

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH): (a) to (c) ICDS is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme in which 90% grants are released by Government of India and 10% is contributed by the States in respect of ICDS (General) wherefrom honorarium of AWW/AWH are disbursed. Fund are released to the States in four or more instalments based on the norms of components and Statement of Expenditure (SOE) sent by the States.

To enable the regular payment of honoraria of Anganwadi Workers/Helpers in a regular manner, Government of India has been releasing funds in time and requesting the States/UTs to make timely payments and also to submit their SOEs in time. However, a few complaints regarding delayed payment of honoraria to Anganwadi Workers/Helpers were received from Uttar Pradesh, Manipur and Delhi. The Governments of both Uttar Pradesh and Manipur have confirmed the payments of honoraria subsequently.

The Government of NCT of Delhi has also confirmed the payment of honoraria of Anganwadi Workers/Helpers. However, it has been reported that there are some delays in regular payment of honoraria due to the procedure of authorization from Finance Department of Govt. of NCT of Delhi, submission of Utilization Certificate of last instalment to Government of India and provision of 10% State share being made in end of February.

The States have been requested from time to time to ensure timely and regular payment of honoraria to AWW and AWH.

Under-nourished children

2587. SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN:

SHRI D. RAJA:

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 20 percent of the world's under-nourished children are in the country and 43 percent of Indian children are under-nourished; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps being taken to improve the condition of children in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH): (a) and (b) As per the last National Family Health Survey, 2005-06 (NFHS-3), 42.5% children under 5 years have been reported to be underweight in India.

The problem of malnutrition is multidimensional and inter-generational in nature, the determinants of which include household food insecurity, illiteracy and lack of awareness especially in women, access to health services, availability of safe drinking water, sanitation and environmental conditions and purchasing power etc. Besides early age at marriage of girls, teenage pregnancies resulting in low birth weight of the newborns, poor breastfeeding practices, poor complementary feeding practices, ignorance about nutritional needs of infants and young children and repeated infections further aggravate the malnutrition amongst children.

The Government has been implementing several schemes which have an impact on the nutritional status of the people.

The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Schemes is being implemented by Ministry of Women and Child Development through State Governments/UT Administrations. The scheme provides a package of six services, namely supplementary nutrition, pre-school non-formal education, nutrition & health education, immunization, health Check-up and referral services. Three of the six services namely immunization, health check up and referral services are delivered through the public health system of Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

The Government has recently taken various steps which include universalisation of the scheme with special focus on SC/ST and minority habitations, revision in cost norms as well as the nutritional and feeding norms of the Supplementary Nutrition component of ICDS. In addition, Government has introduced provision of flexi fund at Anganwadi centre level and new World Health Organisation (WHO) Growth Standards for growth monitoring.

Besides the ICDS programmes, Government has been implementing a number of other schemes, which directly or indirectly affect the nutritional status of women and children. Some of them are as follows:

(i) Reproductive & Child Health Programme under the National Rural Health Mission being implemented by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has interventions which include Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) to promote institutional deliveries; Immunization; Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood illness; Specific Programmes to prevent and combat micronutrient deficiencies of Vitamin A and Iron & Folic Acid through Vitamin A Supplementation for children till the age of 5 Years and Iron & Folic Acid Supplementation for infants, preschool children, adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women; Iodized salt is being provided for combating Iodine Deficiency Disorders.

(ii) Mid-Day meal programme of Department of School Education and Literacy under which meals are provided to children in the age group 6-14 years in the school.

(iii) Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls and Kishori Shakti Yojna of Ministry of Women and Child Development.

(iv) Availability of essential food items at subsidized cost through Targeted Public Distribution System and Antodaya Anna Yojna by Department of Food and Consumer Affairs.

(v) Provision of safe water supply and sanitation under the Total Sanitation Campaign of Ministry of Rural Development etc.

Child prostitution

2588. SHRI VIJAYKUMAR RUPANI: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the country is becoming a hub for large scale child prostitution rackets and Government proposes to set up special investigating agency to tackle the menace;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH): (a) to (c) A study on Girls and Women in Prostitution in India conducted between 2002-2004 which was sponsored by the Ministry of Women and Child Development had estimated that there were about 2.8 million prostitute in the country of which 36% are children.

There is no proposal to set up a special investigating agency to tackle the menace. However, nine (9) integrated Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs) have been established in the States of Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Goa, and West Bengal under the joint project, on capacity building of law enforcement agencies, of the Ministry of Home Affairs and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). In addition, the Governments of Tamil Nadu and Bihar have reportedly themselves set up 38 and 21 AHTUs, respectively.