

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. *288
TO BE ANSWERED ON 17.12.2021

WOMEN HELPLINE SCHEME

*288. SHRI GIRISH BHALCHANDRA BAPAT:
DR. PRITAM GOPINATHRAO MUNDE:

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

- (a) whether any study has been conducted to analyse the implementation of the Women Helpline Scheme in all the States particularly in Maharashtra and Odisha, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (b) whether the funds are being sanctioned and released to the States and UTs bi-annually after they have submitted their respective proposals and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the employment of women has been on decline since 2019 and further worsening in consequent quarters;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and corrective steps taken in this regard; and
- (e) whether any study has been conducted to assess the impact of current schemes and the need to scale them up to tackle unemployment especially in the unorganised sector effectively, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (e): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. *288 FOR ANSWER ON 17.12.2021 BY SHRI GIRISH BHALCHANDRA BAPAT AND DR. PRITAM GOPINATHRAO MUNDE REGARDING 'WOMEN HELPLINE SCHEME'.

(a) and (b): The Scheme of Universalisation of Women Helpline is envisaged to provide 24 hours emergency and non-emergency response through telephonic short-code 181 to women affected by violence, both in public and private spaces by linking them with appropriate authority such as Police, One Stop Centres, hospitals, Legal Services Authorities etc. Women Help Lines (WHL) also support women in distress with rescue van facility and counseling services in addition to providing information about women welfare schemes and programs across the country. They are integrated with One Stop Centres and provide coordinated support to women in distress. 100% funds are released directly to the designated district administrations on receipt of Utilization Certificates (UCs) and Statements of Expenditure (SoE) of the funds previously released.

Presently, WHLs are functional in 34 States/ UTs. As per information received from States / UTs, till 30.09.2021, a total of more than 66 lakh calls has been handled by 181- WHL across the country. The WHL scheme is not functional in West Bengal and Puducherry.

A third party evaluation of the schemes of the Ministry, including analysis of implementation the WHL Scheme, which also covered the States of Maharashtra and Odisha, was conducted during the Financial Year 2020-21. The study found the relevance, efficiency and sustainability of the scheme as satisfactory, and recommended *inter alia* for systematic mass media strategy and action plan to spread awareness about WHL, effective monitoring of calls and assessment of the quality of information, support and referrals provided.

(c) to (e): The objectives of Scheme of Universalisation of Women Helpline do not include providing of employment. However, the guidelines of the scheme include details of the human resource requirement under the service delivery framework of the scheme, and States and Union Territories are responsible for putting the same in place for effective implementation of the scheme.

However, in order to enhance the employability of female workers in the country, the Government is providing training to them through a network of Women Industrial Training institutes, National Vocational Training Institutes and Regional Vocational Training Institutes. To ensure economic independence of women through skill development and vocational training, the Government has also introduced Skill India Mission. The National Skill Development Policy focuses on inclusive skill development, with the objective of increased women participation for better economic productivity. There are schemes like Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana and Stand-up India, for helping the women to set up their own enterprises. The Ministry also implements the scheme of Working Women's Hostels, crèches for children of working women etc. The schemes of One Stop Centres and Universalisation of Women Helpline implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development to support women facing violence of any kind which may also adversely impact their participation in workforce.

The Government, with the aim to provide safe and secure work environment to women and to increase their participation in the workforce, has enacted 'The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013' (SH Act). The Act covers all women, irrespective of their age or employment status and seeks to protect them from sexual harassment at all workplaces whether public or private, organized or unorganized. Further, the Labour Codes, viz. the Code on Wages 2019, the Industrial Relations Code, 2020, Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 and the Code on Social Security, 2020 which have been enacted in the last two years, collectively include provisions to promote participation of women in workforce in a dignified manner.
