

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 634
TO BE ANSWERED ON 07.02.2024

RAJIV GANDHI NATIONAL CRÈCHE SCHEME

634. SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme (RGNCS) for children of working mothers has been extended to informal and unorganised workers in Tamil Nadu, if so, the status of implementation of the scheme;
- (b) whether any special provision in the fund allocation has been made for tribal women, and the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government has made any cuts in the funding to National crèche scheme, and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) whether the grants have not been paid to many creches, and if so, the details thereof, State-wise?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) to (d): Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme (RGNCS) for the Children of Working Mothers was launched as a central sector scheme w.e.f. 1st January 2006 by merging the National Crèche Fund with the Scheme of Assistance to Voluntary Organizations for crèches for Working/Ailing Women's Children. The Scheme was implemented through the Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) and two voluntary organizations, namely Indian Council for Child Welfare (ICCW) and Bhartiya Adim Jati Sevak Sangh (BAJSS) in States/ UTs. The funding pattern of the scheme was 90:10 where in 90 was Centre and 10 was Implementing Agency which were the voluntary organisations. State/UT governments were not the stakeholders in the scheme, so monitoring and supervision was inadequate.

In view of complaints regarding irregularities in management of crèches by BAJSS, 5631 crèches were temporarily transferred to CSWB with effect from 18 November 2008. A writ petition, W.P.No.11116/2015, had been filed in the Honorable Delhi High Court alleging misappropriation of funds by ICCW, one of the implementing agencies. In this regard, Honorable Delhi High Court had directed that States/UTs have to verify the functioning of those crèches. Subsequently, RGNCS was discontinued w.e.f. 31 December 2016.

From 01.01.2017 onwards, the Crèche services were provided by the Ministry of Women and Child Development through the erstwhile ‘National Crèche Scheme (NCS)’, for Children of Working Mothers, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, wherein Stand-alone Crèches were being operated through NGOs as implementing agencies.

The Ministry introduced *Palna* sub-scheme under *Mission Shakti* for all States/UTs w.e.f. 01 April 2022, for providing day care facilities and protection to children. *Palna* is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme ensuring the participation of State/UT government to ensure better day-to-day monitoring and proper implementation of scheme.

Anganwadi centres are the world's largest childcare institutions dedicated to providing essential care and support to children ensuring delivery of care facilities till the last mile. In a first of its kind approach, Ministry has extended the services of childcare through Anganwadi cum Crèche. This will ensure whole day childcare support ensuring their well-being in a safe and secure environment. Anganwadi cum Crèche initiative aims to increase the women work force participation in the economy. The objective of *Palna* component is to provide quality crèche facility in safe and secure environment for children (from ages 6 months – 6 years), nutritional support, health and cognitive development of children, growth monitoring, immunization, education etc. Crèche facilities under *Palna* are to be provided to all mothers, including tribal women, and irrespective of their employment status.

Proposals for establishment and operation of Crèches are received from the respective State Governments/UT Administrations, who are also responsible for contributing their corresponding share for the implementation of the Scheme. During the 15th Finance Cycle, a total of 17,000 AWCCs have been envisioned to be set-up, out of which, 5631 AWCCs have been approved till date, as per proposals received from various States/UTs. Out of these, 100 AWCCs have been approved for the State of the Tamil Nadu.

In the 15th Finance Commission (2021-22 to 2025-26), a total of Rs. 20,989 Cr including central and state share has been allocated under Mission Shakti.
