

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4021
TO BE ANSWERED ON 24.03.2023

RASHTRIYA MAHILA KOSH

4021. SHRI LALLU SINGH:

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken steps to spread awareness about the Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK) if so, the details thereof, indicating the year-wise growth of RMK;
- (b) whether the Government has decided to increase the quality of nutrition provided to children in Anganwadis under Poshan Abhiyan and if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether the Government has conducted any survey for quality check of food supplied in Anganwadis and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) At the time of setting up of Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK), it was a prominent Government body working in the area of extending concessional micro-finance loans to poor women through Intermediary Organisation (IMOs). However, over a period of time, substantial alternative credit facility mechanisms have become available to women entrepreneurs through various Government initiatives like Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojna and Stand-up India and therefore the RMK has lost its relevance. In line with the recommendations of the Expert Management Commission set up by the Ministry of Finance and the report on Rationalisation of Government Bodies authored by the Principal Economic Adviser, Department of Economic Affairs, Government has decided to close down RMK to improve efficiency and utilize the available resources optimally.

(b) In pursuance of the Hon'ble Prime Minister's Address on 75th Independence Day, Fortified Rice have to be provided through every Government Scheme by the year 2024. Therefore, 21 States/UTs were allocated Fortified Rice in the 2nd quarter of FY 2021-22 and only Fortified Rice in lieu of normal rice has been allocated from the 3rd quarter onwards to all the State/UTs which helps in fighting malnutrition and anaemia in women and children arising due to deficiency of micro nutrients like Iron, Folic Acid and Vitamin B-12. Under Wheat Based Nutrition Programme (WBNP) of Anganwadi Services, this Ministry has so far allocated 731962 MTs of Fortified Rice in FY 2021-22 and 1226115 MTs of Fortified rice in FY 2022-23 to all the States/UTs.

Under WBNP, emphasis is also being given on the supply of millets for preparation of Hot Cooked Meal and Take Home rations at Anganwadis for Pregnant Women, Lactating mothers and children below 6 years of age, as millets are highly nutritious and are known to have high nutrient content which includes protein, essential fatty acid, dietary fibre, B-Vitamins, minerals such as calcium, iron, zinc, folic acid and other micro-nutrients thus helping to tackle anaemia and other micro-nutrient deficiencies common among women and children. As per the Mission Saksham Anganwadi & Poshan 2.0 guidelines, millets are to be mandatorily supplied at least once a week and suitably integrated in THR and HCM in a palatable form. In FY 2022-23, 1694.3 MTs of Bajra was allocated to the State Government of Haryana.

(c) The Ministry has issued Streamlined guidelines dated 13th January 2021, wherein States/UTs have been advised to ensure that the quality of Supplementary Nutrition, with reference to the norms of food safety as well as nutrient composition, is in conformity to prescribed standards laid down under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006. Further, under the Scheme Guidelines for Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0, States/UTs have been advised to ensure that quality testing shall be done through Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) owned or authorized laboratories. State Governments and the Union Territory Administrations shall carry out periodic checks and get Supplementary Nutrition tested through the FSSAI owned/registered/empanelled/accredited laboratories for adhering to food quality standards and testing.
