

[Shri Shankersao Savant]

not paid even income-tax to the tune of crores of rupees and yet they are allowed to manage some of these firms and they are already mismanaging the employees' provident funds with the result that the employees are scared that in case the company comes to grief they may not get anything by way of gratuity or provident fund. So, I would suggest that the Department should take preventive steps in time after seeing what these company managements are doing.

With these words, I support the Demands of the Ministry.

17.57 hrs.

STATEMENT RE: JUNIOR DOCTORS' STRIKE

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING (DR. KARAN SINGH): I am glad to inform the House that the Junior Doctors of the Post-Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences in Chandigarh, and the Jawaharlal Institute of Post-Graduate Medical Studies and Research in Pondicherry have called off their strike and resumed duties. This follows the decisions on this problem reached by Government after careful and thorough consideration. In order to save the time of the Members I am placing a copy of the decisions on the Table of the House, and will only highlight a few salient points.

These decisions mark a further advance over the announcement by Government on 12th January, 1974, which had in turn improved upon the recommendations of the Kartar Singh Committee. According to the new decisions an Intern will get a stipend of Rs. 350/- per month with effect from 1st January this year as against Rs. 200/- on the 1st January, 1973 (an increase of 75 per cent). Similarly as against a fixed stipend of Rs. 275/- the First Year Junior Resident in Delhi will now

get Rs. 545 (an increase of 98.2 per cent) and as against fixed stipends of Rs. 300 per month the Second and Third Year Junior Residents will now get Rs. 599.50 and Rs. 654.00 (an increase of 100 per cent and 118 per cent respectively). What is more, the emoluments of the Junior Residents have now been made sensitive to rise in the cost of living, and they will be allowed further increases in Dearness Allowance at the same rate as admissible to Central Government employees of the same group.

Another important point is that Government, consistent with its policy of fairness and a genuine desire to avoid victimization of the strikers has made several concessions with regard to the treatment of the strike period. Whereas the period will be treated on the principle of 'no work, no pay', all punitive action will be withdrawn and Government will consider condoning the break in service for other purposes at the expiry of the tenure subject to satisfactory performance of duties. In the event of condonation there will be no mention of strike in the final certificate and records of Junior Doctors. If the Junior Doctors are required to extend their terms by the concerned academic authorities, they will be given facilities to do so and will also be paid for the extended period.

In the face of such a generous offer, it is most surprising that the Delhi Junior Doctors have not called off their strike. Although I have not yet received any formal communication from them, today's press reports are not encouraging. Hon'ble Members will appreciate that this whole matter cannot be allowed to drag on indefinitely. While the Junior Doctors are obsessed with their own demands they seem to be totally impervious of the continuing suffering that they are inflicting upon large sections of the community. It is not my habit to use strong language, nor do I wish to depart from the attitude of sympathy and consideration that I have adopted throughout this prolonged period. However,

the time has now come when it has to be made perfectly clear that decisions of Government on this matter are final, and further, that they cannot be held open indefinitely in view of our overriding responsibility to ensure that the hospitals function normally.

Despite all that has happened, I retain my basic faith in the good sense and goodwill of the Junior Doctors, and I sincerely hope that they will not push matters to the point of no return. It is our information that even in Delhi a considerable number of Junior Doctors do wish to return to work. I also understand that a number of junior doctors have left Delhi and have gone back to their homes pending a settlement of the strike. In order therefore, to give some more time for better sense to prevail and for doctors from outside to return here, I have decided to keep Government's offer open until the end of this week. Thereafter Government will take necessary steps to ensure alternative arrangements as the situation may demand. I must add that any attempt at intimidation or physically disrupting the out-patient departments or any other aspect of hospital functioning will have to be put down with a firm hand.

Statement Re: Government's Decisions

18.00 hrs.

In the event of immediate withdrawal of the strike, the following can be agreed to:—

1. Junior Residents will be on contract service. From 1st January, 1974 they will be paid as follows:

First Year—Rs. 500/- plus Dearness Allowance at 3 per cent of the pay with effect from 1st January, 1974. Further increases in D.A. will be allowed with effect from the same dates and at the same rates as admissible to Central Government employees of the same pay group. City com-

pensatory allowance will also be paid as admissible to Central Government employees.

Second Year—Rs. 550/- plus allowances as above.

Third Year—Rs. 600/- plus allowances as above.

The contract service will involve a selection at the time of first admission and also after completion of the first year.

2. Stipend of Interns will be Rs. 350/- per month with effect from 1st January, 1974.

3. The request of the Junior Doctors for NPA of Rs. 150/- per month to Senior as well as Junior Residents, and higher starting pay for Senior Residents will be placed before Cabinet for final decision.

4. Minimum qualification for selection as Senior Resident in any speciality will be a post-graduate Diploma or Degree in the concerned speciality. If such candidates are not available in any particular speciality, those without post-graduate qualification may be considered for selection. Senior Resident's possessing post-graduate qualifications will continue to get post-graduate allowance as recommended by the Kartar Singh Committee. The present Registrars, who are not possessing post-graduate qualification, will be permitted to complete their normal tenure.

5. Normal and avoidable breaks between Junior and Senior residency, and between Resident service and subsequent recruitment to regular Government service, will be condoned up to a total period of one year for calculation of qualifying service for pension and retirement benefits.

6. In regard to the experience gained as a result of Residency service for the purpose of grant of increments, the attention of the U.P.S.C will be drawn to the rules under which they

(Dr. Karan Singh)

have power to make recommendations for grant of advance increments and they will be requested to give due weightage to such service and experience.

7. (i) The period of strike will be treated on the principle of 'no work, no pay'. However, as a gesture of goodwill, Government agrees to withdraw all punitive action initiated against the junior doctors including suspension, termination, eviction orders and withdrawal of notices for recovery of scholarship amounts.

(ii) Government will consider the question of condoning the break in service at the expiry of tenure in all cases, subject to satisfactory performance of duties. In the event of condonation, there will be no mention of the strike in the final certificate/records of junior doctors.

(iii) The question of condoning the break in academic term is a matter

which cannot be decided by Government unilaterally, as it involve various academic authorities including the Medical Council of India. This matter will be forwarded to them for sympathetic consideration. In the event of these authorities requiring an extension of any of the periods for various categories of junior doctors they will be provided facilities to complete this period and will be paid for this period.

8. These decisions will be applicable to the Central institutions at Chandigarh and Pondicherry also.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House now stands adjourned to meet again at 11 A.M. tomorrow

18.03 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Wednesday, April 3, 1974/Chaitra 13, 1896 (Saka).