

Rejoinder

**As received from Director, Social Welfare and Social Education
Deptt., Govt. of Tripura**

**"A combined rejoinder for news on 26.4.2020, 3.5.2020 and
5.5.2020 and 9.5.2020 in Syndan Patrika**

Poshan Abhiyan is the flagship program of the Government of India to improve the nutritional services through use of technology and inter-sectorial convergence which require the purchase of mobile phones to be used with specific softwares by all the Anganwadi Workers whose number is around 10000. This is a new initiative by the Government of India with very specific missions. The Department of Social Welfare & Social Education has procured Mobile Phones from the fund sanctioned by the Ministry of Women & Child Development, Govt. of India under POSHAN Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission) Scheme which is specifically meant for this purpose only. In this news clipping (05.05.2020), it is mentioned that the price of Panasonic mobile is Rs.6,499/- in the official website of Panasonic, **but not mentioning the model name.** There are so many model of Panasonic mobile with different rate / price in the website. The Department of SW & SE has procured 10,735 **Panasonic Eluga I7 (Enterprise Edition)** smart phones @ Rs.7,750/- per unit. In the official Website of Panasonic, the current rate of the said mobile is Rs.9,950/- per unit as on 05.05.2020. Hence, the department saved Rs 2.36 crores for the Government of Tripura. Therefore, the news item claiming scam of Rs 1.35 crore in procurement of mobile phones is totally baseless.

The Mobiles have been received in the last week of March, 2020. In the meantime, lock down started in connection to COVID-19. So, the distribution could not be done. Moreover Government of India is also checking the Bengali version of the soft ware to be installed in it for use of anganwadi workers. The warranty period of battery with Smart phone is 2 years.

There is no deviation of fund for procurement of Mobile phones under Social Welfare & Social Education Department as funds are earmarked for this purpose and no diversion is required. With regard to purchase of Pre-School Kits, the Department has received Rs. 2.97 Crore from the Ministry

Women & Child Development, Govt. of India. Hence, Rs.25 Crore remains unspent in respect of procuring toys is factually not correct. The sanctioned amount of Rs.2.97 Crore has been deposited to the Account of Government as per direction of the Finance Department and its utilisation shall take place shortly. Hence, no UCs of PSE kits sent to Ministry year by year.

There are 202 posts of Supervisors (ICDS) lying vacant, out of which 165 posts are promotion posts, which are held up due to a Special Leave Petition pending before the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India (arising out of M. Nagaraj Judgement of 2006).

The Ministry of WCD, GoI has conveyed their decision to all the states for filling up all vacant post on contract basis. The Finance Deptt. has concurred the proposal for recruitment of the vacant post initially by hiring manpower on contractual basis through **outsourcing agency** for 1(One) year. The matter has been placed before the Council of Ministers on 21.09.2019 for necessary approval. The Council of Ministers approved the proposal that only 165 posts of Supervisors (ICDS) would be filled up on **outsource basis**. Accordingly, e-tender for selection of an outsourcing agency for recruitment of Supervisor (temporary) has been floated in the e-procurement portal of Govt. of Tripura on 29.04.2020.

The e-tender called for supply of Supervisors (Temporary) is to finalize the outsourcing agency as the manpower is to be hired on contractual basis through outsourcing agency. The outsourcing agency who would get award of tender shall supply manpower and there is no prejudice against the people of Tripura from being engaged. Hence, the report that for post of Supervisors, people of other states are being prioritized over people of Tripura is factually not correct as knowledge of Bengali / Kok borok has been kept as a desirable qualification.

The reports published in the newspaper appear to be malafide and spoils the image and reputation of the Department as well as State Government and demotivates the staff of the department including those at cutting edge which might affect the welfare works of the Department.

The department of Social Welfare and Social Education is working with all sincerity for the welfare of the most vulnerable. Despite of this misinformation campaign launched against it, the department will keep working for the welfare of the state and its people with same dedication and commitment.”
