

LOK SABHA

Tuesday, November 22, 1960/Agrahayana 1, 1882 (Saka).

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Employees' State Insurance Scheme

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326. { Shri A. M. Tariq:
Shri Indrajit Gupta:
Shri Ram Krishan Gupta:
Shri T. B. Vittal Rao:

Will the Minister of Labour and Employment be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 1974 on the 2nd September, 1960 and state:

(a) whether the Report on the working of the Employees' State Insurance Scheme has been examined; and

(b) if so, the action taken thereon?

The Deputy Minister of Planning and Labour and Employment (Shri L. N. Mishra): (a) and (b). The Report is still under examination in consultation with the Employees' State Insurance Corporation and the State Governments.

Shri A. M. Tariq: How much time will it take to finalise this Report because since the last Session we are hearing that it is under consideration? May I know if and when the recommendations will be accepted?

Shri L. N. Mishra: We have not taken long. The Report was submitted only in April, 1960 and we had to consult all the State Governments.

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Only five State Governments have sent their comments. Moreover, the Corporation has yet to finalise it. It is to meet in February, 1961 and we believe by that time it will be finalised.

Shri A. M. Tariq: May I know if Government has received replies of all the State Governments to whom it had sent this Report? Has every State Government sent its reply?

Shri L. N. Mishra: Five State Governments have sent their replies.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: May I know whether a copy of this will be made available to hon. Members? May I also know the recommendations that the Medical Benefits Council made when they considered this Report at their last meeting?

Shri L. N. Mishra: The Report is already available in the Library of the House and the hon. Member can look into it. The Medical Benefits Council met on the 15th November. They have sent some suggestions. We would not like to tell them in public interest.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: What progress has been made with regard to the extension of the benefit to families in various places and also with regard to the construction of hospitals in big cities?

Shri L. N. Mishra: About 4,88,000 families have been covered so far. Regarding construction of hospitals, construction is going on according to the schedule mostly.

Shri Tangamani: May I know whether the Corporation, when they consider this Mudaliar Committee report, will also take into consideration the comprehensive social security scheme which was submitted by Dr. Menon?

Shri L. N. Mishra: The Mudaliar Committee Report will be considered independently.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: May I know whether the Mudaliar Committee has recommended that with the present sources of resources it will not be possible to give full benefits and therefore the employers' contribution should be raised as per the Act?

Shri L. N. Mishra: There is already a proposal to raise the employers' contribution. I believe by April 1961 special contribution will have to be raised.

Shri Supakar: What percentage of employees are covered by the scheme?

Shri L. N. Mishra: The number of persons covered is about 15·768 lakhs.

Dr. Sushila Nayar: The hon. Minister is aware that several crores of rupees have accumulated already because of the delay in putting up hospital buildings etc. Now the contribution is proposed to be increased. But what steps has the Government taken to see to it that the money will be utilised in time and the facilities will be provided?

Shri L. N. Mishra: It is a fact that there has been some accumulation because the construction of hospitals could not be taken up. But we are now having the construction of hospitals and we believe that shortly most of the hospitals will come up.

Dr. Sushila Nayar: Is the hon. Minister aware of the fact that because of the delay in providing medical facilities to the employees no other benefits of the Employees State Insurance can be extended to workers? Large numbers of workers are in that category, that is, having made the contribution they are not receiving the benefits. What steps have been taken to rectify this situation?

Shri L. N. Mishra: I do not think the workers are deprived of the benefits. But it is a fact that they are not getting due benefits that they would have got if there had been good hospitals.

Shri Palaniyandy: This scheme is not extended to workers working in the mines side by side with those who are working in the cement factory. May I know whether Government will also extend it to the mine workers who are working in the cement factory?

Shri L. N. Mishra: Mine workers are covered by another Act.

Shri Anthony Pillai: With regard to the preventive aspect of medicine, has the Mudaliar Committee made any recommendations that are covered by another Act.

Shri L. N. Mishra: They have made a number of recommendations and the whole Report is available in the Library.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members will look into it.

Shri Anthony Pillai: I want to know about one particular aspect, namely, the preventive aspect.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member may go and spend some time in the Library.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: May I know whether the Government of West Bengal have also agreed to have a hospital under the ESIS scheme? If so, have the details been finalised? If not, why not?

Shri L. N. Mishra: Yes, Sir.

Shri Palaniyandy: My question was that workers working side by side in the cement factory mines . . .

Mr. Speaker: Next question. I have allowed sufficient number of questions.