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Title: Need to enhance wage ceiling from Rs.1600 to Rs. 6500 under Payment of Wages Act and issue a Gazette Notification relating thereto.

SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI (MADRAS NORTH): Sir, the Union Cabinet's decision to accept the recommendations of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Labour and Welfare empowering the Government of India to increase the wage ceiling from time to time on the basis of Consumer Price Index by a Gazette notification instead of bringing forward an Amending Bill in Parliament each time, is a welcome step. Accordingly, the Government of India should have come forward to issue necessary notification for enhancing the wage ceiling.

At present, an employee or workman is being defined with different yardstick and the ceiling fixed for salaries or wages also differs in various legislations. In the Industrial Disputes Act, the wage ceiling for workman is fixed at Rs.1600 per month whereas in the Payment of Bonus Act, the 'employee' is defined as any person employed on a salary or wage not exceeding Rs.2500 per month. Similarly, in the Payment of Gratuity Act, in the Plantation Labour Act, the salary ceiling is fixed for an employee. By adopting various parameters in fixing the wage ceiling for a worker under different legislations, there is every possibility of a worker being deprived of his benefits in the event of a legal dispute.

I would, therefore, urge upon the hon. Minister of Labour to issue necessary guidelines to adopt the proposed wage ceiling of Rs.6500 per month in the Payment of Wages Act and Payment of Bonus Act, as the wage or salary criteria for the purpose of defining an employee or workman under other relevant Acts. It is also urged upon him to issue Gazette notification for enhancing the wage ceiling from Rs.1600 to Rs.6500 per month in the Payment of Wages Act, at the earliest.