

[Shri Mohammad Elias]

These are some of the points which I want to place before the hon. Minister for his consideration. With these few words, I welcome this Bill.

Shrimati Lakshmikanthamma (Khammam): I welcome the Workmen's Compensation (Amendment) Bill, 1962, brought forward by Government.

From the very beginning our Government has been the champion of the cause of labour, and has all the time been persuading the management to give better treatment to the labour, provide them better amenities and so on and so forth.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member may resume her seat for a minute. I have to make an announcement.

12.29 hrs.

RE: CALLING-ATTENTION-NOTICE

Mr. Speaker: I might inform hon. Members that the Prime Minister would be making a statement at about one o'clock. There was a calling-attention-notice about the communique that has appeared in the papers that India and Pakistan shall be having talks. I have admitted that notice, and the Prime Minister has agreed to make a statement. He will be coming here and making a statement on it at about one o'clock.

12.30 hrs.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION
(AMENDMENT) BILL—contd.

Shrimati Lakshmikanthamma: The very fact that this Bill has been brought before this House in spite of the emergency shows how much interest Government is evincing in problems of labour. By this amendment, they have increased the rate of compensation that will be payable to the

workers on account of death or disablement. Government cannot make arrangements to provide security to the families of the affected workers for all the time, but the small amount that will be given to their families will be a form of security for some time at least, after the death of the worker.

I feel that while filling up the vacancy caused by the death or disablement of a worker, preference should be given to the wife, son or near relatives of the worker. This will be of some help to the family which has lost its earning member.

As many Members have mentioned, I had also during election time the experience of going through labour areas and the dwelling places of workers. I found a number of TB cases in coal mines. I do not know whether work in coal mines has anything to do with this disease. The patients were lying down unable to go and work. I also learnt that people working in mica mines contract a certain type of disease, the exact name of which I forget now. Then I do not know whether the incidence of cancer is connected with working in biri factories. So all these things which render the workers invalid should be looked into.

Then sometimes there is inordinate delay in payment of compensation. I know of an instance. In an industry, a young girl was employed and asked to operate a dangerous machinery. In the process, her hand was cut. It is more than two years and still no compensation has been paid. I do not know what exactly is the reason for the delay.

While welcoming this Bill, I feel Government should advise the managements of industries to take preventive measures to protect the workers. I know of cases where adequate care is not taken to protect workers operating dangerous machinery. The workers are expected to remain at a