

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2559**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 22.03.2023

**GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX - 2021**

2559 SHRI R. GIRIRAJAN:  
DR. KANIMOZHI NVN SOMU:

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

- a. whether the Union Government is aware that in Global Hunger Index-2021, India with a score of 27.5 ranks 101 out of the 116 countries and level of hunger is considered serious;
- b. if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor;
- c. the effective steps taken by the Union Government to address the issues of food security, dietary deficiency and Minimum Dietary Energy Requirement (MDER); and
- d. Whether it is a fact that the per capita consumption of food grains, pulses, edible oil and essential foods are far below the prescribed levels by UNDP and Minimum Dietary Energy Requirement (MDER)?

**ANSWER**

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

(a) and (b) The GHI does not reflect India's true picture as it is a flawed measure of 'Hunger'. It should not be taken at face value as it is neither appropriate nor representative of hunger prevalent in a country. Out of its four indicators, only one indicator, i.e., undernourishment, is directly related to hunger. The two indicators, namely, Stunting and Wasting are outcomes of complex interactions of various other factors like sanitation, genetics, environment and utilisation of food intake apart from hunger which is taken as the causative/outcome factor for stunting and wasting in the GHI. Also, there is hardly any evidence that the fourth indicator, namely, child mortality is an outcome of hunger.

As per Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2021 released by Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe, India stands at rank 101 out of 116 countries with a score of 27.5.

Data on nutritional indicators in the country are captured periodically under the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) conducted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. As per the recent NFHS-5 (2019-21) report, the nutrition indicators for children under 5 years have improved as compared with NFHS-4 (2015-16). Stunting has reduced from 38.4% to 35.5%, Wasting has reduced from 21.0% to 19.3% and Underweight prevalence has reduced from 35.8% to 32.1%.

(c) Government has accorded high priority to the issue of malnutrition and is making serious efforts to address this issue. The efforts under the Supplementary Nutrition Programme under Anganwadi Services and POSHAN Abhiyaan have been rejuvenated and converged as 'Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0' (Mission Poshan 2.0). 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.

Poshan 2.0 focuses on Maternal Nutrition, Infant and Young Child Feeding Norms, Treatment of MAM/SAM and Wellness through AYUSH. It rests on the pillars of Convergence, Governance, and Capacity-building. POSHAN Abhiyaan is the key pillar for Outreach and covers innovations related to nutritional support, ICT interventions, Media Advocacy and Research, Community Outreach and Jan Andolan. Steps have been taken to improve nutritional quality and testing in accredited labs, strengthen delivery and leverage technology under the 'Poshan Tracker', a robust ICT enabled platform to improve governance with regard to real time monitoring of provisioning of supplementary nutrition for prompt supervision and management of services.

Government released Streamlined Guidelines dated 13.1.2021 for greater transparency, accountability and quality in the nutrition support programme and service delivery. These guidelines emphasize on ensuring the quality of supplementary nutrition, highlight roles and responsibilities of duty holders, IT enabled data management and monitoring, leveraging of traditional knowledge through AYUSH, procurement and convergence for achieving good nutritional outcomes.

The Government of India accords high priority to the issue of hunger and has been providing foodgrains at highly subsidized prices to the targeted population through State Governments/Union Territory Administrations under National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013 and Other Welfare Schemes (OWS). Government of India enacted National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013 which provides for coverage of upto 75% of the rural population and upto 50% of the urban population thus addressing the hunger alleviation of the bottom 67% of the population, which at Census 2011 is at a maximum limit of 81.35 crore persons. Identification of beneficiaries under the Act is under two categories- households covered under Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) and Priority Households (PHH). Priority Households are entitled to receive 5 Kg per person per month and AAY households are entitled to receive 35 Kg of foodgrains per household per month @ Rs 1/2/3 per kg for coarse grains/wheat/rice respectively. The Act is operational in a seamless manner across all States/Union Territories. The coverage under the Act is substantially high to ensure that all the vulnerable and needy sections of the society get its benefit. During the year 2021-22, the Government allocated a quantity of 1060.00 lakh MT of foodgrains to the States/UTs under NFSA, Other Welfare Schemes (OWS), Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyaan Anna Yojana, Atmanirbhar Bharat and allocations due to natural calamities and festivals. During the current year i.e., 2022-23, the Government of India has so far allocated 971.26 lakh MT of foodgrains under NFSA, OWS, Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyaan Anna Yojana and other additional allocations. The scheme of End-to-End Computerization of the PDS has ensured rightful targeting of the beneficiaries all over the country."

(d) The UNDP does not prescribe levels of per capita consumption of food grains, pulses, edible oils and essential foods. Indian dietary guidelines for different types of foods and recommended dietary allowances of nutrients are prepared by the Indian Council of Medical Research for different types of persons (depending on their age, sex, body mass, physical activity level, and other characteristics). The per capita net availability of food grains in the country has increased from 176.0 kg in 2019 to 185.4 kg (provisional) in 2021, pulses has increased from 15.5 kg in 2019 to 16.4 kg (provisional) in 2021 and edible oil has increased from 18.1 kg in 2018-19 to 19.7 kg (provisional) in 2020-21.

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