

Title: Issue regarding regularization of Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS).

SHRIMATI MINATI SEN (JALPAIGURI): Sir, the anganwadi workers and helpers throughout the country had assembled yesterday in Delhi with their prolonged demands.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you in your seat?

SHRIMATI MINATI SEN : Yes Sir.

Sir, 6,49,000 anganwadi centres had been introduced in 1975 with the object of overall development of children, nutrition and health of pregnant and lactating mothers. But the World Bank report on malnutrition in India says that more than half of the children under the age of four are malnourished, 30 per cent of new born babies are significantly under-weight and 60 per cent of women are anaemic. More than 85 per cent women in India in rural areas and 95 per cent of women in remote areas give birth at home. Only 42 per cent have access to safe delivery facilities.

Sir, on behalf of my Party, I welcome the announcement of Government of opening 1,88,168 new anganwadi centres in the country. But nearabout 14 lakh centres would be required to cater to all needy children and mothers.

Sir, I urge upon the Government, through you, that ICDS should be institutionalised and converted into a regular Department or made an integral part of the Department of Women and Child Development of the Government instead of remaining as a scheme.

Number 2, Anganwadi Centres must be further strengthened from where the various programmes of the Government for women's empowerment and for the overall development of children and women in the area should be carried out.

Number 3, Anganwadi workers should be regularised as employees of the Department and they should be provided all the facilities due to them. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I am sure it is being taken note of. This is an important matter and I expect a response.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (BANKURA): Sir, we would like to have the Minister's response. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Not now. But I will see to it that it comes. I am regularly monitoring the replies.

...(*Interruptions*)