

immunized against seven vaccine preventable diseases every year. The Government of India supports the vaccine programme by supply of vaccines and syringes, Cold chain equipments and provision of operational costs.

- (7) Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakaram JSSK: A new initiative namely Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakaram JSSK has been launched on 1st June, 2011, which entitles all pregnant women delivering in public health institutions to absolutely free and no expense delivery including Caesarean section. The initiative stipulates free drugs, diagnostics, blood and diet, besides free transport from home to institution, between facilities in case of a referral and drop back home. Similar entitlements have been put in place for all sick newborns accessing public health institutions for treatment till one year of age.
- (8) Home based new born care HBNC: Home based newborn care through ASHAs has been initiated by providing incentive of Rs. 250. The purpose of Home Based New Born Care is to improve new born practices at the community level and early detection and referral of sick new born babies.
- (9) Mother and Child Tracking System: A name based Mother and Child Tracking System has been put in place which is web based to ensure registration and tracking of all pregnant women and new born babies so that provision of regular and complete services to them can be ensured.

(c) and (d) In the 12th five year plan, the Government of India has set a target to reduce Infant Mortality rate of 25 per thousand live births by 2017. The states have been assigned state specific targets based on their existing Child Mortality indicators. The screening of all children up to 18 years of age is also being strengthened for early detection of birth defects, disabilities, deficiencies and diseases and their management under "Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakaram" in order to improve child survival and development.

Use of banned chemicals for ripening fruits

†890. SHRI RAGHUNANDAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether it is a fact that the use of harmful chemicals to ripen fruits is totally banned under food adulteration laws;

(b) whether it is also a fact that this is not being complied with and harmful chemicals like Carbide, Ethylene and Ethicon solutions are being used to ripen fruits;

(c) the details of effects these chemicals on people's health; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to put a blanket ban on the use of such chemicals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A.H. KHAN CHOUDHURY): (a) Clause 2.3.5 of the Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restrictions on Sales) Regulations, 2011, prohibits sale of fruits which have been artificially ripened by use of acetylene gas commonly known as carbide gas produced from Calcium Carbide. There is no provision of use of ripening hormones under the Food Safety and Standards Act/ Rules/Regulations. However, the Ministry of Agriculture has recommended the use of ethylene gas in low concentration exogenously to trigger ripening of fruits.

(b) There are certain reports suggesting the use of the chemicals like calcium carbide, ethylene and ethion for the use of early ripening of fruits. However, no scientific validated published information is available on the same.

(c) Following the reports of use of the artificial coloring/ ripening agents in vegetables/fruits, a Joint Committee for Research on Food Safety, was formulated in August, 2010 under Co-Chairmanship of the Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the Director General, Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) to address the various issues relating to the safety of using ripening and coloring agents, and any other relevant issues in nutrition & food safety which emerge from time to time. The Committee has recommended further research studies to generate information/data regarding the extent of use and effect of artificial ripening agents and other chemicals in fruits and vegetables.

(d) Implementation of the Food Safety and Standards Act/Rules/ Regulations rests with State/U.T. Governments. The Commissioners Food Safety/Food (Health) Authority of States/UTs who are responsible for implementation of Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and its Rules/Regulations in their States/UTs, have been requested from time to time to keep a strict vigil on use of carbide gas and other

hazardous chemicals for ripening of fruits and to take legal action for violation of the above provision of the Act/Regulations. The State Governments have also been advised to educate the public through print and electronic media against consumption of such artificially ripened fruits and vegetables. State Governments have taken measures in this regard, such as ordering the Food Safety Officer (FSOs) Designated Officers (DOs) to keep watch on fruit markets, inspection of fruit market, fruit stalls/ godowns, taking samples of fruits, vegetables and milk, educating fruit vendors to refrain from using these chemicals, etc.

Release of funds to Rajasthan under RAN

†891. SHRI ASHK ALI TAK: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of funds yet to be received by the State Government of Rajasthan from the Central Government under the provisions of Rashtriya Arogya Nidhi (RAN) for providing free medical facility to the members of the families belonging to below poverty line; and

(b) by when the said amount would be released to the State Government?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) There is no balance amount to be released to State Government of Rajasthan.

(b) However, the State Government was asked to fulfill the following conditions stipulated under the guidelines of the State Illness Assistance Fund when request for releasing of funds received from Government of Rajasthan:

(i) Memorandum of Association, (ii) Rule and Regulation of the Society, (iii) Registration of Society Certificate, (iv) Documentary proof (photocopy of the pass book of the Bank Accounts in the name of Society) confirming that the contribution made by the Rajasthan Government has been credited to the society, (v) Application form for Central Assistance duly filled in, (vi) Account of the Society shall be audited by AG, Rajasthan and (vii) List of hospital recognized by the State Government for the purpose.

Release of further grants to the Government of Rajasthan will depend on fulfilment of above conditions and submission of the information.

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