Maternity Benefit Programme – Pan-India Expansion

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What's the news?

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- Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, in his address to the nation on 31.12.2016 has **announced pan-India expansion of MBP in all the districts** with effect from 01.01.2017.
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- It is expected that annually about 51.70 lakh beneficiaries would avail of the benefit.
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- Government of India is committed to ensure that every woman attains optimal nutritional status – especially from the most vulnerable communities.
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- A woman's nutritional status has important implications for her health as well as the health and development of her children.
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What are the ill-effects of under-nourishment?

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- An under-nourished mother almost inevitably gives **birth to a low birth weight baby**. When poor nutrition starts in-utero, it extends throughout the life cycle, particularly in women.
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- More on "Why the health of a mother matters?" – Click Here
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Why MBP is needed?

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- Owing to economic and social distress many women **continue to work to earn a living right upto the last days of their pregnancy**.
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- Furthermore, they resume working soon after childbirth, even through their bodies might not permit it – thus **impending their ability to exclusively breastfeed** their young infant in the first six months.
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What is MBP?

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- To address the above issues, the MWCD, in accordance with the provisions of Section 4(b) of National Food Security Act, formulated a scheme for pregnant and lactating mothers called Maternity Benefit Programme – a conditional cash transfer scheme.
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- **The Scheme provides cash incentives to pregnant and lactating women.**\n
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    - for the wage loss so that the woman can take adequate rest before and after delivery;
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    - to improve her health and nutrition during the period of pregnancy and lactation;
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    - to breastfeed the child during the first six months of the birth, which is very vital for the development of the child.
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Who gets the benefits?

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- Under the scheme, all Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers (PW&LM), excluding the PW&LM, who are in regular employment with the Government or PSUs or those who are in receipt of similar benefits under any law for the time being are eligible.
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- The cash incentive of **Rs.6,000/- is payable in three instalments** for the first two live births in three stages.
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- The cash transfer would be Aadhaar linked through the individual bank/post office account etc. in DBT mode.
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Why the expansion of MBP matters?

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- Expansion of MBP will have huge impact on the PW&LM as it will not only provide them compensation for the wage loss but will also provide them adequate nutrition and rest before and after delivery.
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- Mothers will have sufficient time to breastfeed the child during first six months of the birth. Resultantly, it is expected that **it will reduce mother mortality rate, IMR, under-nutrition and its adverse effects.**
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What about the cost sharing?

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- It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme and the cost sharing between Centre and States is 60:40 for all the States and UTs (with legislature), 90:10 for NER and Himalayan States and 100% GoI share for UTs without legislatures.
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