

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI

O. V. ALAGESAN): Three accidents occurred as shown in the statement attached. [See Appendix VI, Annexure No. 148.]

EMPLOYEES STATE INSURANCE SCHEME

276. SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Will the Minister for LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that while inaugurating the Madras Regional Board of the Employees' State Insurance Corporation the Minister for Labour referred to some difficulties which have slowed down the progress of the Employees' State Insurance scheme;

(b) if so, what are these difficulties; and

(c) what steps are being taken to overcome these difficulties?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR LABOUR (SHRI ABID ALI): (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). A statement giving the required information is placed on the Table of the House.

Statement

The following are the main difficulties which have considerably slowed down the progress of the Employees' State Insurance Scheme and the steps that are being taken to solve them:—

(1) According to the original programme of implementation, Delhi and Kanpur were chosen for a start and the Scheme was on the point of being put on the ground when employers pleaded that the burden of implementation of the Scheme would place the industry at those places under a competitive handicap. A solution was ultimately found which was to distribute the burden of the employers' contribution among all employers in the country and the Act had to be amended for the purpose.

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(2) The provision of medical care for insured persons under the Scheme is the responsibility of State Governments. They have also to bear a part of the cost of providing medical care. The State Governments with their financial difficulties do not find this responsibility easy to discharge but they are all doing their best to co-operate with the Corporation. After the State Governments' co-operation is assured, there are many arrangements to be made and details to be worked out.

(3) A third cause is the time taken in making reasonably satisfactory arrangements for the actual rendering of medical care. In some States, it is not immediately possible, for lack of facilities, to introduce the service system. In these States, the possibility of resorting to what is called the panel system has to be explored, which is not an easy matter either. Settlement of the terms of panel doctors keeping in view the resources of the Corporation takes time. Unless these are settled, it is not possible to introduce the Scheme in any State.

(4) There have also been deficiencies in the administrative set up of the Corporation. These have recently been removed.

2. To ensure rapid implementation of the Scheme throughout the country, Regional Boards are being established. One of its main duties is to ensure that a better standard of service and satisfaction is rendered to workers after taking into account the corporation resources and local requirements. A considerable measure of decentralization has been envisaged and it has been decided to arm the Regional Board with more and effective administrative powers to ensure more expeditious handling of the many details that arise in the day to day administration of the Scheme.