No pre-baby blues for tribal women

ITDA-run hostel at Saluru ensures safe deliveries

Delivery has always been a major concern for pregnant women of tribal areas in Vizianagaram district of Andhra Pradesh.

The arduous journey to the nearest hospital at the time of delivery used to put them in life and death situations. Infant mortality was also high.

In the absence of institutional delivery facility in remote habitations, women were forced to go all the way to towns such as Parvathipuram, Saluru, and Kurupam. Lack of ambulance facility was another major concern.

To overcome the problem, the Integrated Tribal Development Agency-Parvathipuram, has set up an exclusive hostel at Saluru, 60 km from the district headquarters, in September last.

Women can stay in the hostel right from the eighth month of their pregnancy. The ‘hostel,’ manned by qualified personnel, has ensured 108 safe deliveries, till date. ITDA Project Director G. Lakshmisha expressed happiness over the overwhelming response from the tribal women.

“Homely ambience, nutritious food, regular medical check-up and complete relaxation are ensured in the hostel. All the infants are looking healthy. Baby kits are being supplied for their initial care,” said Mr. Lakshmisha.

Deputy District Medical and Health Officer M. Ravi Kumar said the facility was exclusively for women from tribal areas and those in the high-risk category.

Wide publicity

“We are giving wide publicity for the facility with the support of Anganwadi and Asha workers. Our aim is to reduce both infant and mother mortality rate significantly,” he added.

Vemula Chandramma, whose baby was the 100th in the hostel, said: “I had nothing to worry about at the hostel as there were no household chores.”

The atmosphere is relaxed, said Ms. Chandramma, who hails from Kotturu of Saluru mandal.