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Title: Need to make Maternity Benefit Scheme more beneficiary friendly.

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The financial assistance to pregnant women was initially provided nationally under the National Food Security Act and now under PM's Maternity Benefit Scheme. The maternity benefit entitlement under NFSA, 2013 is Rs. 6000 per child. But under PM's scheme PMMVY, it was reduced to Rs. 5000 per woman and restricted only to the first living child. A budget provision of Rs. 2,700 crore was made in 2017-18, and Rs. 1200 crore in 2018-19, against the requirement of Rs. 15,000 crore for full implementation of the scheme.

Based on the RTI replies and JABS survey conducted in six states of Northern India revealed that entitlement under PMMVY scheme reaches only one-third of the beneficiaries. Implementation challenges for the scheme are a 23-page application, mother-child protection card, Aadhaar card, husband's Aadhaar card, bank passbook, updated marital home address and the linking of bank account with Aadhar card. Frequent technical glitches in the application and payment process and the lack of effective grievance redressal mechanism discourages the beneficiaries as well.

I urge the Government to make it beneficiary-friendly by adopting best practices in some of already successful maternity benefit schemes like the Tamil Nadu's Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy Maternity Benefit

Scheme brought by Dr. Kalaignar during DMK Government which provides Rs. 18,000 per child for the first two births.