

- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether there have been any complaints regarding this scheme from any section of the society;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken by Government to improve the scheme and avoid complaints?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (e) Yes. The National Eligibility and Entrance Test (NEET) for admission to MBBS and Postgraduate medical courses for the academic year 2013-14 was conducted by the Central Board of Secondary Education and National Board of Examinations respectively. However, a few private medical colleges and the State Governments of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu filed writ petitions in the respective High Courts seeking exemption from NEET. These petitions were transferred to the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. The Hon'ble Apex Court *vide* its judgement dated 18.07.2013 in NEET related cases quashed the implementation of NEET. The Central Government has filed a petition before the Hon'ble Apex Court to review its decision.

High rate of under-five mortality

1317. SHRI T.M. SELVAGANAPATHI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that despite reducing less than five mortality from 2.5 million in 2001 to 1.4 million in 2012, India still holds the dubious distinction of having the highest number of deaths in the world in this vulnerable age group according to a report by UNICEF for 2013; and
- (b) whether it is also a fact that out of the 2.1 million deaths in the entire southern Asian region, India's share alone is 1.4 million deaths?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) Yes. As per RGI, MHA information available in the Statistics Division regarding child deaths (0-4.9 years) in respect to mid-year projected population are as under:

Sl. No.	Census	Child Deaths (0-4.9 years)
1.	2001	2,430,084
2.	2011	1,451,473

India ranks at 49th position in the world in descending order of under five mortality rate.

(b) Yes. As per the State of World's Children 2013, the estimated number of under five deaths in 2011 in South Asia region is 2.3 million and India's share is 1.4 million, which is 60% of total deaths in South Asia region.

It is also a fact that India has 73% of the under five population in South Asia region.

Devolution of power to PRIs

1318. SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry is preparing activity maps for the devolution of functions, funds and finances to the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs);

(b) if so, the schemes and programmes of the Ministry which are being covered and which are not, and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the deadline(s) set by the Ministry for the completion of Activity Mapping for the first set of schemes and subsequent schemes and programmes?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (c) The Expert Committee on Leveraging Panchayats for Efficient Delivery of Public Goods and Services has made recommendations about involving Panchayats in the scheme of National Rural Health Mission. Public Health being a State subject, States have been requested to urgently take steps to adopt activity mapping for the National Rural Health Mission as recommended by the Committee and transfer funds, functions and functionaries to PRIs accordingly. In cases, where the States have to contextualize regarding level of PRI to which the funds, functions and functionaries should be devolved etc. the States have been requested to do so in consultation with the State Panchayati Raj Department. The States were requested to submit the action taken report by the 15th October, 2013

Renewal of expired CGHS plastic cards

1319. SHRI PALVAI GOVARDHAN REDDY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether process of renewing expired CGHS plastic cards has been started;

(b) whether it is a fact that CGHS authorities and offices are asking residential proof for all individual family members and dependents;