

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 405
TO BE ANSWERED ON 25.07.2024**

EXPANSION OF COVERAGE OF ESI SCHEME

405. SMT. JEBI MATHER HISHAM:

Will the Minister of Labour and Employment be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the workers in the unorganised sector have been brought under the ESI scheme, if so, the details thereof, if not, whether Government will take timely measures in this regard;**
- (b) whether the protection of the ESI scheme will be made available to the workers of MGNREGS;**
- (c) whether ESI scheme has been extended to the workers in the plantation sector also, if so, the data thereof on the beneficiaries in Kerala; and**
- (d) the details of steps taken to improve the working of the ESI scheme?**

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
(SUSHRI SHOBHA KARANDLAJE)**

(a) to (c): The Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948 is applicable to all factories and establishments, other than seasonal factories, having ten or more employees, drawing wages up to Rs 21,000/- (Rs. 25,000/- for persons with disability). As such, the Act does not apply to the unorganised sector.

In the Code on Social Security, 2020, provision of benefits to the unorganised sector is contained in section 45 and section 109 of the Code whereby the Central Government and the State Governments can frame scheme for unorganised workers. Further, the plantation workers are covered under a separate legislation, namely 'The Plantations Labour (PL) Act, 1951' and the ESI Act, 1948 is not applicable to them.

However, as per provisions under the Code on Social Security, 2020, an employer of a plantation may also opt for applicability of the provisions related to the ESI by giving willingness to the ESI Corporation. The Code has not come into force so far.

(d): Various steps taken by ESIC to improve the working of the ESI scheme are placed at annexure.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (d) OF RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 405 FOR 25.07.2024 BY SMT. JEBI MATHER HISHAM REGARDING EXPANSION OF COVERAGE OF ESI SCHEME.

VARIOUS STEPS TAKEN BY ESIC DURING 2023-2024 TO IMPROVE WORKING OF ESI SCHEME

1. Rates of benefits have been enhanced for Permanent Disablement Benefit (PDB)/Dependents' Benefits (DB) Beneficiaries.
2. Proposal for a new scheme has been approved to cater medical care (including SST) for superannuated beneficiaries who have contributed in ESIC but went out of coverage before superannuation.
3. Online module has been launched for updation/editing the particulars of Insured Persons (IPs) and their family details.
4. Aadhar based authentication of Insured Persons & their family members on voluntary basis has been adopted for providing social security benefits, including medical and cash benefits to beneficiaries.
5. For providing hassle-free services to Insured Persons (IPs)/Insured Women (IW), an online portal/facility has been started for submission of cash benefits claims under ESI scheme.
6. Relaxation in contributory conditions have been made for the Covid period starting from 01.04.2020 to 30.09.2020 by amending the Rule 55(1) & 56(1) of ESI (Central) Rules, 1950 in the year 2023 to remove the hardships faced by various insured persons in getting their maternity benefits/sickness benefits during the Covid period.
