

(Thunder, 27 May 1961)

## **FOR WORKERS' BENEFIT AND WELFARE**

### **– Labour Legislation since October 1957**

By Janet Jagan, Minister of Labour

During the last three years, this Government has enacted a great deal of legislation which aims to improve wages and working conditions and the welfare of workers. I should like to remind you of some of these laws and the effects they have had on the welfare of workers.

#### **Workmen's Compensation (Amendment) Ordinance**

There have been three amendments to the Workmen's Compensation Ordinance. The Workmen's Compensation (Amendment) Ordinance, 1957 provides for the application of the provisions of the main Ordinance to domestic servants and thus, for the first time, entitles domestic servants to compensation. The Workmen's Compensation (Amendment) Ordinance 1958 enables compensation claims to be heard in a readily accessible Magistrate's Court for the convenience of employees and employers.

Another Amendment to that Ordinance in 1960 increases the minimum amount of compensation payable, e.g. in the case of death, the sum payable has been increased from eighteen hundred dollars to twenty-seven hundred dollars.

This amending Ordinance also extends the definition "workmen" in the main Ordinance to include all persons employed in manual labour and other persons in receipt of remuneration not exceeding the sum of twenty seven hundred dollars per annum.

This Ordinance also provides that where a lump sum payment of compensation is paid to a workman as a result of permanent incapacity or where he dies of his injuries, any amount paid as periodic payments shall not be deducted from the lump sum payment.

#### **Shops Consolidation Ordinance, 1958**

Another Ordinance which affects a large group of workers is the Shops (Consolidation) Ordinance, 1958. This Ordinance regulates the opening and closing hours of certain shops, the hours of work of shop assistants, and provides for the welfare of shop assistants.

The Ordinance restricts the hours of work per week of a shop assistant to 40 hours instead of 47 hours as was the case formerly. The overtime work of a shop assistant is limited to two hours in any one day or 20 hours in any one month. The ordinance also provides for compulsory pay at the rate of one and a half times the ordinary rate for all overtime work including work done during the period of eight working days immediately preceding Christmas Day.

#### **Bakers (Hours at Work) (Amendment) Ordinance, 1958**

Bakeries (Hours of Work) (Amendment) Ordinance, 1958 amends the main Ordinance so that as the law now stands it prohibits night baking in bakeries by self-employed persons, thus eliminating unfair competition.

### **Labour (Amendment) Ordinance, 1960**

Another important Ordinance is the Labour (Amendment) Ordinance 1960 which amends the Labour Ordinance with the principal object of giving effect to the Labour Inspectorate (Non Metropolitan Territories) Convention, 1947, and the Penal Sanctions (Indigenous Workers) Convention, 1939. Among other things the Ordinance provides for the inclusion of domestic servants where they have previously been excluded, thus giving them rights enjoyed by all workers.

This Ordinance also provides that an employer must supply to his employee information concerning the particulars of his wages and any change in those particulars.

The Ordinance abolishes penal sanctions against workers and also empowers officers of the Labour Department, when on visits of inspection, to carry out such enquires as they consider necessary to satisfy themselves that the law relating to the employment of persons is being strictly observed, and makes it compulsory for every employer to grant to his employees and their representatives every facility for communicating freely with the Commissioner of Labour and other officers of the Labour Department when on a visit of inspection.

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