

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF PLANNING

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO: 1423**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 13.03.2023

**NUTRITION STRATEGY IN HIGH-BURDEN DISTRICTS**

1423 DR. FAUZIA KHAN:

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has identified high-burden districts with regards to their health and nutrition profiles in the country;
- (b) if so, the details of the same and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the health and nutrition profiles of three aspirational districts, namely Begusarai, Araria, and Aurangabad were prepared, using multiple administrative data sets and shared with the districts to improve their performance in these indicators;
- (d) if so, the details of the reasons behind the better performance of these districts in comparison to the others; and
- (e) the steps taken to improve the status of the high-burden districts?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION; MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS

**(RAO INDERJIT SINGH)**

- (a) & (b) Government of India has identified high burden districts using different criteria on health and nutrition. In the Data note, "*Burden of undernutrition among Indian children and women, 2019-21*" (March 2022), conducted by International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), in collaboration with NITI Aayog and International Institute for Population Science (IIPS), 100 highest burden districts have been identified on the basis on stunting, wasting, severe wasting, anemia, underweight among children; and anemia among non-pregnant women and pregnant women. These districts were identified on the basis of NFHS-4 and 5 (2015-16 & 2019-21) data.

The Government has approved the supply of fortified rice throughout the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) and in other Welfare Schemes of Government of India in all States and Union Territories (UTs) in a phased manner. In Phase 2 of this initiative, high-burden districts on basis of stunting have also been identified by Department of Food and Public Distribution for supplying fortified rice.

- (c) NITI Aayog did a situational analysis of three Aspirational Districts, namely Begusarai, Araria and Aurangabad using administrative and survey data sets and the analysis was shared with the districts to improve the status of their health and nutrition. These recommendations can be broadly categorized as below:
  - i) Behavioural interventions to improve maternal health and child health.
  - ii) Different ways to improve dietary diversification.
  - iii) Upscaling Iron and Folic Acid (IFA) supplementation
  - iv) Improving uptake of immunization
- (d) Does not arise in view of point (c).
- (e) Government has accorded high priority to the issue of malnutrition and is making serious efforts to address this issue. POSHAN Abhiyan, a flagship scheme of the Government was launched in 2018 to address the malaise of malnutrition by adopting a synergised and result oriented approach. Further, to address various policy and systemic needs, the Integrated Child Development Scheme and Anganwadi Services schemes were re-evaluated in respect of programme design, implementation process, outcome and impact and for re-assessing the relevance of the programme in achieving its aims and goals. The efforts under the Supplementary Nutrition Programme under Anganwadi Services, Scheme for Adolescent Girls and POSHAN Abhiyaan have been re-aligned as 'Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0' for maximizing nutritional outcomes. It seeks to address the challenges of malnutrition in children, adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers through a strategic shift in nutrition content and delivery and by creation of a convergent eco-system to develop and promote practices that nurture health, wellness and immunity.

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