MESSAGE

By

Shri Bandaru Dattatreya, Hon'ble Minister of Labour & Employment, Govt. of India (Independent Charge) on the occasion of 'World Birth Defects Day' on 3rd March, 2016.

About 5 – 10 % of the babies are born with Birth Defects. Infant Mortality Rate is high in India. Birth defects are one of the leading causes of infant deaths in India. Every year, Third day of this monthis designated as **World Birth Defects day**. The cost of the treatment of this group of malformations is high as the birth defects are common and most of the major defects need super specialty treatment. Children who are successfully treated are at an increased risk for long-term medical and surgical issues.

Hence the role of prevention of Birth Defects and education about the Birth Defects is very important. In this direction, as a Chairperson of the ESI corporation with around 8 Crore ESI beneficiaries in India, I propose to start the **FetalMedicineunit** at ESIC Super Specialty Hospital associated with the proposed ESIC Medical College at Sanathnagar , Hyderabad. This unit is contemplated to start a unique national program - ESIC CARES program. CARES :*C*ongenital *A*nomalies *R*egistration and *E*ducation *S*ervice. Our Insured Persons would be educated and counseled for the Birth Defects through this initiative. Once well established at Hyderabad, this would be extended to the rest of the country through the ESIC Hospitals.

Surgical intervention for the Birth Defects carries significant mortality in India. I propose to start the **Neonatal Surgery Services** unit at ESIC Super Specialty Hospital associated with proposed ESIC Medical College at Sanathnagar, Hyderabad. This unit is envisaged to start International Collaborative ESIC NSS [*N*eonatal*S*urgery *S*ervice] and **ESIC BiDS***Bi*rth *D*efects *S*urgery units.This would be extended to the rest of the country through the ESIC Hospitals.

Today, ESIC [EmployeesState Insurance Corporation] has marched towards another ESIC. This ESIC is - *E*mpathetic *S*ocially *I*nclusive *C*orporation.