

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 155
TO BE ANSWERED ON 07.12.2022

MALNUTRITION RELATED DISEASES CAUSING DEATH

155. SHRI SYED NASIR HUSSAIN:

Will the Minister of Women and Child Development be pleased to state:

- (a) whether according to a recent report by the Centre for Science and Environment and Down to Earth magazine, 71 per cent of Indians cannot afford nutritious food and more than 17 lakh people die every year due to diseases caused by poor diet;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether as per National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5), 67.1 per cent of children aged 6-59 months suffered from anemia in 2021 as compared to 58.6 per cent in 2016 highlighting the significant increase in anemia; and
- (d) if so, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) & (b) Ministry is not aware of any such report. However, the issue of food security at the household level has been addressed by Government by ensuring access to adequate quantity of quality foodgrains at subsidised rates. Further, even during the COVID Pandemic, free ration was provided to 80 crore people under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana

(c) & (d) Children aged 6-59 months had some degree of anemia (haemoglobin levels below 11.0 g/dl) which has increased as per NFHS-5 survey.

There are various causes for anemia in children, which inter alia include low iron stores at birth due to maternal anemia, non-exclusive breastfeeding, poor complementary feeding practices, insufficient quantity of iron and iron enhancers in diet such as foods rich in Vitamin-C, increased iron requirements related to rapid growth and development during infancy and childhood, iron losses due to parasite load (e.g. malaria, intestinal worms), unsafe drinking water and inadequate personal hygiene and poor environmental sanitation, etc.
