

PAYMENT OF WAGES (AMENDMENT) BILL

The Deputy Minister of Labour (Shri Abid Ali): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Payment of Wages Act, 1936, be taken into consideration."

Sir, the Payment of Wages Act, to which the present Bill proposes to make certain amendments, was enacted in 1936. This was an experimental piece of legislation, and its working has shown that the Act requires to be amended in certain respects. The proposals for amendment have been under consideration for a long time. They were discussed at the Labour Ministers' Conference held in 1940 and 1942 and also with the representatives of employers and workers, and a Bill was prepared and introduced in the then Legislative Assembly in November, 1944 and later circulated for eliciting public opinion. But with the dissolution of the Legislative Assembly in 1947 the Bill lapsed. And in the light of the comments received, the proposals were further examined.

Since then the question of the amendment of the Act has been under the active consideration of the Government, and in view of the importance of the amendments and the necessity for consulting and obtaining the views of various interests concerned, their finalisation has taken some time. The amendments now incorporated in the Bill will, I am sure, go a long way to improve the administration of the Act, and they will also bring under its purview certain categories of labour which hitherto could not enjoy the benefits of the Act.

I shall now proceed to explain briefly the nature and scope of these amendments. The existing wage limit of Rs. 200 was fixed in 1936. The pattern of the wage structure has since undergone considerable change, particularly because of the introduction of dearness allowance. The wages of workers, particularly the

lower wage group, have gone up; but this does not mean that they have ceased to require the protection of the Act. The Workmen's Compensation Act and the Employees State Insurance Act already apply to persons whose monthly wages do not exceed Rs. 400.

Mr. Chairman: I take it that the hon. Minister is likely to take much more time.

Shri Abid Ali: Yes, Sir.

Mr. Chairman: Then he may continue on the next day. We shall now take up Private Members' Business.

14.29 hrs.

EQUAL REMUNERATION BILL*

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty (Basirhat): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to introduce equal pay for equal work for women workers.

Mr. Chairman: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to introduce equal pay for equal work for women workers".

The motion was adopted.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

BEDI AND CIGAR LABOUR BILL

Mr. Chairman: The House will now resume further discussion of the motion moved by Shri A. K. Gopalan on the 22nd November, 1957 that the Bill to provide for regulating employment and work in the factories manufacturing Beedi and Cigar in India, be taken into consideration.

Out of two and a half hours allotted for discussion of the Bill, one hour and 50 minutes were taken up on the 22nd November, 1957 and 40 minutes are still available.