

1444 hrs.

**SHRI XAVIER ARKAL (ERNAKULAM):** Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir. I am extremely proud to stand up in this House and support this Bill. It is because in 1977 when was an MLA, I had the occasion to inaugurate the first Kottida Nireena Thozhilali Union.

Today, as Shri Chennithala has said, it is a landmark. But I have my own apprehensions when it comes to the implementation side of the Bill. Nevertheless, it is a landmark and the poor people of this country, especially, the construction workers will appreciate and support the move.

Sir, the one suggestion which I would like to put forward for the consideration of this House is this. We have intentionally or unintentionally omitted the brick-makers and certain other connected trades. They are also a major section of the unorganised labour force in this country. They are not going to get substantial benefit from this enactment.

Secondly, out of 8.5 million casual construction workers, how many are going to get benefit out of this Bill? I am putting this question to this House very sincerely. In the coming years, this question will definitely come. At that time our people should not think that the House did not deliberate on this vital subject. This is an area which is unsailed. It is difficult to organise this sector. My experience, Sir, in this field is that the State is the fittest authority in the organised sector as far as this subject is concerned. Now, the Centre has taken the responsibility. Is this the policy of the Government to concentrate powers at the Centre? Anyway, the State Advisory Committee is there. This is a landmark enactment of the House.

I fully support this Bill and I am also really proud to see that the baby which was born in Kerala in 1977 is growing up to a maximum position. I hope in coming years, this enactment will be a landmark for the other unorganised labour sector also.

Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to speak.