

may be constituted. May I know whether Government is considering such a proposal ?

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** The Coconut Development Council has been constituted only recently and it would not be right for me to pass a judgment that it should be dissolved and a new body should be set up. I think the council is doing a fine job in advising the Government.

#### Uniform Approach to Labour Problems

+

\*635. **SHRI MAYAVAN :**

**SHRI DHANDAPANI :**

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Labour Minister had urged the need for a uniform approach to labour laws and growing labour problems in industries ; and

(b) whether Union Government are preparing any scheme in this regard ?

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR, EMPLOYMENT AND REHABILITATION (SHRI BISHWANATH ROY) :** (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The more important recommendations of the National Commission on Labour which provide a basis for such an approach, have already been discussed at the tripartite Standing Labour Committee. Action is being considered in the light of the Committee's conclusions.

**SHRI MAYAVAN :** May I know whether the labour laws are different for different categories of labour ? May I also know whether the disparity in the laws between highly paid workers and low-paid workers is the cause of all the trouble and heart-burning in industries ? If so, how is the Government going to solve the problem ?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR, EMPLOYMENT AND REHABILITATION (SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD) :** As it is known to the House, it is in the Concurrent List. There are certain laws which are in the Central sphere and some State Governments have got their own laws. Though we are striving for uniformity in the laws, as recommended by the National Labour Com-

mission, because of the nature of the industry and type of work there is bound to be some differences in the labour laws of different States. So far as wages are concerned, there is some difference between agriculture and industry. Our attempt is always to rationalise it as far as possible.

**श्री रामावतार शास्त्री :** यह प्रश्न लेबर-लाज यूनियन करने के सम्बन्ध में है। हर आदमी जानता है कि हमारे देश में बीड़ी मजदूर लाखों की तादाद में हैं और उनकी तनख्वाहों में 1 रु० से 4 रु० तक का फर्क है मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि उनकी आर्थिक स्थिति को देखते हुए क्या सरकार एक समान मजदूर कानून पूरे हिन्दुस्तान के पैमाने पर लागू करने का विचार रखती है ? अगर नहीं रखती है तो उसके क्या कारण हैं ?

**अध्यक्ष महोदय :** इसमें बीड़ी मजदूरों का सवाल नहीं उठता है।

**श्री रामावतार शास्त्री :** बीड़ी वाले भी मजदूर हैं, जब लेबर-लाज का सवाल आता है तो उनका सवाल भी पैदा होता है।

**अध्यक्ष महोदय :** यह एक जैनरल क्वेश्चन है, जिसका जवाब उन्होंने दे दिया है।

#### Expenditure on Arbitration Cases by Food Department

\*636. **SHRIMATI SUCHETA KRIPALANI :** Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Department of Food even after transferring the work of Procurement and Distribution of Food grains to the Food Corporation of India is still incurring expenditure on maintaining staff/officers on account of a considerable number of arbitration cases still going on for the fear that in case of their early finalisation, some posts of officers might be abolished ;

(b) whether in a number of Arbitration cases, where the Department of Food is the claimant, the delay in finalisation of those Arbitration cases is unnecessarily causing loss to Government ; and

(c) whether Government propose to take any suitable steps in order to avoid accrual of such expenditure/loss to Government ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI JAGANNATH PAHADIA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) No undue delay in the disposal of such arbitration cases has come to notice.

(c) Does not arise.

SHRIMATI SUCHETA KRIPALANI : May I know the number of arbitration cases pending and the years for which they are pending ? I would also like to know when the contracts were over and when the arbitration cases were started. What is the gap between the conclusion of the contract and the filing of the arbitration ?

SHRI JAGANNATH PAHADIA : The number of pending cases is 52.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE) : Some of these are pending for quite a number of years. These are many legal aspects and questions over which we have no control. Some cases one be taken to judicial courts. Then, even the arbitrators have a certain discretion. Even though the name is "arbitrator" we cannot act arbitrarily in such cases.

SHRIMATI SUCHETA KRIPALANI : I know of a case where the contract was concluded during the period 1952-66 but the case was sent for arbitration in 1970. In Bombay in another case the work was finished in 1962-63 but the case went for arbitration in 1969. In a Delhi case the contract was concluded in 1965 but it was sent to arbitration in 1970. In another case the contract was concluded in 1966 but it was sent to arbitration in 1970. Under the agreement all such disputes should be sent for arbitration immediately and there should not be any delay. But if it takes such a long time, the staff have to be maintained and the office has to be maintained for such a long time. Also, during the period of delay the staff gets transferred and sometimes files get destroyed. Therefore, there is

difficulty and the litigation goes on for longer periods. There is delay because concerned authorities are not alert and they do not file the case before the arbitrator in time. There is a second category of cases where the arbitrator himself goes on deliberately delaying it. The impression is that he is deliberately delaying and prolonging the case to get some financial advantage out of it. Therefore I would like to know what are the causes for such delay.

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE : Broadly I have explained the position as to why in some cases there are delays. As to the specific cases to which the hon. Member has made a reference, I will go into each case individually to see what were the reasons for the delay. Offhand it will be very difficult for me to say in regard to individual cases. But may I submit that the Government's interest also has to be adequately protected ? We are advised about that by our legal experts. There is not other staff maintained and I do not think that Government incurs additional expenditure for conducting such cases. (Interruption)

SHRI S. KUNDU : I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he has investigated that the delay caused in these arbitration proceedings is also largely due to the FCI which does not appear before the arbitrators and does not take due cognisance of the arbitration proceedings. Will he make an inquiry into this fact that in spite of several notices in some cases the FCI has not bothered to appear in the arbitration proceedings ?

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE : If the hon. Member has in mind any specific case, I shall be glad to look into it. But, as far as my information goes, the FCI is taking every precaution to see that these cases are expedited.

#### Conversion of PTI and other news Agencies into Corporation

\*639. SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a final decision has since been taken to convert Press Trust of India