

LOK SABHA DEBATES

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LOK SABHA

Thursday, March 1, 1973/Phalgun
10, 1894 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of
the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair.]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Inability of States to implement re- vised wages for Agricultural Labourers

*141. SHRI RANABAHADUR
SINGH: Will the Minister of
LABOUR AND REHABILITATION
be pleased to state:

(a) whether the decision of revised wages proposed by the Central Government for agricultural labour could not be implemented by many State Governments due to financial position; and

(b) if so, the steps Central Government have taken to ensure full co-operation of farmers and agricultural labour for the success of Green Revolution in the country?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY): (a) The Central Government has published draft proposals for revision of the present minimum wages for employment in agriculture, falling in their sphere of jurisdiction under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948. The State Governments have not been asked to follow these proposals. It is up to them to revise minimum wages in the agricultural employment falling in their sphere of action, having regard to the relevant circumstances. However, the suggestions/criticisms made in the meeting

of the Consultative Committee of the Ministry of Labour on the 15th May, 1972, regarding fixation of minimum wages, have been brought to their notice.

(b) Does not arise.

SHRI RANABAHADUR SINGH: How were these recommendations about fixing the minimum wages reached by the Central Government? What was the basis on which they had been worked out? In the course of arriving at these minimum wages, was the minimum production cost of commodities on the agricultural front taken into account?

SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY: All the relevant circumstances have been taken into account while arriving at these figures.

SHRI RANABAHADUR SINGH: Were the representatives of farmers and agricultural labourers taken into confidence while arriving at these figures?

SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY: A notification has been issued calling for opinions. Once opinions are invited, farmers' representatives or other representatives are free to express their opinions. After that, Government will arrive at a decision.

श्री नाथूराम ग्रहिवार : मैं जतना चाहता हूँ जब सरकार दूसरे कारखानों के मजदूरों के बारे में उनकी दैनिक मजदूरी तय कर देती है तो देहात में फले हुए गरीब मजदूर जिनको 8 घाना रोज भी नहीं मिलता है, जिनका वुरी तरह से शोषण किया जा रहा है पिछले 25 सालों से उनके बारे में भी क्या सरकार गम्भीरतापूर्वक विचार

करेगी और उनके बतनमान को निर्धारित करने के लिए सक्रिय कदम उठाएगी ?

SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY: Under the provisions of the Minimum Wages Act, the Central Government is taking necessary steps within the sphere of jurisdiction of the Central Government to fix the minimum wages for the agricultural labour. Similarly, the appropriate State Governments in respect of State matters are also taking into account some of these matters and trying to do their best to fix the minimum wage. Having regard to the extent and magnitude of the problem, there may be some difficulties.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: In view of the recent rise in prices throughout India, may I know whether the government is thinking of advising the State Governments to fix suitable minimum wage for agricultural labour?

SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY: Draft proposals for revision were notified on the 25th August, 1972, inviting comments and suggestions from the interests concerned. The existing wage rates were fixed in May 1959. The revised wage rates now proposed were also notified. I expect that the State Governments would certainly take into account these facts and take necessary steps in that direction.

श्री मूलबन्ध डाया : मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि सन 1948 के मिनिमम वेजज एक्ट यहाँ पर लागू है तो क्या कोर्ट में आज तक एक भी ऐसा केस हुआ है जिसमें मिनिमम वेजज न दिए गए हों ?

MR. SPEAKER: He says that the law about minimum wage has never been implemented since 1948. He is giving some information.

SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY: In every sphere of activity the minimum wage has been fixed under the

Minimum Wages Act. It has been implemented to the extent possible.

SHRI B. V. NAIK: The total population of cultivators in this country is 78 million as per the census of 1971. The population of agricultural labour is 47 million. In other words, we have two cultivators for one labour. When the number of hirers is more than the number hired, is it possible now or in the future to have a meaningful implementation of the Minimum Wages Act in the sphere of agriculture?

SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY: I am glad that the hon. Member is fully aware of the difficulties and complications involved in the situation.

SHRI B. V. NAIK: If so, what is to be done?

MR. SPEAKER: Instead of indulging in giving opinions or counter opinions why does he not ask a question?

SHRI B. V. NAIK: What do the Government propose to do to get over this difficulty in the way of implementation?

SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY: As I have already submitted, in respect of certain matters the Central Government is the appropriate government. In respect of some other matters, under the Minimum Wages Act the State Government is the appropriate Government. The Central Government is trying to the best of its ability to implement the provisions of the Minimum Wages Act. I have already stated that the minimum wages are sought to be revised by way of notification and opinions are called for. As far as the State Governments are concerned, our experience is that they are trying their best to implement the spirit of the provisions of the Minimum Wages Act, to the extent possible. For instance Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry and Kerala Governments

have passed special legislations to fix some kind of fair wages and minimum wages wherever possible.

श्री हुकम चन्द कठवाय : मंत्री मन्त्री महोदय ने बतलाया कि राज्य सरकारों को अगस्त में प्राहप भेज गया था और मई 1969 में उन का उत्तर आया। मंत्री महोदय ने कहा कि शायद उन्होंने उस पर विचार किया ही होगा। मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या वह राज्य सरकारों के अतिरिक्त जो इन क्षेत्रों में संगठन का कार्य करते हैं या जो काश्तकारों के प्रतिनिधि हैं उन में भी सलाह लेने का विचार रखते हैं? इस समय सारे देश में राहत कार्य चल रहे हैं अलग अलग स्थानों में कृषक मजदूरों को जो मजदूरी मिलती है वह 50 पैसे रोज के हिसाब से मिलती है।

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : गुजरात में 13 पैसे है।

श्री हुकम चन्द कठवाय : गुजरात में 13 पैसे है, महाराष्ट्र में 1.50 पैसे मध्य प्रदेश में 50 पैसे हैं। शायद मंत्री महोदय को पूरी जानकारी नहीं है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या यह सही नहीं है कि जैसा मैं ने बतलाया उन को 50 पैसे दिया जाता है और श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी 13 पैसे बतलाते हैं, लेकिन माइन करवाये जाने हैं 3.50 रु० पर? मैं अभी थाना जिले का दौरा कर के आया हूँ। मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूँ कि जो इस प्रकार की धोखा घड़ी चल रही है उस को रोकने के लिए सरकार क्या कदम उठाने जा रही है? और जो मजदूरी ता की गई उस पर पुनर्विचार करने के लिए क्या वह तैयार है?

SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY : As I said, for the purpose of implementation of the provisions of the Act, the appropriate Government in certain

spheres is the State Government and in certain spheres it is the Central Government. Having regard to the circumstances a notification has been issued for revising the wages which have been fixed in 1969. I am thankful to the hon. member for giving the information. We would look into the matter in what manner it is being done.

SHRI A. P. SHARMA : May I know, if the State Governments do not follow the advice of the Central Government in regard to implementation of the Act for agricultural labour, what steps the Central Government proposes to take to see that the State Governments do implement it?

SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY : The provisions of the Minimum Wages Act are very clear in this respect. I do not want to go into that legal question. The Central Government can only advise the State Governments to do certain things.

SHRI A. K. M. ISHAQUE : May I know whether the Government is really serious about implementing the Act in the rural sector? If so, what machinery do they propose to have for this purpose because the minister knows that the employers in the rural areas do not have the same standards. May be some of them are rich but there are some employers in rural areas who themselves work as labourers on others days. So, if these employers work themselves as labourers at some time, what machinery the Government of India or for that matter the State Government has set up to implement the provisions of this Act.

SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY : The appropriate authority in respect of States' sphere is the State Government which is to implement the provisions of this Act. Certain officers are already there, the factory inspectors and other officers, authorised by the State Government to look into it. The machinery may not be sufficient

enough. But we are trying to impress upon the State Governments the necessity of creating necessary machinery for implementing the provisions of this Act.

SHRI D. K. PANDA: As far as this aspect is concerned, in Orissa, we find since 1948, the wage is Rs. 1.25 p. and it is continuing like that. May I know whether any special instructions are being issued to such States like Orissa where it is even below what actually they are getting?

SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY: No directions have been issued under the Act. As the hon. Member has brought it to our notice, we will write to Orissa Government to take appropriate action.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: In view of the agricultural labour is about twenty-five times more than the industrial labour and also, in view of the fact that this agricultural labour falls into the category of 20 crores of people who have been described as living below the poverty line, may I know whether the Government will convene a meeting of different representatives of the State Governments to thrash out the problem, see the difficulties they are facing, and also the problem as to how to implement the revised structure of wage for agricultural labour?

SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY: We are on these lines.

श्री विभूति मिश्र : जो एग््री-कल्चर लेबर के मजदूर हैं और जो एग््री-कल्चर चलाने वाले मालिक हैं उन की प्रलग-प्रलग कंडिशन होती है। प्रसर फसल को कीड़े खा जाते हैं और पदावार का नुकसान होता है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या केन्द्रीय सरकार कोई कमिशन बना कर के जो अतिहर हैं और जो उन के मजदूर हैं उन की कठिनाइयों को दूर करने के लिए कोई रिपोर्ट लेने जा रही हैं ताकि दोनों को सुविधा हो सके ?

श्री अध्यक्ष महोदय : प्रश्न तो एक ही है, किसी न किसी शकल में बार-बार आ जाता है।

SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY: As I have already answered in reply to the question of Prof. Samar Guha, we are thinking on these lines to convene a meeting and to discuss all these things.

श्री विभूति मिश्र : मंत्री महोदय ने मेरे सवाल का जवाब नहीं दिया। यहां कोई देयता खंग नहीं है कि हम लोग बगारम की तरह से विष्वनाथ जी के दर्शन करने के लिए बट हंग हैं। हम यहां आये है अपना काम करने के लिए।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आप यहां बहम में क्यों पड़े रहे हैं ?

श्री विभूति मिश्र : मंत्री महोदय का जवाब तो आना चाहिए।

SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY: I quite understand the feelings voiced by the hon. Member for the purpose of evaluating the situation and taking necessary steps in the direction of implementing the provisions of the Minimum Wages Act. I am also thinking of calling a conference of representatives of various State Governments and other representatives in order to see in what manner we will be able to best utilise the machinery available and to implement the provisions of the Act.

विद्यार्थकस्त भारतीय टायू

* 144. श्री जगन्नाथ राव जोशी : क्या विदेश मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) भारत की सीमा में आने वाले ऐसे कितने डीप हैं जिन पर भारत की प्रभुसत्ता है ;