

For the time being, the urgent issues are being addressed by the Chairperson and Member-Secretary of NCPQR.

Performance of ICDS

1392. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme has failed to protect children from malnourishment and to provide mothers with nutritional supplements;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the major bottlenecks in the functioning of ICDS across the country; and
- (d) the steps being taken to improve the performance of the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH): (a) to (d) The problem of malnutrition is multi-dimensional and inter-generational in nature which needs to be tackled through focused and coordinated interventions in areas of food security, sanitation and safe-drinking water, nutrition, health, family welfare and poverty alleviation and income generation. Besides, early marriage of girls, teenage pregnancies, inadequate purchasing power, ignorance about nutritional needs of infants and young children also aggravate malnutrition among children. Since there are multiple determinants of malnutrition, this cannot be addressed by single sector scheme or intervention alone. Among the various schemes/programmes of different Ministries, one of the programmes being implemented by the Government is the Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) Scheme, which is primarily a Child Development Scheme.

The ICDS Scheme is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme which provides a package of six services and supplementary nutrition is one of the six services rather than a full nutrition programme. It is meant to bridge the gap between the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) and the Actual Dietary Intake (ADI) through Supplementary Nutrition Programme for children below 6 years and Pregnant & Lactating Mothers.

Through various Review Meetings, Sample testing of SNP and field visits to the States/UTs, certain deficiencies such as slow pace of sanction by States and slow operationalization of Anganwadi Centres/Mini-Anganwadi Centres, large number of vacancies at Anganwadi levels,

disruptions in provision of supplementary nutrition, supply of fewer calories against those prescribed, non-adherence to nutritional and feeding norms, were noticed. The respective States/UTs were conveyed the deficiencies for immediate remedial action, which they have reportedly taken. There is a proposal to restructure the ICDS also.

Government employees status to Anganwadi workers

†1393. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any proposal for granting status of Government employees to Anganwadi Workers and Helpers working across the country;

(b) whether Government has any information about the demand to this effect being made over the years by Members of Parliament, labour unions and central labour unions;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the steps taken by Government, so far in this regard;

(e) whether Government proposes to give them more by way of salary if they are not being given the status of Government employee; and

(f) if so, the extent of extra amount and the date since when it would be given?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH): (a) to (f) ICDS Scheme envisages the Anganwadi Workers(AWWs) and Helpers(AWHs) as "honorary workers" from the local community who come forward to render their services, on part-time basis, in the area of child care and development. They are paid a fixed honorarium per month as decided by the Government from time to time.

There have been demands from various quarters including Members of Parliament on improving the service conditions to AWWs/AWHs including granting them the status of Govt. employees.

Government of India, is fully conscious of the significance of the voluntary efforts put in by these honorary workers and therefore, continuous efforts have been made to improve their working conditions by extending the facilities such as paid absence on maternity of 180 days, insurance cover

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.