

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE**

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2494
TO BE ANSWERED ON 17TH DECEMBER 2024**

DEATHS DUE TO POOR NUTRITIOUS DIET

2494. SHRI AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH:

Will the **Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether, as per a recent report by the Centre for Science and Environment and Down to Earth magazine, 71 per cent of Indians cannot afford a nutritious meal and more than 17 lakh people die annually because of diseases attributable to poor diet;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor;
- (c) whether, as per NFHS-5, 67.1 per cent of children aged 6-59 months were anaemic in 2021 against 58.6 per cent in 2016 and highlighted a very high increase in anaemia; and
- (d) if so, the reasons therefor?

**ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY
WELFARE
(SMT. ANUPRIYA PATEL)**

(a) and (b) As per the information furnished by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, the Government implements various schemes to improve the access to nutritious food. National Food Security Act (NFSA) 2013, provides highly subsidized food grains under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) for coverage up to 75% of the rural population and up to 50% of the urban population. Under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY), free food grains are provided to 80.67 crore beneficiaries of Antyodaya Anna Yojana households and Priority Households.

Under Mission Poshan 2.0, Supplementary Nutrition is provided to children age 6 months to 6 years, pregnant women, lactating mothers and adolescent girls at Anganwadi centres as per nutrition norms under Schedule II of NFSA Act 2013, based on principles of diet diversity that provides quality protein, healthy fats and micronutrients.

The Pradhan Mantri POshan SHakti Nirman Yojana (PM POSHAN) under Ministry of Education, provides one hot cooked meal in Government and Government-aided schools as per nutrition norms under Schedule II of National Food Security Act, 2013 to school going children from Balvatikas (pre-school) to Class VIII.

Under Nutrition Rehabilitation Centers (NRCs) established for in-patient medical and nutritional care to children under 5 years suffering from Severe Acute Malnourishment (SAM)

with medical complications at public health facilities, children admitted in NRCs are provided starter diet during stabilization phase and catch-up diet during rehabilitation phase to promote recovery of normal metabolic function and promotion of rapid weight gain.

(c) and (d) The prevalence of anaemia among children age 6-59 months in the country is 67.1 percent as per National Family Health Survey 5 (2019-21) and 58.6 percent as per National Family Health Survey 4 (2015-16).

The major causes of anaemia include iron deficiency, other micronutrient deficiencies (e.g. folate, riboflavin, vitamins A and B12), acute and chronic infections (e.g. malaria, cancer, tuberculosis and HIV), worm infestation, fluorosis, and inherited or acquired disorders that affect haemoglobin synthesis, red blood cell production or red blood cell survival (e.g. haemoglobinopathies).
