

Request to change the nomenclature of the compensation category of Anganwadi workers from 'honorarium' to 'salary' and provide requisite resultant benefits to them

SHRI RAJMOHAN UNNITHAN (KASARAGOD): Thank you very much, Sir. Today, I want to bring forth the plea of anganwadi workers in India, an initiative under ICDS by the Indian Government, where women as frontline workers are providing essential services of additional and supplementary healthcare, and nutritional services including community-level immunization to children and pregnant women. They are the ones who drove the vaccination drive in thousands of villages of the country as frontline workers during the pandemic.

Yet they struggle with low financial support provided to them which is referred to as either an honorarium or required incentive for their contribution. The financial support provided to them is meagre and is even less than the wages of a Grade-IV government servant. Sir, in the absence of these anganwadi workers, it would be almost impossible for such a big country as India to provide essential primary healthcare services to children and women at the grassroots level.

The Government has taken advantage of more than 24 lakh anganwadi workers, their hard work and is yet giving them duties related to elections and surveys thereby adding more to their existing burden of work. Time and again the anganwadi workers went to the court demanding social security benefits, facilities, increased wages, gratuity, post-retirement benefits and many more but with no tangible results.

Therefore, I request the Government to change the nomenclature of the compensation category of anganwadi workers from 'honorarium' to 'salary' and provide requisite resultant benefits to them. Thank you very much, Sir.