

LEVY SUGAR PRICE EQUALISATION FUND BILL*

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI SHAHNAWAZ KHAN): On behalf of Shri Jagjivan Ram, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the establishment, in the interest of the general public, of a fund to ensure that the price of levy sugar may be uniform throughout India and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the establishment, in the interest of the general public, of a fund to ensure that the price of levy sugar may be uniform throughout India and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI SHAHNAWAZ KHAN: I introduce the Bill.

BONDED LABOUR SYSTEM (ABOLITION BILL)—Contd.

MR. SPEAKER: The House will now take up further consideration of the following motion moved by Shri K. V. Raghunatha Reddy on the 23rd January, 1976:

"That the Bill to provide for the abolition of bonded labour system with a view to preventing the economic and physical exploitation of the weaker sections of the people and

for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY): I am grateful to the Hon'ble Members who participated in the debate. They have shed a lot of light on the strategy that we should adopt for the economic rehabilitation of the bonded labour. Some Members have pointed out that socio-economic legislation is bound to be reduced to a dead letter, if appropriate follow-up steps are not taken on the economic and the social fronts. The Government also share this view. The hon. Members have rightly pointed out that overt and disguised unemployment is rampant in the agrarian sector and there is a disquieting lack of balance between the supply and demand of labour in the rural market. Forced labour or debt-bondage are logical consequences of this imbalance and cannot obviously be done away with only through legislative fiat.

Government have analysed the economic problems that a bonded labourer would face immediately after emancipation. He will not have inputs for production or any supply of credit; he will neither have any professional skill that would enable him to pursue an independent livelihood. He may not be acceptable to the urban labour market either. Even when installed in a profitable activity, he will have no income during the period of gestation of any income-generating process; therefore, he may have to be given a consumption subsidy during the gestation period. The bonded labourer

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†Introduced with the recommendation of the President.