

Promotion of breastfeeding

1595. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether India ranks lowest in South Asia in breast feeding practices, if so, the reasons therefor; and

(b) the fresh steps taken by Government for promotion of breast feeding including an effective mechanism for strict implementation of regulations controlling baby foods, revival of baby friendly hospitals and maternity protection and policies?

THE MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA SANJAY GANDHI): (a) No, Sir. As per the UNICEF Report “The State of World’s Children, 2015”, the rate of early initiation of breastfeeding in South Asia is 39% and that of exclusive breastfeeding is 47% which is lower than India. In India, as per the recent Rapid Survey on Children, 2013-14, the rate of early initiation of breastfeeding is 44.6% and exclusive breastfeeding up to the age of 6 months is 64.9%.

(b) This Ministry is taking following steps for promotion of breastfeeding in the country:

- National Guidelines on Infant and Young Child Feeding, 2006, have been issued, through which appropriate Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices are emphasised.
- Infant Milk Substitutes Feeding Bottles, and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 1993, as amended 2003, has been enacted in the country to protect and promote breastfeeding and ensure proper use of infant foods.
- Recently, the National Steering Committee on Infant and Young Child Feeding and National Coordination Committee on Infant and Young Child Feeding have been notified to give policy guidelines, coordinate and integrate all activities relating to breastfeeding and IYCF and advise on measures to promote breastfeeding.
- The restructured ICDS Mission also aims to increase Infant and Young Child Feeding Practices in the country. Under the Care and Nutrition Counseling component, focus is to provide counseling to women on issues relating to infant feeding practices. Under the Mission, there is also provision of an additional Anganwadi Worker in 200 High

Burden Districts of the country for imparting counseling and behavior change communication through community and home visits as well as demonstration of appropriate feeding practices.

- Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY), which is a Centrally Sponsored Conditional Maternity Benefit Scheme for pregnant and lactating women, aims to improve nutritional and health status of pregnant and lactating women across the country by partly compensating for their wage loss. The Scheme encourages women to follow optimal Infant and Young Child Feeding practices including early and exclusive breast feeding for the first six months. The Scheme is now operational in 53 selected districts across the country.
- Food and Nutrition Board under the Ministry is engaged in creating awareness on health and nutrition issues with strong focus on 'Infant and Young Child Feeding' (IYCF). "World Breastfeeding Week" is also celebrated every year from 1-7 August by organizing various activities such as State level Workshop/Seminar, lecture-cum-practical demonstration, etc. for creating greater awareness. Awareness is also generated through audio-visual medium for promotion of optimal IYCF.

IT enabled services in Anganwadi Centres

1596. SHRI AMBETH RAJAN: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government took any initiative to apply IT enabled services in Anganwadi Centres in order to obtain real time information; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA SANJAY GANDHI): (a) and (b) Information and Communication Technology enabled Real Time Monitoring (ICT-RTM) of ICDS has been included as one of the key activities for implementation in restructured ICDS Systems Strengthening and Nutrition Improvement Project (ISSNIP) in 162 high malnutrition burden districts of 8 States, namely, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Andhra Pradesh. ICT enabled Real Time Monitoring would provide real time information on service delivery at Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) including growth and nutrition status of children. ICT-RTM would be driven by a Common Application Software (CAS), an Android based solution having six tiered Dash Board with AWC as the basic information generation node.