

1637 hours

DR. B.N. REDDY (MIRYALGUDA): The Bill for Building and other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Bill, 1996 is really something which is very important and I really support the Bill. It would really help the construction workers whether they are in the field of construction of buildings or projects, or in the field of any other construction work, where they are neglected. Neither there are any regulations in regard to the number of their working hours nor in regard to their accommodation. Their living conditions, sanitary conditions, condition with regard to water, electricity, everything is so bad. So, I feel that this Bill is definitely going to provide better conditions of work for the millions and millions of construction workers in the country.

The cess to be collected for the Welfare Fund, which has been limited to one per cent, can perhaps be looked into and revised so as to improve their conditions in comparison to other workers in other fields. We really have to think in terms of one per cent which would be collected from the employers. I think that may not be sufficient. But I would still say that an attempt is being made to see that some amount is collected and is deposited in the Welfare Fund and the same would be utilized for the welfare of the workers.

One important aspect which has to be mentioned is that there are several construction workers who are below 18 years of age. We see ten or twelve years old girls and boys working in this industry. There is no control; there is no regulation.

(kkk/1648/rs/asa)

Their education, their welfare and their development is not taken care of. We have been seeing the conditions in which they are put during the construction of buildings and other projects. They do not have proper accommodation and there are no proper living conditions. So, I would say that this Bill would definitely bring some improvement in the living and working conditions of the construction workers.

As I learn from some hon. Members, there have been some welfare measures taken in several States, especially in Kerala. But I would say that some beginning has been made, though it has already been delayed for such a long time. Once some effort is made, later on some more developments and amendments can be made in that.

So, I would request the House to definitely and seriously consider and pass this Bill so that we would be definitely doing some justice, some help to improve the conditions of these building and other construction workers.

Hence, I support the Bill. Thank you.

(ends)