

Data on growth of health services in private sector is not available from official statistics.

(d) and (e): The public health services in India are perceived to be inadequate. This has led to the emergence of a large private sector in Health that contributes towards commercialization of the health sector. Government of India launched National Rural Health Mission in 2005 to provide accessible, affordable, accountable, effective quality healthcare services especially to the poor and vulnerable sections of the population. The major thrust of National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) is to build the public health system by way of strengthening the health infrastructure, augmentation of human resources, flexible financing and encouraging involvement of community to improve service delivery. The Mission covers the entire country with special focus on 18 identified States with weak public health indicators and weak health infrastructure. These include the hilly and north eastern states amongst others.

The other steps taken to improve the public health system in the country *inter-alia* include:

- Increased public allocation for health programmes
- Implementation of programmes for control of communicable and non-communicable diseases.
- Mainstreaming of India system of Medicine and Homeopathy.
- Making available specialized health care services through strengthening of hospitals.

Letters received from MPS

5023. PROF. ANIL KUMAR SAHANI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of letters received from Members of Parliament (MPs) by the Minister of Health and Family welfare during 2011 and 2012 till date;

(b) how many of those letters have been replied and the reasons for not replying the remaining letters;

(c) whether copies of letters replied would be laid on the Table of the House; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Procurement of neonatal care equipments under NRHM

5024. SHRI B.S. GNANADESIKAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is providing funds to State Governments under National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) to procure material and neonatal care equipments at facilities to reduce infant and maternal mortality rates;

(b) whether it is also a fact that there are no standards for such equipments and no regulation barring entry of unsafe, non-standard equipment into the market; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and steps taken by Government for installation of effective neonatal care equipments in Government hospitals?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) Yes. Funds are released under National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) to all State/UTs as per approved Annual Programme Implementation Plan.

(b) and (c) No. The maternal and neonatal care equipments are procured by the States and UTs as per State Procurement plans. However, as per facility based newborn care operation guidelines of Government of India (MOHFW, 2011), conduct of power audit is recommend for installation of equipment and a list of essential and desirable newborn care equipments has been provided therein.

Prevention of female foeticide

5025. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is the fourth most dangerous country for women, female foeticide being the key reasons; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and steps being taken to avoid such occurrences in the country?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) There is no such assessment by any UN or Inter-governmental agency. However, as per the Thomas Reuters Foundation Survey, India is ranked 4th based on the overall perception of 213 gender experts from 5