

RAJYA SABHA

*SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE

(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

Friday, December 18, 2009/ Agrahayana 27, 1931 (Saka)

MATTERS RAISED WITH PERMISSION OF THE CHAIR

I. Selling of Gurudwara land in Lahore

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: When the country was divided in 1947, Evacuee Property Boards of India and Pakistan entered into an agreement that the safety and maintenance of religious places of minority community and places of historical importance will be done by them. It is very unfortunate that in the land of Lahore, which has the blessings of the Fifth Guru and all the Gurus, about 150 acre of Gurudwara land is being sold for constructing defence housing colony. Though, the Minister of Minority Affairs, Pakistan has ordered an enquiry but the Chairman of the Board says that it is an autonomous body and that he is free to do anything. If such thing happens in Pakistan with the minorities people and the Government of India remains a silent spectator, then it is an unfortunate. I demand from the Government to take immediate action upon this by calling Pakistan Ambassador and a commitment be taken from him to cancel orders regarding taking over forcibly the properties of Sikhs, Hindus and Sindhis residing there and their properties be restored to such people.

(Shri Vikram Verma associated.)

***This Synopsis is not an authoritative record of the proceedings of the Rajya Sabha.**

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA): I share Hon'ble Member's concern and I will certainly take it up with the concerned authorities in Pakistan.

II. Maharashtra-Karnataka border dispute

SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI: Maharashtra-Karnataka border dispute has been pending for a long time despite several attempts by the State Government to resolve the problem. Particular portion formerly belonging to Maharashtra was given to the State of Karnataka. The resolution of the Government of Maharashtra clearly says that the first essential consideration is the preservation and strengthening of the unity and security of India. However, this is not happening in this case. The people of this area are subject to discrimination in Karnataka. Unfortunately, they are also deprived of their elementary right to education in Marathi. The circulars are issued in Kannada language, which the Marathi people are unable to understand.

The Maharashtra Legislature has unanimously passed several resolutions for settling this issue but the Central Government has not paid any attention to this important issue.

(Shri Bharatkumar Raut, Shri Govindrao Wamanrao Adik and Dr. Janardhan Waghmare associated.)

III. Inadequate assistance to Rajasthan to fight the drought situation

SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: There has been 40% less rain in Rajasthan during the year 2009 and to deal with this situation we had demanded 12,690 crore rupees as assistance. There is unprecedented famine in Rajasthan. When flue is spreading, no assistance is being provide to the medical sector. It is certainly an injustice to Rajasthan. The amount which we demanded for this purpose, must be provided to us so that we may deal with the situation of famine, defend our cattle and arrange for medical care.

(Shri Prakash Javadekar, Shri Krishanlal Balmiki and Shri Jai Prakash Narayan Singh associated)

IV. Shooting of workers from Bihar in Manipur

SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: The series of attacks on the migrant workers of Bihar are continuing in the various parts of the country. Yesterday, two workers have been killed in Manipur. So far 27 migrant workers have been killed in Manipur since February. This is misfortune of the workers from Bihar that wherever they go, they are subjected to dishonour and they have to lose their life and property. It is unfortunate that even today migration from Bihar is still continuing. This needs to be checked and for this Government of India should talk to those states and directions should be issued to the State governments for providing security as the workers have gone there to do work and for earning livelihood and it is the responsibility of the concerned State Government to provide security to them.

(Shrimati Viplove Thakur associated.)

V. Suicide by weavers in the country

SHRI ALI ANWAR ANSARI: The weavers are committing suicide in a number of states including Delhi and Uttar Pradesh as they are unable to pay their debts taken from Banks. A person living in Weavers Colony of Sunder Nagar, Delhi has committed suicide last week. Similarly, a weaver in Mirzamurad area of Uttar Pradesh has committed suicide after killing his wife and son last month. Instead of taking welfare measures, the State Government of Uttar Pradesh is behaving contrary to that. When the weavers come on the roads in support of their demand, they are fired at. 8 weavers sustained injuries and one succumbed to his injuries in the police firing there. The prices of silk yarn, which was 1,400 rupees per kg, has gone up to 2,200 rupees per kg in the last one month. Consequently, the sarees which are woven by them, are not getting sold and hence they are committing suicide. Their spouses and children are dying due to malnutrition. The government has waived off the loans of farmers amounting to Rs. 60,000 crore rupees but it is not doing anything for weavers.

(Shri Rudra Narayan Pany, Shri Mangala Kisan, Shri Rajniti Prasad and Shri Kishore Kumar Mohanty associated.)

VI. Land acquisition by Railways in Uttar Pradesh

SHRI AMAR SINGH: In 70 villages of Chandauli in Uttar Pradesh, there are 30,000 farmers who cultivate paddy. I am sorry to say that Hon'ble Mamata Banerjee is acquiring 10,000 hectare land of the paddy

farmers in the name of Railway Freight Corridor. She had herself led a movement against the acquisition of a small expanse of farming land in Singur. It is surprising enough that a movement is being launched by the Secretary General of the Congress against the same who is not an MLA of Uttar Pradesh. In fact, the land in Singur is much smaller than that of Chandauli.

So, I request you to stop the acquisition of land in Chandauli otherwise the farmers will be rebellious. That land is like their mother and they will foil the efforts of acquisition thereof.

The Rubber (Amendment) Bill, 2009 -Contd.

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ANAND SHARMA), moving the Motion for consideration of the Bill, said: The natural rubber plays an important role in the industrial and economic development of the country. Rubber plantation provides the principal raw material for manufacture of around 35,000 items. Rubber cultivation is basically eco-friendly. It provides firewood and precious rubber timber. Its industry provides direct employment to over four lakh people. It is grown in about 6.62 lakh hectares. There are more than one million small and marginal farmers. The small holding sector accounts for 90 per cent of rubber planted area. Today, India ranks number one in rubber productivity and number four in production of natural rubber in the world.

Over the years the rubber industry has undergone immense changes. This amendment will enable the Rubber Board to utilize the available funds for improvement of small holdings and facilitate greater participation of small growers. There are provisions to ease the burden on the growers. The Rubber Board is being empowered to implement the standards for quality, marking, labelling and packing for the products. The domestic consumers will also get good quality rubber from the foreign market through the quality checks. A provision has also been made to simplify the process of assessment of cess. Three representatives of the Central Government are being included in the Rubber Board to provide technical advice and guidance.

SHRI M. RAMA JOIS: By and large, I am not opposing the Amendment. My first objection is: Why this Bill was not referred to the Standing Committee? The Central Government proposes to nominate three

members who, I think, should be of specified office or rank. I belong to Karnataka where rubber is being grown in thousands of acres, specially in the districts of Shimoga, Chickamagalur, South Canara and Hassan. Therefore, I want that provisions should be made for the 2 members' representation from the State. I appreciate that the Central Government will fund the Rubber Board by means of grants, loans and budgetary services. In respect of fund to be utilized by the Board, there must be specific criteria, reasons and conditions. The purposes for the funds utilization must be mentioned. Here I will ask as to what is the rational basis for empowering the Central Government to make the cess zero. Who is benefited thereby? The Exchequer will lose Rs.16 crores. It has not been described in the Financial Memorandum.

SHRI P. R. RAJAN: I oppose the decision to amend the Rubber (Amendment) Bill, 2009 because the Bill was not referred to the Standing Committee. Kerala accounts for 92 per cent of the rubber production in India whereas the small and marginal farmers produce 85 per cent of rubber. The total volume of trade in 2008 is around Rs.62,000 crores. We earned about Rs.1,069 crores through foreign trade.

The Bill aims at creating a Rubber Development Fund and giving fresh impetus to the functioning of the Rubber Board. A self-assessment procedure will be introduced to replace the existing assessment and collection of cess. I have a serious doubt about empowering the Central Government to levy zero paisa. By signing the Indo-ASEAN Treaty for free trade, the rubber growers, plantation workers, small industrialists and industrial workers will adversely be affected.

If the Central Government is serious in protecting the interests of the rubber farmers, they should not move ahead with the ASEAN Treaty. The Government should ideally increase the import duty on rubber and allied products. Research and development of rubber, used in industrial factories, should be expanded. Methods to increase the production of rubber should also be developed to meet its growing demand in the country. I appreciate the new definition of the 'small grower' which means a land owner whose estate does not exceed ten hectare. This amendment will benefit a lot of farmers. I think that the democratic character of the Rubber Board should be preserved.

SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA: Ten lakh rubber growers have only three representatives and 283 big farmers too have three representatives. Small growers should get five representatives on the Board. Board should

create a separate health insurance scheme for labourers and their families as also a crop insurance scheme to provide social security. Restricting the import of artificial rubber and allied products is praiseworthy, as it is ruining the rubber producers in the country. The proposal to encourage exports is laudable. There is mismatch between the imports and the exports. Whether any action plan has been framed for the target of exporting, 50,000 tons. The Government should increase the per hectare replanting cost from Rs.19,000 to a minimum of Rs.40,000 to meet the increased cost of production because the present amount is very meagre. How can the evasion of excise duty and illegal transactions be tackled.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: The rubber industry has undergone immense changes in the recent years. The bill proposes eight main changes in the principal Act. Out of which, two ought to be very much welcomed. The amendment, while it retains the requirement of the licences, it empowers the Rubber Board to implement standard for quality, marking, labelling and packaging and permits Central Government to issue policy directives to the Rubber Board. It increases penalty for making false statement to Rs.5,000 from Rs.1,000. An amendment which permits such excise rate export for the period for April 1961 to August 2003 and excise collected during the period to be refunded. What is the reason for fixing the period? Clarification for existing rate for previous period is required.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN: The Rubber Board has done a wonderful work. We are number one in the world in rubber productivity. There is a problem in inspection of traders and dealers. 80 per cent of the rubber produced is from small growers who do not have facility for proper processing. Dealers will buy rubber, naturally they would prosecute the dealer for the lower quality rubber. 30 per cent of the rubber produced of the lower quality. Small dealers are not subjected to this kind of inspection and the small growers do not suffer. The clause 13 may kindly be clarified. If prices go below and is not remunerative, the Government would intervene and declare the minimum floor price. The same should be assured. 88 per cent of the rubber is produced by small growers and large growers are only 283. They have each three representatives in the Rubber Board. Therefore, representation in the Board should be increased accordingly and three for the large growers should be retained. Rubber plantation being different from other crops. It takes seven years. They are given paltry sum of subsidy. Therefore, in regard to subsidy there should be a study by a committee to help them during those seven years when they do not get yield.

Replying to the debate, the Hon'ble Minister said: The objective of this Bill is to ensure that the various difficulties which are faced by the small growers are addressed. In regard to the criteria for nomination from Karnataka and for grants, competent authority can sanction any grant for development, Human Resources Development and for other support to rubber estate. Ten States are growing rubber and Government has decided to open more offices there for their support. Representation will be increased in respect of small growers in the Rubber Board. As regards cess, after 2003, this issue has been addressed and notification examining cess on exporting rubber has been reduced to zero from 1.9.2003.

The purpose of the provision under section 17(2) is to ensure that the quality of natural rubber fully meets the requirements of the domestic and international standards. I will also address the question of India-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement. The quantity of exports is not adequate enough. We are first in the productivity of natural rubber in the world. We are the third largest consumer in the world. When we look at the production and consumption of Rubber, the production in the country was 8,25,345 tones, whereas, the consumption is more than the production. The pioneering research in India has placed it as one of the major producers of rubber in the world. The composition of the Rubber Board has 10 nominees of the Government of India and this question was asked on various occasions.

I have already given an assurance that it will be corrected. We will ensure that after these amendments, the Rubber Board functions in a manner to meet the objectives which have been clearly defined. This Bill is, actually, meant to help the small growers and help the rubber plantation in the country. I have given firm assurance to give more representation to small growers. Since, it is in ten States, we will see that those States which have always remained unrepresented on the Rubber Board, will get representation.

The motion for consideration of the Bill was adopted.

Clauses etc. were adopted.

The Bill was passed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS-INTRODUCED

- I. **The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2009 (to amend article 51-A).**
- II. **The Compulsory Registration of Marriages Bill, 2009.**
- III. **The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2009 (to amend articles 124 and 217).**
- IV. **The Naxalite Affected Areas (Special Provisions) Bill, 2009.**
- V. **The Quality and Accountability in Education Bill, 2009.**
- VI. **The Prevention of Hunger and Malnutrition and Right to Food Bill, 2009.**
- VII. **The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2009 (insertion of new articles 15A, 17A and 17B).**
- VIII. **The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2009 (insertion of new article 2A).**
- IX. **The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Amendment Bill, 2009.**
- X. **The Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 2009 (amend to Section 77).**
- XI. **The Ban on Cow Slaughter Bill, 2009.**

The State Bank of Saurashtra (Repeal) and The State Bank of India (Subsidiary Banks) Amendment Bill, 2009

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA), moving the motion for consideration of the Bill, said: The State Bank of Saurashtra (Repeal) and the State Bank of India (Subsidiary Banks) Amendment Bill, 2009 was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 4th December, 2009 to repeal the State Bank of Saurashtra Act, 1950 and to make consequential amendments in the State Bank of India (Subsidiary Banks) Act, 1950. After the acquisition of the State Bank of Saurashtra by the State Bank of India, the State Bank of Saurashtra ceased to exist and therefore, it is necessary to repeal the State

Bank of Saurashtra Act, 1950 and to make consequential amendments in the State Bank of India (Subsidiary Banks) Act, 1959.

SHRI VIJAYKUMAR RUPANI: Today after 50 years, Saurashtra Bank has been wound up and it has been merged in State Bank of India. We are sad about it. Firstly, you merged it and thereafter, you are bringing a Bill in both the Houses, it is not correct. In a manner, in which, you are merging, your intention is being doubted that in coming days, you will merge more Banks and gradually, by closing all the Banks, you are going to make State Bank of India a bigger Bank. Whether Government has made any observation about serious consequences regarding safeguarding of interests of its employees besides its profit and loss? State Bank of Saurashtra was a lead Bank in Kutch region of Saurashtra. Its 460 branches were functioning in rural areas and alongwith capital of Rs. 15,804 crore, about more than 4 lakh people were its account holders and maximum accounts were for payment of farmer loans, exchange of Government revenue and of pensioners. Its contribution in financial assistance for self employment has been very prominent. As a result of its merger in State Bank of India, it had an adverse effect on its existence to a great extent. After its merger in State Bank of India, State Bank of India is following attitude of discrimination with its customers and also with officers and employees of State Bank of Saurashtra. Whatever amenities farmers, unemployed persons, pensioners and widows were getting, they should continue getting it. If are also making State Bank of India a very big Bank, if anything occurs in future and such a big Bank goes into losses then the our economy will not survive.

SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: The merger of banks in India was recommended by Narasimham Committee in 1993. Those recommendations were based on the experience of America. The myth of 'big is better' has exploded with the failure of giant-sized financial institutions like Lehmann Brothers, AIG etc.

There is a need to evolve our own banking policies suited to our nation's needs and interests. Government should review the policy of subsidiary banks' merger since all subsidiary banks are showing continuous business growth, earning profits and carrying regional developmental responsibilities. We are opposed to any kind of merger in the banking sector.

SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: I support the Bill. This Bill is for the betterment of the people, workers and also in the interest of the country. Consolidation and strengthening the financial sector is a priority in our country. From 1961 to this date, around 79 banks have been merged.

Grameen banks are working very well in the rural areas without affecting the interests of the workers, poor labour in the rural areas and the people involved with these banks. While merging banks, the Government should also see that the interests of the people are protected. When subsidiary of SBI merges with the SBI, the Government and the Minister should assure that the workers' salary and all other benefits, which they get, they will continue to get.

If the area where the employees are transferred is beyond the radius of 100 km, then it causes difficulty to the employees. This difficulty of them should also be taken into consideration. The IBA and the Government agreed and all employees and officers of the nationalized banks have been given the assurance that they would get pension from 2009. Grameen Bank employees get the salary, but not other benefits and pension. So, giving pension to the employees of the Grameen Banks should also be taken into consideration. These employees are giving provident fund deduction only upto Rs. 6500. The Government should consider about this ceiling also.

The State Bank officers and employees are getting pension from 200 years and all other banks have got pension as a result of the agreement. Their grievance is that when pension scheme was introduced for the nationalized banks, they were also given some additional benefit. The Government should consider this matter also.

I believe that the workers, officers and rural poor will be benefitted by the merger and I support the Bill. The Government has taken right decision by merging the Saurashtra Bank with the SBI.

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: I oppose this particular Bill. Bank of Saurashtra employees and officers association are agitating. The employees of the SBI are getting a pension scheme like a third retirement benefit. It is denied to those employees who will be absorbed from the State Bank of Saurashtra to the SBI after the merger. The whole bank workforce today are jointly opposing this move of merger.

This merger will inevitably reduce the number of bank branches of different banks throughout the country. It will be against the interest of rural poor and rural employees. This kind of merger is not in the interest of the country's economy. We request the Government to seriously consider the merger. It is not in the interest of the people, banking business in the country and the national economy. I oppose the very concept of merger and hence, I oppose this Bill.

There is a total unity of all the trade unions who are unitedly opposing this move, and if the Government goes forward in the same line, there will be further opposition.

Replying to the debate, the Hon'ble Minister said: The Indian banking sector is no longer stranger to the phenomenon of merger. Narasimham Committee and the Indian Banking Association's report have given their reports in support of the merger of the amalgamations. No direction on consolidation is being issued by the Government and the Reserve Bank of India. The Boards of the Banks have to take a decision in this regard. With merger, the customers get better banking services with larger geographical coverage of branches and ATM network.

While examining any merger proposal, Government will keep in view the interest of all the stakeholders, including the employees of the merging banks. Suitable clauses have been incorporated in the acquisition of the State Bank of Saurashtra Order, 2008 so that the pay and allowances or the compensation to the employees of merging entity are not altered to their disadvantage. There should be no apprehension about the service conditions of the Saurashtra Bank employees. All their interests will be protected.

Section 35 of the SBI Act, 1955 provides the legal framework for acquisition of banking institutions, including a public sector bank, by the SBI. Therefore, there is no legal infirmity in this matter. All branches of the Saurashtra Bank will function. No branches will be closed. There are over 82,000 branches of the various banks in the country. We have an expansion policy. More and more banks will be opened in the rural areas.

The motion for consideration of the Bill was adopted.

Clauses etc were adopted.

The Bill was passed.

The Payment of Gratuity (Amendment) Bill, 2009

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI HARISH RAWAT), moving the motion for consideration of the Bill, said:

There are two objectives of this amendment. First is to widen the definition of word 'employee' in order to extend the benefit of gratuity to the teachers. Second is to provide the benefit of the provision to the teachers from the date i.e., 13th April, 2008, on which the earlier benefit of gratuity was discontinued. The educational institutions were covered under the Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972 by a Notification dated 3rd April, 1997. The Supreme Court in its judgement had held that the teachers of educational institutions are not covered under the definition of word 'employee'. So, the Government decided to cover the teachers under above definition and a Bill was brought in Lok Sabha in 2007 and that was referred to Standing Committee. After giving due consideration to the recommendations of the Standing Committee, this amendment has been brought to get the lakhs of teachers benefitted under this Act. I urge upon the Hon'ble House to pass the Bill unanimously.

SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY: The Hon'ble Minister has said that the teachers would be benefitted by this amendment. But the way in which the word 'employee' has been placed, it seems that the Hon'ble Minister, the Government, are not ready to directly name the 'teacher' in it. There is a principle of BJP that we are very careful towards the welfare of the labour. We are more close to Bharty Mazdoor Sangh (BMS). We have just passed a banking bill. BMS is not agreed upon it. After the merger of banks, the condition of employees gets worse. So, the issue of merger of banks should be given a careful thought.

As regards this Bill, I do not understand how the teachers are going to be benefitted by it. Today, the education is being commercialized. With this commercial mind set-up, the position of teachers as well as other employees is going to be worsened. As regards the point of retrospective effect, we do support it. There are so many workers under unorganised sector. I want to ask what provisions have been made for their social security and for funding of this sector. There are agricultural labourers and marginal farmers in the country. They are very poor and are forced to commit suicide. Apart from this, the Government are silent on the matter of industrial workers.

Workmen has been termed as employees, then it should be called salary instead of wage. The minimum wages should be Rs. 263 keeping in view price-rise.

DR. E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: I support this Bill. Definition is a broad one. It is good to bring the teachers specially aided teachers also under the Gratuity Act. Now the total concept of the employee is gradually changing. The gradual shifting is now towards the employee rather than the employer. There is no protection for the employees of information technology. At least, there has to be a compulsory insurance scheme unorganized workers. The Labour Department should come forward to cover every citizen with life insurance irrespective of where he works in India or abroad.

The employer should pay the premium. Any type of work should be covered fully. Enforcement is very weak specially in SEZ. Therefore, it is high time to think about empowering enforcement authorities. It has to be ensured that law enacted by the legislature is properly enforced by the Executive. A better enactment covering Provident Fund, Gratuity or any other scheme should be deliberated comprehensively. It has to cover all categories of the employees. The person who is employed should be insured for life and also for social security. The coverage should continue till his life irrespective of another employment. Gratuity should be increased to at least Rs. 10,00,000.

SHRI T.K. RANGARAJAN: I support this Bill. It will also help those who are in teaching profession. The Payment of Gratuity Act requires some more amendments. A lot of seasonal establishments are there. 90 per cent of the sugar factory employees are seasonal workers. That worker should be treated as a regular worker. The Minister must look into that amendment. The regular jobs are given on contracts. The contractors do not pay gratuity. Today, lakhs of contract workers are not eligible under this Act. So, what is the use of these five years? I would request the Minister to look into this very important point. There is no case for retaining the ceiling of Rs. 3,50,000 under the Payment of Gratuity Act. This ceiling should be removed with immediate effect. Gratuity paid to a workman beyond Rs. 3,50,000 is taxed. This is the violation of natural justice.

SHRI GOVINDRAO WAMANRAO ADIK: I rise here to support this Bill. I congratulate the Government to have amended this law to bring the teachers community under the purview of this legislation. Those who are left out from the present definition of this Amendment Bill should be considered again. As far as contract labour is concerned, the employers have always been able to evade these laws. The number of contract labours is more than regular employees. More than 50 per cent of the workers are contract workers. None of the laws is applicable to unit workers. This issue has to be looked into. The Hon'ble Minister should consider this suggestion of extending this ceiling up to Rs. 10 lakh.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: The Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972, allows the payment of gratuity to employees in any establishment. The State Governments are responsible for administering operations of this Bill. The Bill does not provide an estimate of the funding allocation required from the Consolidated Fund of India. This Bill is to be welcomed by one and all.

There is one important suggestion that the contract workers should be brought within the purview of this Act. The Government should make an overall assessment of the contract labour system, review the systemic flaws and carry out reforms through legislation.

SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS: The Minister said that the Supreme Court had asked for amendment in the act with a sense of respect towards the teachers and the Standing Committee had also said that you make a provision for it. I have a small suggestion. Can you add the word educational 'institutions' therein. If you will not clearly indicate for the teachers, perhaps your purpose will not be understood properly.

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: Have a ceiling of Rs. 10 lakhs, in line with the Sixth Pay Commission's recommendations, and, make it effective from the same date from which the Sixth Pay Commission has come into effect. Secondly, taxing superannuation fund is atrocious. Please stop this because giving it by one hand and taking it through other hand is not fair.

Replying to the debate, the Hon'ble Minister said: Hon'ble Supreme Court gave a decision in 2004. Particularly quoting the EPF Act it said that the Gratuity Act does not have such comprehensive definition of the word 'employees' as has been in this provision. Hence, the teachers could not be included therein. Government held discussion with all the stake-holders.

Then, Government brought an amendment Bill in the Parliament. When the matter was referred to the Standing Committee, they gave four important suggestions. Out of these, we have accepted one suggestion completely and two of the suggestions were being covered, one way or the other, in the Act after the amendment. While introducing this amendment Bill for consideration, I had explained the situation in which one of the suggestions could not be accepted. The Government does not want to avoid the debate. This is an important Bill which is benefiting more than 60 lakhs of teachers of the Central Government as well as the private institutions. Therefore, the Bill was passed in the Lok Sabha without any debate. We would like the Hon'ble Members to help us in its implementations.

As regards, not mentioning the word 'teacher' in the definition, if the word 'teacher' would have been mentioned, we would have been asked that why the other professions have not been mentioned. The way amendment has been brought therein, the teachers are also getting covered in it.

As far as the consultation with the trade unions is concerned, for the amendments that we have brought today, we did not accept the opinion of either Labour Commission or Expert Committee. We accepted the opinion of trade unions only in this matter. As far as the funding is concerned, we have made a provision in the Act that whatever State social security schemes the social security board, national security board will fix at national level and State social security boards at the level of State Government, the funding for them will be arranged by the Central Government in the matter of centre and by the State Government in the matter of States.

There is a provision in section 4A for life insurance coverage. Our Ministry is finding out ways to extend the benefits of the provisions of section 4A to the labourers. When the report of the Sixth Pay Commission was submitted, this Government not only accepted the report it also created a history. For the first time something was added to the report and some benefits were tried to be given the employees of the Central Government.

Today contract workers are an area of concern for all of us and we all are sensitive towards them. The Government is making efforts to extend the benefits of the provisions of various labour laws and to make their life better.

As far as the provision for five years is concerned, this is a kind of terminal benefit. If we will further reduce it, then it will become a part of wages and it will not be a social security measure anymore. The process of

social security measures started in 2004 and it is still continuing. This decade will be known as a decade for formulating scheme for measures for enacting the laws for the welfare of labourers.

*The motion for consideration of the Bill was adopted.
Clauses etc. were adopted.
The Bill was passed.*

V. K. AGNIHOTRI,
Secretary-General.

rssynop@sansad.nic.in

**ERRATA TO SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE, DATED 17TH DECEMBER,
2009**

- Page 314 Line 2 from bottom read the name of Hon'ble Minister as
'Km. MAMATA BANERJEE'
- Page 317 Line 18 add 'of' after 'shortfall'
- Page 330 Line 5 read 'every eye. With the help of the work, which'
for ' every eye with the help of the work. Which'