

**Title:** Made a statement regarding situation arising out of the strike by Group C & D Employees of Government Hospitals in Delhi.

16.01 hrs

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): The Group C & D employees of hospitals of the Central Government, Government of NCT of Delhi, Municipal Corporation of Delhi, New Delhi Municipal Council, ESIC, etc; have under the aegis of the Joint Council of JACKHU, CHEF, ESI and AIIMS, have proceeded on strike with effect from 20.7.1998 with a notice for proceeding on an indefinite strike from 25.7.1998, if their demands are not accepted by the Government. Their major demands include:

(i) Three time bound promotions to all the Health employees;

(ii) Better Pay-scales to be given to all Group C & D employees;

(iii) Night Weightage Allowance, Risk and Hazard Allowance, Washing

Allowance to be paid to them.

(iv) Patient Care Allowance prevailing in various hospitals/institutions be given at par to all Deprived Health Employees

and PCA should be 25 per cent of the basic pay; and

(v) All anomalies/disparities arising out of recommendations of 4th

and 5th Pay Commissions be removed and uniformity in recruitment

rules be brought out;

(vi) Implementation of the agreement signed on 23.9.1997, between

JACKHU and the D.G.H.S.

In pursuance of the above demands, the unions adopted the following agitational programme:

May 22, 1998 Day long dharna from 9.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. at respective hospitals in the groups of 10-12 people.

May 25, 1998 Indefinite relay hunger strike at Nirman Bhawan.

June 4, 1998 Mass demonstration in front of Nirman Bhawan.

June 5-9, 1998 Wearing of black badges.

June 10, 1998 Mass demonstration at Nirman Bhawan by all affiliate units as well as mass dharna by outstation health employees too.

June 16-20, 1998- Two hour demonstration at each unit.

June 25-26, 1998 One day token strike - from 6.00 AM on 25th

June, 1998 to 6.00 PM on 26th June, 1998.

July 9-10, 1998 48 hours token strike

July 20-23, 1998 Indefinite strike if their demands

are not considered.

Group of Ministers:

The Government have set up a Group of Ministers to examine these demands. The Group of Ministers consists of:

(i) Shri Yashwant Sinha, Minister of Finance

(ii) Shri Dalit Ezhilmalai, Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare.

(iii) Shri K.R. Janarthanan, Minister of State in the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, and Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance (Banking, Revenues and Insurance).

[Status of Negotiations:

Meetings with the representatives of the Joint Council have been held on 30th June, 7th July, 14th July and 22nd July, 1998 by the

Director General of Health Services. I also held a meeting with them on 19th July, 1998.

The meetings of the Group of Ministers have been held on 13th July and 19th July, 1998.

In the last meeting taken by the Director General of Health Services on 22nd July, 1998, a substantial increase in the Hospital Patient Care Allowance (HPCA) and the Patient Care Allowance (PCA) was offered to the striking employees along with an assurance that the left out categories of employees connected with patient care will also get this benefit and also the washing allowance. This offer was not accepted by the employees who demanded that the increase in HPCA/PCA should be in proportion to the increase allowed in the Nursing Allowance to the nurses in Delhi Hospitals. They also demanded that there should be minimum three time-bound promotions for every Group

C and D employee of hospitals.

These demands are being examined by the Government. The Director General of Health Services has also appealed to the Unions to withdraw their agitation and participate in the negotiations.

Precautionary Measures Taken for Maintenance of Hospital Facilities:

Against this background, realising that all the measures which had been taken were not leading to a diffusion of the situation and further realising that the strike would not be confined only to Central Government hospitals but would involve the All India Institute of Medical Sciences and all the Delhi hospitals, including those under the National Capital Territory of Delhi, including those under the Municipal Corporation, etc., the Union Health Secretary called a meeting on 8th July, 1998 where the Chief Secretary of the Delhi Government, the Home Secretary, the Principal Health Secretary and a senior representative of the Commissioner of Police attended. It was inter alia decided that:-

- (i) the police would see that security was mounted at major hospitals so that doctors and others are not obstructed. Further, it was noted that if there was any overt incidence of manhandling of staff, disrupting of critical work or sabotage of equipment, the police would make arrests on the basis of complaints to be registered by the Medical Superintendents;
- (ii) an appeal would be issued through Doordarshan so that all employees are informed that a Group of Ministers had been set up and that they should not take precipitating action;
- (iii) the Delhi Government will take steps to ask all private nursing homes to attend to casualties and emergencies;
- (iv) contingency measures would be adopted by individual hospitals to see that the least possible problems were caused to the public; and
- (v) specific tie up between designated hospitals and the police could be set in motion for conducting medico-legal work and post mortem.

Assistance is also being sought from the Railways for attending to emergency cases in their own hospitals.

Retired employees are being recruited to man various facilities in our hospitals.

However, I appeal to our Unions to call off their agitation in the interest of the patient care and resolve the differences by negotiations instead. 2fs

---