

(b) the steps proposed to widen the schemes to include workers of the unorganised sectors to provide them social security?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) As per the 1999-2000 estimates of National Sample Survey Organisation, there were about 397 million workers, out of which 26 million have been extended benefits under Employees Provident Funds & Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 and schemes framed thereunder.

(b) Some changes in the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 are contemplated, so as to widen the scope and streamline the implementation of the provisions of the Act.

Failure of ESI Schemes

†1932. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the ESI Schemes have failed to provide social security to all due to many lapses;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that under this scheme only 10 per cent employees of the organised sector are benefited whereas employees of the unorganised sector are also covered under the scheme;

(c) if so, the main reasons therefor; and

(d) whether Government propose to strengthen this scheme and to remove the lapses after identifying the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) to (d) The ESI Scheme applies to workers employed in factories and establishments coverable under the ESI Act and drawing wages up to Rs. 6,500/- per month. The Scheme mainly targets the workers in the organised sector. However, the workers belonging to the unorganized sector are also covered under

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

the ESI Scheme, when they render services in the premises of factories establishments covered under the Scheme.

The extension of ESI Scheme is a continuous process.

Rise in the consumer price Index

1933. SHRI RAJU PARMAR:

SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that inflation rate based on the consumer Price Index (CPI) has been rising for the last six months;

(b) if so, the details thereof month-wise; and

(c) the steps Government have taken or propose to take to reduce the inflation rate by controlling the prices of agricultural and other goods?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) and (b) The rate of inflation based on the Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers for the last six months (May—October, 2001) is given below:

May, 2001	2.50%
June, 2001	3.39%
July, 2001	4.04%
August, 2001	5.14%
September, 2001	4.73%
October, 2001	4.23%

(c) Government constantly maintain a close watch on the price and availability of essential commodities in the country. Apart from certain long-term measures for augmenting the production of essential commodities in the country, imports of items like pulses and edible oils are allowed to augment their availability. Export of onion are regulated through quantitative restrictions. Essential commodities like rice, wheat, sugar and kerosene are also being supplied through the outlets of Public Distribution System at below market prices. Stringent action is taken against hoarders black-marketeers and others indulging in unfair trade practices under the Essential