

SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL : Hon. our senior colleague Prof. N. G. Ranga has suggested that this ESI Scheme should be extended to agricultural labour and unorganised labour. No doubt, it is a very good suggestion because whatever legislations we have and social security measures we have for the workers, the benefit of those legislations and social security measures are going only to the organised labour and very little benefit goes to the unorganised labour and in our country out of total work force, it is only 10% of the work force which is in organised sector and 90% of the work force is in unorganised sector. There are practical difficulties in extending this Scheme to the agricultural sector and unorganised sector.

In 1972, the Corporation had set up a perspective planning committee to go into this programme and to prepare a phased programme for the Corporation for giving medical and other benefits under this Scheme and they prepared a programme in three phases.

The first phase, according to the programme prepared by that Committee, is to extend these facilities to the factories run with power and employing 10 to 19 workers, factories run without power, shops, cinemas, including preview theatres, road motor transport and newspaper establishments, hotels and restaurants employing 20 or more workers. In the second phase, the Committee wanted the organized mines and plantations to be covered. In the third phase, they wanted the scheme to be extended to unorganized or semi-organized sector about which accurate statistical data is not available.

So far as these three phases of programmes prepared by that Committee are concerned, the Corporation has not covered even the first phase, let alone the question of going to the second and the third phases. That stage has not been reached. So far as the third phase is concerned, about extending the scheme to the workers in the unorganized sector and mostly in the agricultural sector, this was considered by the Government, this was examined by the Government, and it is recognised that there is need to extend the social security benefit to the workers in the

unorganized sector. But at the same time it is realised that the ESI Corporation may not be in a position to enter the unorganized sector. It is, therefore, felt that we may have to leave it to the State Governments to provide the social security benefit to the workers in this sector by setting up appropriate departmental undertakings. That is the view of the Government because the unorganized sector is spread over and we cannot have such a big and huge organization; there are practical difficulties.

Hon. Member Prof. Ranga has suggested why not publicise whatever we have been doing for the workers by printing pamphlets and all that? I want to tell the Hon. Member that we have got another programme also; there is an organization for creating consciousness and awareness among the workers, that is, the Central Board for Workers' Education. A labour leader is the Chairman of that Board and it is a society registered under the Societies Act. The entire expenditure of educating the workers, training the workers, creating awareness and consciousness among the workers, is being met by the Government. So, on an average, every year, we are spending Rs. 3 crores on educating workers. So, sufficient programmes are there to create consciousness, to publicise what we have been doing for the workers. Therefore, the suggestion made by the Hon. Member is well taken care of.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

“That the Bill be passed.”

The motion was adopted.

15 34 hrs.

DISCUSSION ON REPORT OF EIGHTH FINANCE COMMISSION AND MEMORANDUM OF ACTION TAKEN THEREON

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : Sir, with your permission, I beg to move :

“That this House takes note of the Report of the Eighth Finance Commission together with Memorandum showing action taken thereon,

laid on the Table of the House on the 24th July, 1984."

MR. CHAIRMAN : Motion moved :

"That this House takes note of the Report of the Eighth Finance Commission together with Memorandum showing action taken thereon, laid on the Table of the House on the 24th July, 1984."

There are some amendments given notice of.

SHRI CHITTA BASU (Barasat) : Sir, I beg to move :

That in the motion—

add at the end—

"and urges upon the Government to give effect to the recommendations of the Commission from April, 1984."
(1)

PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA (Samastipur) : Sir, I beg to move :

That in the motion—

add at the end—

"and regrets that it has failed to suggest structural remedy for debt relief to the States in respect of overdrafts."(2)

That in the motion—

add at the end—

"and regrets that the Union Government has departed from the accepted principle of treating the Commission's Report as an award in respect of revenue shares and grants-in-aid." (3)

That in the motion—

add at the end—

"and regrets that there is no synchronization of the Finance Commission's quinquennium with the Seventh Plan period so as to enable the Centre and the States to have a complete picture

of their respective Plan resources."
(4)

That in the motion—

add at the end—

"and its failure to link railway earnings from passenger fares as the States are expected to provide a variety of supporting services for passenger traffic." (5)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee is not present.

Some Hon. Members have requested that discussion on the Motion and the Amendments moved thereto may be taken up at a later date and that the other items of business listed in the Agenda may be taken up now. If the House agrees.....

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN : So, it is agreed.

15.35 hrs.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (PUNJAB), 1984-85

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now we take up item No 10--Discussion and voting on the Demands for Grants in respect of the Budget for the State of Punjab for 1984-85.

Motion moved :

"That the respective sums not exceeding the amounts on Revenue Account and Capital Account shown in the Fourth column of the Order Paper, be granted to the President out of the Consolidated Fund of the State of Punjab to complete the sums necessary to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1985, in respect of the heads of demands entered in the second column thereof against Demands 1 to 41."