

The third part is about the workers' participation.

MR. SPEAKER: It is difficult even for the Minister to reply. First, let the hon. Minister reply.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: First of all, our load factors are much more than that of the private airlines even on the trunk routes.

Secondly, regarding punctuality of the flights, except for the eastern sector, the southern, the western and the northern sectors are, by and large, satisfactory. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR: Not at all. Please do not mislead the House.

PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM: Sir, due to delay, we had to wait at Mumbai Airport for more than six hours. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR: What is the experience of the hon. Speaker?

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: In the months of December and January, because of the unprecedented fog which was never witnessed in the past thirty-six years, there were flight delays. We have operationalised the Category ILS-2. We have decided to operationalise Category ILS-3 by the end of November, 1999 to improve the aircraft movement.

And secondly, regarding food, as I have already said, it comes in Q.No. 5. When that Question is taken up, I will answer.

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Sir, as far as food is concerned, the quality must be improved. ...(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI BHAJAN LAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to say that the hon'ble Minister did not give a straight reply to the question asked by Shri Jain Saheb. Chandigarh is a Union territory and also the capital of Haryana and Punjab. Further, I will not be making any mistake if I make any reference to Himachal Pradesh in this context. Flight service to that State from Chandigarh were available for thirty years. In the morning it would take off for Srinagar and come back by the evening. But, now, you have cancelled that operation which is causing a lot of inconvenience to the people. I, therefore, would like to know the time from you by which you would start those flights for Chandigarh?

[*English*]

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Sir, I want to draw the attention of hon. Shri Bhajan Lal that flights to Chandigarh were cancelled in his Government's regime and now the Vajpayee led Government is starting these flights within a month.

Report of Satyam Committee

*222. *SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL:
SHRI MADHAV RAO PATIL:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Satyam Committee on the functioning of ESI has submitted its report;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the recommendations accepted by the Government; and

(d) the time by which these are likely to be implemented?

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the table of the House.

Statement

In July, 1998, the Government had constituted a Committee to review medical facilities available in ESI hospitals/dispensaries. The Committee submitted its report on 14.1.99. The important recommendations of the Committee include enhancement in the ceiling on expenditure on medical care from Rs. 500/- to Rs. 600/ per insured person per annum, vigorous implementation of Action Plan to sanction medical equipments, introduction of Health Record Booklet for each beneficiary, preparation of common formularies and rate contracts for supply of medicines, establishment of Rogi-Kalyan Samities, deterrent penal action for supply of sub-standard drugs, streamlining of the system of local purchases, contractual arrangements for ambulance, cleaning, laundry, privatisation of ESI hospitals, contribution of the Central Government towards the ESI Scheme etc.

The ESI Scheme is a self-financing scheme run mainly on the basis of contributions given by the employers and employees. The scheme is being administered by the ESIC except the medical care which

is mainly the statutory responsibility of the concerned State Governments. The expenditure on ESI medical care is being shared between the ESIC and the State Governments in the ratio of 7 : 1. In view of these existing arrangements, the recommendations of the Satyam Committee have been placed before the Corporation for consideration/recommendations. In its last meeting held on 19.02.99 the Corporation has decided to enhance the ceiling on expenditure on medical care from Rs. 500/- to Rs. 600/- per insured person per annum with effect from 1.4.1999.

SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, first of all I want to draw the attention of the hon'ble Minister towards his reply. I would like him to let me know whether this committee was set up one year ago or 10 years ago...*(Interruptions)* because the year mentioned in Hindi reply is 1988 and not 1998 ...*(Interruptions)*

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: This is not true.

SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL: It means, you are not giving due consideration to Hindi. ...*(Interruptions)*

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: No, no. It is not like that.

MR. SPEAKER: Please, ask your supplementary.

SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL: You may, please, look at this.

My supplementary is that ESI is a Centre sponsored scheme in which contribution is made by the employers and employees, The State Government also makes contribution. But inspite of its being a Centre sponsored scheme, it has not got any contribution by the Centre. Satyam Committee report clearly mentions that the Union Government must make some contribution. People of the town hospital near Pune in my constituency have also raised this demand.

MR. SPEAKER: What is your question? Please, ask your question.

SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL: I am asking the same thing. This is the same question. It has been the 15 years old long standing demand of the people of that area that these machines should be installed there in ESI hospitals. Now I want to ask whether the Government, in pursuance of the recommendations made, propose to provide these sophisticated machines to ESI hospitals everywhere?

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, as the hon'ble Member has asked, I want to inform him that this committee was set-up in July, 1998 and gave their report on 4 January, 1999. Thus the committee performed the important task of giving their recommendations. As we know, this is a specific scheme aimed at providing medical facilities to the employees and their family members. We have decided to provide assistance in installation of these sophisticated equipments in hospitals. We are issuing directions to give approval to the proposals sent by the State Governments in this regard.

SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL: In most of the ESI hospitals, sophisticated equipments are not available due to which employees do not get adequate and proper treatment. In case, they receive treatment or undergo any operation in other hospitals, that requires a lot of expenses which these employees can not afford. Whether Satyam Committee has made any recommendation that whatever expenses do incur on treatment of employees in hospitals other than ESI, should be met with by ESI? And if so, whether the Government propose to accept the same?

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is a scheme run by contribution. The State Governments get 7/8 share of the total amount from the Corporation whereas 1/8 share of the amount is required to be given by the State Governments themselves. When the Government get the entire amount then it is utilized by the State Governments. We are ready to give our approval to the proposals of State Governments to purchase sophisticated equipments and machines. In the case of Maharashtra, we have already given our approval. In pursuance of main recommendation the amount of Rs. 500/ for every insured person has been enhanced to Rs. 600/- or providing medical treatment. So far as implementation of other recommendations are concerned, the Government would like to discuss them in the next sitting of the Corporation.

PROF. JOGENDRA KAWADE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, under the State Employees' Insurance Scheme, the hon'ble Minister has increased the amount of Rs. 500 to 600 for providing medical treatment to every insured employee. But he has said nothing in respect of other recommendations made by this committee. The condition Equipments medicines and medical treatment provided in ESI hospitals is very bad. Most of the people do not want to go there as medicines provided to there are generally of sub-standard quality. So, whether the hon'ble Minister propose to take some action in this regard?

In addition to it whether the Central Government provide maximum support in the scheme in which the medical expenditure has been raised from Rs. 500 to Rs. 600 per annum per labour and whether by doing so, the Government are making any scheme to give the best medical and hospital facility to maximum number of employees.

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir I have told that it would be considered in the next meeting of the corporation on the rest of the recommendations. We had considered the report of Stayam committee recently and the provision of the financial assistance in that report, have been increased to Rs. 600. As far as the quality of the medical services is concerned, all this work is related to the management by the State Government which performs it by getting assistance from us. Governments therefore, it is expected from the State Government that the assistance which we have provided, it should be utilized properly. We have extended the assistance for medicines. We have raised that the amount of the assistance. Earlier there was a provision to spend Rs. 165 only but now it has been raised by Rs. one hundred. It has been stated therein that Rs. 220 should be spent on this item. Special attention should be paid to the quality of the medicines which are being utilized for medical treatment. This recommendation is also include in the recommendations of the Satyam Committee.

PROF. JOGENDRA KAWADE: The sub-standard medicines being provided and...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity. From Beedi Welfare Fund, the Government of India is providing all the benefits to the beedi rollers. Is the Government actually aware of how much beedi welfare fund available? The Government knows the figures. Kindly place it before the House. Also, in the year 1998, the Beedi (Amendment) Bill was passed in Parliament. Since that, time till date, whatever benefit that has to be reached to the beedi rollers, has not reached them. They are not enjoying the benefits out of the Beedi Welfare Fund.

About the medicine also, the Minister is telling that it is the responsibility of the State Government. But even the State authorities are not taking any part in the purchase of medicines throughout the country. Is there any proposal before the Government for bulk purchase of medicine? And, it should be stamped by the Government of India. It should be mentioned that it should

be directly supplied through the ESI. Is there any proposal before the Government? Kindly also mention the amount available in the Beedi Welfare Fund.

MR. SPEAKER: You have to ask your supplementary only.

[*Translation*]

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: It is true that the question is not related to the Beedi Workers, even then I would like to point out for the kind information of the hon'ble Member that earlier money was not available with us. As per the record we have total strength of the Beedi Workers in the country at about 42 lac. We raise the money in the form of cess for providing remaining facilities to those workers. The cess which was collected during the previous session of the Parliament was fifty paise per thousand rupees of Beedis. It has been increased to one rupee. Due to this, the amount of cess is going to be increased on this basis. We are going to expand the facilities. As far as the suggestion of marking the ESI label on medicines is concerned we have noted it and the action will be taken on this.

SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know through you that mostly the petty employees and the factory workers purchase medicines from the ESI dispensaries but a complaint has been received that the stock of medicines which should be available in the ESI dispensaries is not sufficient. Moreover, the number of beneficiaries is decreasing, is it true?

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Infact, this number continues to fluctuate its limit depends on the limit of income and wages or workers. This number decreases because of the number of employees falling outside the wage limit. Therefore it is not correct to say that the number of beneficiaries is decreasing. Definitely it keep on decreasing and decreasing.

[*English*]

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Sir, the Minister has just now stated that the medical expenditure will be increased from Rs. 500 to Rs. 600 per annum per labour. I want to know whether this Government has given any basic norms or data to the Satyam Committee to arrive at this increase from Rs. 500 to Rs. 600.

You would have supplied some basic data or some norms or some guidelines. What are all those data or norms supplied to the Committee? Further, if there is

any inflation, will you take the inflation into account to decide the future course of expenditure fund? Many of the hospitals are not having adequate number of doctors and there are no specialists at all. What are you going to do? What is your reaction to provide as many doctors and specialists as required to give proper treatment to the labourers?

[Translation]

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Certainly, there are constant endeavours to improve the health services in the ESI and in view of that since the new Government has taken over, we have tried to make arrangements for expanding the treatment facilities and improving management to improve the existing facilities available with them. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI T.R. BAALU: This is general reply. He should give us a specific reply.

MR. SPEAKER: Let the Minister reply.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: The hon. Minister is replying generally. What is the rate? What is the use of our asking questions? I want to know about the points raised by the Committee and how it has come to such a conclusion. What is the reason behind it? What is the rationale? He has to answer properly.

[English]

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: I could not follow...*(Interruptions)*.

[Translation]

As I have stated that this scheme has to be implemented by the State Governments, we just help them. If there is no Doctor and Paramedical Staff this is the responsibility of State Governments that they should make them available and provide proper service to the employees. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: We are not getting proper replies.

[Translation]

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Actually these were the expectations of the State Governments that funds would be raised for increasing medical facilities. But the assistance provided by us is not being utilized properly according to instructions issued. The medical expenditure per amount per labour has been increased from Rs. 500 to Rs. 600 so that the quality of medical services are improved.

SHRI MITRASEN YADAV: Hon'ble Speaker Sir, the Minister is looking after the Ministry of Labour of Government of India. In a country like India there is the importance of the money capital and labour capital. It is upto the Government to safeguard. It is the biggest task assigned to you. The way in which the negligence is done with the employees in various fields, they are neglected in the field of health care also in the same way. Deduction is made in their salaries. You have enhances only by Rs. 100 for the workers where as incalculable amount is spent for the service of high-ups....*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: What is your supplementary question?

SHRI MITRASEN YADAV: I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the recommendations of Satyam Committee are reviewed from time to time. If they are not reviewed, whether the Government would like to implement them because they are not provided proper facilities. Until or unless the review is made, the reality is not known. I would like to know whether the recommendations of the Committee would be implemented or not and whether the recommendations of the committee are reviewed or not.

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: As I have stated that the recommendations were submitted to corporation on 14 January 1999. Those recommendations are yet to be considered. When those are considered completely then there would be the question of their implementation.

SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the Minister that the Government have accepted many recommendations of the Satyam Committee. The medical expenditure has been increased from Rs. 500 to Rs. 600. It means that a man will be benefited by one rupee and forty seven paise in a day in terms of medicines.

[English]

What is the increase? What are the recommendations of the Satyam Committee Report? I would like to ask the hon. Minister to reconsider the Report and tell Shri Satyam not to propose such recommendations. You are giving one person Re. 1.47 paise only.

Moreover, in my constituency, Bhilai, there are 50,000 labourers working and they have not been provided with any facilities. I have been requesting the hon. Minister times without number and probably the hon. Minister has not taken care. I have received this letter from him that the matter was being looked into. This is a general reply received from every Minister.

I would like to invite your attention. I know that Shri Nitish Kumar. He has done the work there. I must tell him. This is a general reply from the Minister that the matter is being looked into. I would like to know from the hon. Minister about this rate of Re. 1.47 paise. Let him reply ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Let the Minister reply.

[Translation]

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to tell Shri Voraji through you that we provide financial assistance to the State Governments for the Employees State Insurance Scheme. We take 4.75 percent and 1.75 percent as contribution from the employer and the employees respectively. We send 7/8 the part of this fund to the State Government. It is the responsibility of the State Governments as how they maintain this fund and make available the medical facilities. Therefore, it would not be proper to say that the Central Government is not paying attention to it. The Satyam Committee report has since been laid for the first time and we are going to consider its recommendations in the next meeting and decision would be taken on the remaining recommendations later on.

[English]

Food Processing Policy

*224. MAJ. GEN. BHUVAN CHANDRA KHANDURI (AVSM): Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the salient features of the food processing policy;

(b) whether the demand for processed food items is increasing;

(c) if so, the manner in which the Government propose to meet the rising demand; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to make processed food items available to the working class at affordable rates?

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

The Policy regarding food processing is guided by the Industrial Policy of the Government. Most of the food processing items have been exempted from the provisions of industrial licensing under the Industries (Development & Regulation) Act, 1951 with the exception of beer and alcoholic drinks and items reserved for the small scale sector. The items reserved for the small scale sector are pickles & chutneys, bread etc. However, as per the Industrial Policy, all the units located within the radius of 25 kms of urban limit of cities having a population of 10 lakhs as per 1991 census and not located in any of the approved industrial estates would require licensing. As far as foreign investment is concerned, Automatic Approval through Reserve Bank of India for foreign equity upto 51% is available for majority of the processed food items. Approval for more than 51% foreign equity is also allowed on case to case basis by the Government on the recommendations of the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB).

It is evident from the growth in production of various processed food items over the last few years that the demand for processed food items is increasing. The Government has taken a number of initiatives including policy initiative as stated above to promote the growth of food processing sector. The Ministry of Food Processing Industries provides financial assistance in the form of soft loan as well as grant in aid for growth, promotion and development of food processing industries. This assistance is available to Private Entrepreneurs, Non-Government Organisations, Co-operatives, Public Sector Undertakings etc. The thrust areas for Plan assistance are:

(i) Setting up of post harvest infrastructure including cold chain infrastructure.