to ban engaging children below the age of 14 years. As I have already stated that a complete ban has been imposed on employing children in hazardous units such as mines, factories, Bidi industry and the motor vehicles industries. Whenever any complaint to this effect is received, on the spot enquiry is made.

[*English*]

PROF. N.G. RANGA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in view of the fact that there is this impression that child labour on a large scale still continues to be employed in various parts of India and more especially in Delhi itself, will the Government consider the advisability of publishing an Annual Report as to the steps that are being taken, actual administrative and inspectorial steps that are being taken and the results thereof in order to see that child labour employment is being brought down?

[*Translation*]

SHRI RADHA KISHAN MALAVIYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member has said that

there are several work-establishments in Delhi in which children are employed. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: You please be specific whether an annual report will be published or not?

SHRIRADHA KISHAN MALAVIYA: We have enacted several laws with regard to child labour. The hon. Member has given a good suggestion and we will consider it.

PROF. NIRMALA KUMARI SHAKTAWAT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am pained to hear the reply of the hon. Minister because even today a large number of children are found working in our country and the laws to this effect are no more than yet another addition to the pages of statute-book. A number of small children can be found working in carpets weaving industry in Mirzapur and Jammu and Kashmir. Similarly, a number of children can be seen working hotels, Bidi industry etc. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government propose to bring about any amendment in the law in near future in view of violation of existing laws. My second question is this that a number of orphans are being taken to foreign countries to work as bonded labour in the guise that they have been adopted by them. Is the Government aware of this fact? If so, what steps are being taken to check it?

SHRIRADHA KISHAN MALAVIYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government is not aware of the fact that children are being taken to foreign countries in the guise of adoption.

PROF. NIRMALA KUMARI SHAKTAWAT: What is your department doing then?

SHRI RADHA KISHAN MALAVIYA: I am coming to that. Her second point is this that small children are found working in Mirzapur and Jammu and Kashmir in carpet weaving industry. I would like to inform her in this regard that we have launched as many as 10 to 11 projects for the places where children are engaged in large number. Under the project launched in Mirzapur, children are imparted professional training and provided mid-day meals and children in the age group of 5-14 are given education. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA: Incorrect reply is being given.

SHRI RADHA KISHAN MALAVIYA: It is not an incorrect reply, it is a correct reply.

She has enquired about Mirzapur. As regards amounts sanctioned by the Government for Mirzapur, an amount of Rs. 62,61,000/- was sanctioned for the year 1988-89 and for 1989-90 it is Rs. 17,83,500/-. As against sanctioned amounts, and amount of Rs. 4,78,151 was released in 1988-89 and for the year 1989-90 and amount of Rs. 3,58,181 has so far been allocated. 10 schools are being run and as many as 500 children are studying in them.

As regards Jammu and Kashmir, the State Government has not sent any proposal to this effect so far.

[*English*]

Amendment to Indian Forest (Conservation) Act

*231. SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to liberalise the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980;

(b) if so, the details of the proposed changes and the reasons thereof;

(c) whether all State Governments have been authorised to transfer forest land for development purposes; and

(d) the measures to be adopted to ensure that forest land is not transferred for any purpose other than development?

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FOREST (SHRIMATI SUMATI ORAON): (a) and (b). Government have not liberalised Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. On the contrary, the Act has been made more stringent by the Forest (Conservation) Amendment Act, 1988.

(c) and (d). The State Governments have not been authorised to transfer forest land for development purposes. Diversion of forest land for development purposes needs prior approval of Government of India.

[*English*]

SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am extremely happy that the Government have not liberalised the Forest Conservation Act, 1980. On the contrary, the Act has been made most