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

(a) the percentage of rural villages covered by services of Anganwadi Workers across the country, State/UT-wise including Maharashtra and Bihar;

(b) whether the Government has formulated any plan for large scale appointments of Anganwadi Workers towards providing better services to rural women and children;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

**Answer**

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

(a) to (d) Anganwadi Services under Umbrella Integrated Child Development Services Scheme is a universal, self-selecting scheme covering all habitats across the country including rural villages. The Scheme is open to all eligible beneficiaries i.e. children in the age group of 6 months - 6 years, pregnant women and lactating mothers. Government has engaged with States/UTs on sustained basis to enhance appointments including in recently concluded review meetings. Besides, it depends on States to propose new centres to service the needs of rural villages. Currently more than 8 lakh AWCs out of 13.86 lakh AWCs are operating in rural areas.

The Central government issues guidelines and releases funds in the prescribed cost sharing ratio for implementation of Scheme whereas the administration at ground level for implementation of the scheme, including appointment of AWWs/AWHs, is dealt with by the State/UT governments.

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