

Saket Gokhale (West Bengal), Shri Mohammed Nadimul Haque (West Bengal), Shrimati Mausam B Noor (West Bengal), Shrimati Phulo Devi Netam (Chhattisgarh), Shri M. Mohamed Abdulla (Tamil Nadu), Dr. John Brittas (Kerala), Shri Ramji (Uttar Pradesh), Shri Prakash Chik Baraik (West Bengal), Shrimati Sagarika Ghose (West Bengal), Shri Haris Beeran (Kerala), Shri P. Wilson (Tamil Nadu), Shri Jose K. Mani (Kerala) and Shri M. Shanmugam (Tamil Nadu).

Now, Shri M. Shanmugam, 'Need to review the facial recognition system for issuing take home ration to the beneficiaries under Integrated Child Development Services Scheme through Anganwadi workers'.

Need to review the facial recognition system for issuing Take Home Ration (THR) to the beneficiaries under Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme through Anganwadi workers

SHRI M. SHANMUGAM (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I am raising a very important matter, namely, the problems being faced by beneficiaries under the ICDS Programme. Representations have been received from various stakeholders against the introduction of two-Factor Authentication System for take home ration distribution through Anganwadi workers for beneficiaries under the ICDS.

Under Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Mission POSHAN, supplementary nutrition is provided to children, pregnant women, lactating mothers to address the challenge of malnutrition. Even the pregnant mothers are compelled to come to Anganwadi Centres to do facial recognition for getting the ration. Because of this cumbersome procedure and not getting OTP, as the mobile which is registered might be with the male member and not readily accessible to beneficiary, many people are not able to avail the benefit. This system has also put strain on the Anganwadi workers, as they have to carry kits to the centres and sometimes, these are not received. Besides, due to tower problem, phones do not work. Even all the Anganwadi workers are not having smart phones. This system may reduce the strength of beneficiaries in which case funds to the States will also reduce, which is not fair.

Sir, they are getting only meager honorarium which is less than the minimum wages declared by various State Governments. The enormous amount of work which they have to perform is nothing but exploitation of workers. Hence, their salary should be increased and other welfare benefits like PF, ESI, pension, etc. should be extended to them. At many places, Anganwadi workers are going on strike.

I would, therefore, demand that the Ministry should review the conditions of facial recognition for issuing take home ration to beneficiaries and should simplify the procedure of issuing ration; the old system has transparency and verifications done through register, after getting beneficiary's signature. Thank you, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The following hon. Members associated themselves with the matter raised by hon. Member, Shri M. Shanmugam: Shrimati Jebi Mather Hisham (Kerala), Dr. Sasmit Patra (Odisha), Shri R. Girirajan (Tamil Nadu), Shri Niranjan Bishi (Odisha), Dr. Fauzia Khan (Maharashtra), Shri A. A. Rahim (Kerala), Ms. Dola Sen (West Bengal), Shrimati Priyanka Chaturvedi (Maharashtra), Dr. John Brittas (Kerala), Shri M. Mohamed Abdulla (Tamil Nadu), Prof. Manoj Kumar Jha (Bihar), Dr. V. Sivadasan (Kerala), Shri P. Wilson (Tamil Nadu) and Shri Jose K. Mani (Kerala).

Now, Shri B. Parthasaradhy Reddy- Concern over the reciprocal traffic imposed by the United States on Indian pharma exports.

Concern over the reciprocal tariff imposed by the United States on Indian Pharma Exports

SHRI B. PARTHASARADHY REDDY (Telangana): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, thank you for having given me the opportunity. Today, I wish to draw the attention of the House to the most worrisome and immediate threat to the Indian Pharmaceutical industry owing to the US reciprocal tariff proposal which may come into force any time from now on. This could badly impact an industry which is very vital to our country's economy and there is an immediate job threat to over 30 lakh Indians. In 2023-24, India exported about nine billion dollars, that is, Rs. 74,000 crores, worth of pharma products to the US and exports are growing rapidly. This makes the U.S. the largest importer of Indian pharmaceutical products, accounting for over 31 per cent of India's total pharma exports. The Indian pharmaceutical industry, which is considered as pharmacy of the world, is likely to face significant challenges due to the US reciprocal tariff policy. Sir, Indian pharma products will become more expensive in the US market, which may result in substantial loss in the US market share for our Indian pharma companies. This could lead to reduced profit margins, especially for low-cost generic medicines, and they may become uncompetitive and most of their investments may not be viable. In terms of economic impact, the Indian pharmaceutical sector contributes significantly to India's GDP and foreign exchange earnings. The reciprocal tariff proposal could lead to foreign exchange revenue