

Minister takes on HP govt for ignoring ESIC hospitals



(From left) Union Minister Mallikarjun Kharge and Ministers Singh and CLP leader Vijay Chohan during the inauguration of the hospital work on Tuesday.

Amritsar Union Minister Mallikarjun Kharge here today lambasted the state government for failing to cater to the needs of ESIC medical institutions for which the Centre had provided Rs 750 crore aid.

He was speaking at the inaugural ceremony of ESIC Medical Hospital which is

being conducted a week before its completion on Tuesday. Addressing a gathering, he said it was ironic that the state government had neglected the ESIC hospitals and though the funds were provided for construction, they were not utilised. This was despite the fact that the state government had not been doing its work.

He also expressed dissatisfaction over the working of

the Labour Department and the implementation of ESIC hospitals. He said the state government had not been doing its work properly and the ESIC hospitals were not being run properly. He also mentioned that the state government had not been utilising the funds provided for the construction of ESIC hospitals.

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ईएसआई के 100 वर्ष की जयंती में एमिटीएम 22 इंडिया का सौजन्य से आयोजित एक कार्यक्रम पर ईएसआई के अध्यक्ष एम.एस. कौर (दोसरे से)।

ईएसआई का सिरक जयंती समारोह शुरू

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ईएसआई का डायमंड जुबली ईयर



डायमंड जुबली ईयर के मौके पर साल भर चलने वाले समारोह में ईएसआई का जोर अत्यादा से अत्यादा कामगारों को बीमा के दायरे में लाने पर होगा।

प्रस **|| नई दिल्ली** : कर्मचारी राज्य बीमा निगम (ईएसआई) का जोर अधिक से अधिक कामगारों को इस दायरे में लाने पर है। निगम डायमंड जुबली ईयर मना रहा है। साल भर चलने वाले इस समारोह में खास ध्यान दिया जाएगा कि हर जन्तुमंद को सामाजिक सुरक्षा दायरे में लाया जाए। निगम को शुरुआत सिर्फ 21 डिपेंडेंसियों के साथ हुई थी लेकिन अब 1486 डिपेंडेंसी और 145 हॉस्पिटल हैं। इसके मेडिकल केयर संस्थान हर साल 4.5 करोड़ से अधिक मरीजों का इलाज कर रहे हैं। 2009-10 में इस स्कीम के तहत मेडिकल केयर पर 1626.93 करोड़ रुपये खर्च किए गए और नकद लाभ के तौर पर 426.93 करोड़ रुपये बट्टे गए।

A digital ESIC

The Panchdeep project of the Employees' State Insurance Corporation to provide health and social security services to millions of contributor-members through a national digital network from July 1 is a laudable initiative. Workers have been waiting for some measure that ensures they do not lose their welfare benefits simply because they have to relocate. Happily, they will now be able to use their identity cards to access the services in any networked institution. Achieving such scale is no easy task, considering that the membership base of the ESIC stands at 56 million, and the number of hospitals, dispensaries, and offices is 2,220. Networking will also bring about another significant advance: the families of the insured can get health care without the insured member having to accompany them. These are overdue measures, and they lend belated impetus to India's efforts to provide low-cost health insurance and welfare support to workers. Over the decades, the agenda has made only fitful progress. Often, the huge cash reserves with the ESIC have contrasted sadly with the less-than-average quality of its services. Against this backdrop, the 2010 amendment to the Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948 to widen its reach was welcome. The new provisions enabled extension of coverage to any institution with a manufacturing process, and employing 10 or more people, irrespective of the use of power.

Impressive as the networking achievement is, the ESI system now has to turn its focus on strengthening its core purpose — to safeguard employee health. There are acknowledged problems starting with the sheer demand for facilities, inefficiency, official indifference, corruption, and a lack of accountability. Improving medical infrastructure is a key priority, as is an administrative revamp. A legitimate question is whether the Hospital Development Committees constituted by the ESIC have brought about any perceptible change. Policy concerns at the State level also remain. For example, a liberal approach would facilitate the inclusion of more shops and establishments. The Centre has been appealing to the States to invoke the powers under the Act and lower the threshold for coverage from 20 employees to 10. But not all States have acted. Labour Minister Mallikarjun Kharge told Parliament recently that only Bihar, Punjab, Rajasthan, and West Bengal had issued the necessary notifications. The decision of the ESIC to start 18 medical colleges "in phases" to provide the human resources for its expanding hospital operations is a step forward. At a time of rising costs and debilitating out-of-pocket health expenditure, it is vital that governments widen social security.

ESIC BYTES

