

ITEM 2:

The position regarding the poor state of medical services provided in various States on behalf of ESI Scheme was explained. It was claimed that the Scheme was being run by the contributions made by the workers and employers to the ESIC which is a statutory body but the ESIC was unable to exercise any control over the quality of medical services. Since ESIC was accountable to the tripartite body of the Corporation and the Parliament and the funds were provided to the extent of 7/8 of the expenditure, it was proposed by the workers' representatives and employers' representatives that the medical services should be taken over by the ESIC. The Chairman suggested that the management of the ESI medical service- in the States may be entrusted to a Joint Management Committee comprising State Labour/Health Secretary, Director, State ESI Medical Services and the representatives of the Corporation for taking decisions speedily and the share of the State Government and the Corporation may be placed in a separate fund which should be subject to the control of this Committee.

After a detailed discussion some of the States welcomed the suggestion and thought it could be workable. Some States wanted the legal aspects of such a Committee to be examined and expressed reservations regarding the practicability of such a Committee functioning effectively. Some of the States opposed. Finally it was decided that the State Governments should give it further thought and special meetings at both Regional and Central level will be called to discuss it further in which the representatives of employers and trade unions will also be invited.

ITEM 3:

The amendments to the Minimum Wages Act, 1948, in the Agenda notes were supported by the State Labour Ministers. It was generally agreed that the amendments should be enacted in an early date.

It was felt that if additional inspectors were appointed, mobility of inspectors improved, publicity stepped up, awareness raised through organising camps and

group meetings for educating agricultural labour and making inspection the responsibility of only one agency at State level, would all go a long way towards making implementation of these Acts effective. All these aspects of better implementation would be put on a regular schedule of monitoring.

The Conference suggested for strengthening of Central assistance.

ITEM 4:

The Conference noted the need for uniform rules on important aspects of occupational safety and health and agreed that the Central Government should also have the power to make rules under the Factories Act. The Central Government should, however, circulate the draft rules among the State Governments and finalise the Rules after consultation with them. The Conference also felt that provisions should be made to avoid conflict between the Central and the State Rules. Moreover, the State Governments should have the power to supplement the Central Rules.

Drinking water scarcity in Orissa

311. SHRI BAIKUNTHA NATH SAHU:

Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have identified the towns in Orissa facing acute drinking water scarcity during summer;

(b) if so, the names of those towns; and

(c) the scheme drawn up or proposed to be implemented to remove water scarcity problem in Koonjhargarh?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI): (a) to (c). Water Supply is a State subject. Urban Water Supply Schemes are planned and implemented by the State Governments and executed as their normal plan activity.

Accordingly, it is for the State Government to identify the towns and execute specific schemes.