

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2077
TO BE ANSWERED ON 17.12.2025

MALNUTRITION-RELATED DEATHS IN TRIBAL AREAS OF MAHARASHTRA

2077. DR. MEDHA VISHRAM KULKARNI:

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

- (a) whether Government is aware of continuing deaths of infants and children due to malnutrition in tribal-dominated areas of the State of Maharashtra such as Melghat;
- (b) if so, the details of child and maternal deaths reported from these areas during the last three years, year-wise and district-wise; and
- (c) the steps taken or proposed by the Union Government in coordination with the State Government to prevent further malnutrition-related deaths and to improve health outcomes among tribal children and mothers?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SAVITRI THAKUR)

(a) & (b): As per the Cause of Death Report released by the Sample Registration System (SRS) of the Registrar General of India (SRS-RGI), malnutrition is not identified as a cause of infant and child mortality in India.

According to the report, **major causes of children deaths** (0-4 years of age) in India are Diarrhoeal diseases (4.3%), Fever of unknown origin (4%), Injuries (4.2%), Ill-defined or cause unknown (9.8%), Prematurity & low birth weight (30.7%), pneumonia (16.3%), birth asphyxia & birth trauma (9.8%), other non-communicable disease (8.4%), Congenital anomalies (5.8%), Sepsis (3.9%) etc.

The detailed report is available at: <https://censusindia.gov.in/nada/index.php/catalog/46176>

(c): To address the challenge of malnutrition, Anganwadi services, Poshan Abhiyaan and Scheme for Adolescent girls (14-18 years, in Aspirational Districts and North-Eastern region) have been subsumed under the umbrella Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 (Mission Poshan 2.0). The Mission is being implemented across the country, including tribal

and remote areas. The Mission has adopted a multi-sectoral approach involving dimensions of food, health, water, sanitation and education by establishing cross-cutting convergence amongst more than 18 Ministries/Departments.

Supplementary Nutrition is provided to Children (6 months to 6 years), Pregnant Women, Lactating Mothers and Adolescent Girls (14-18 years) as per nutrition norms (revised in 2023) in Schedule-II of the National Food Security Act, 2013 which are based on the principles of diet diversity and recommend provision of quality protein and 7 essential micronutrients. Fortified rice is provided and emphasis is laid on use of millet to meet the requirement of micro-nutrients among women and children.

Ministries of Women & Child Development and Health & Family Welfare have jointly released the Protocol for Management of Malnutrition in Children to address acute malnutrition in children.

2 lakh Anganwadi Centres have been approved to be upgraded as Saksham Anganwadis with better infrastructure for improved nutrition delivery and for imparting early childhood care and development under the Mission.

The PM JANMAN Mission launched by Ministry of Tribal Affairs aims for targeted development of 75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) residing in 18 States and a UT. This Mission focuses on 11 critical interventions related to 9 key Ministries including Ministry of Women and Child Development. As on date, a total of 2500 Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) have been approved for construction under the Mission. 178 AWCs have been approved for construction in Maharashtra.

Ministry of Tribal Affairs has launched Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Unnat Abhiyan (DAJGUA) aimed at improving the socio-economic condition of tribal communities by adopting saturation mode of tribal families in tribal majority areas and Aspirational Block ST villages. The intervention of Ministry of Women and Child Development involves establishment of 2000 new Saksham AWCs and upgradation of 6000 existing AWCs into Saksham AWCs from FY 2024-25 to FY 2028-29.

The Ministry has introduced Poshan Tracker, an ICT tool, for monitoring and tracking of supplementary nutrition delivery at Anganwadi Centers (AWCs) and beneficiaries.

Community Mobilization and Awareness activities are undertaken to educate people on nutritional aspects as adoption of healthy eating habits requires sustained efforts for behavioural change. Regular sensitization activities under monthly Community based Events and during Poshan Maahs and Poshan Pakhwadas is an essential component of the Mission. Additionally, Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Days (VHSNDs) are observed in convergence with Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for mass awareness on maternal and child health services.
