

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

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2228
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.03.2026**

MISSION POSHAN 2.0

2228. SHRI KARTIKEYA SHARMA:

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

- (a) the steps taken under Mission Poshan 2.0 to combat “Hidden Hunger” caused by the rising consumption of High Fat, Sugar and Salt (HFSS) foods among urban and peri-urban children;
- (b) whether the Ministry, in coordination with FSSAI, is developing a “Front-of-Pack Labelling” (FOPL) awareness campaign to identify “Empty Calories” in ultra-processed snacks;
- (c) how the Poshan Tracker App is being upgraded to monitor “Lifestyle Malnutrition” (overweight/obesity) alongside traditional metrics like stunting and wasting; and
- (d) the progress of the “Poshan Vatikas” initiative in schools to promote “Bio-fortified” natural alternatives to combat the micro-nutrient deficiencies exacerbated by fast-food dependency?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI ANNPURNA DEVI)

(a) to (d) : Hidden hunger is a term used to describe deficiencies of essential micronutrients. As per ICMR-National Institute of Nutrition, high-fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) foods are those foods that are prepared with excessive cooking oils/fats or more added sugar and salt.

There is no proposal underway in the Ministry in coordination with Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), to develop a “Front-of-Pack Labelling” (FOPL) awareness campaign to identify “Empty Calories” in ultra-processed snacks.

Steps taken by the Ministry to limit the consumption of High Fat, Sugar and Salt (HFSS) foods among women and children are as under:

- States and UTs have been advised to limit the use of added sugar in Supplementary nutrition (Take Home Ration and Hot Cooked Meals) provided to children, adolescent girls, pregnant women, and lactating mothers.
- States/UTs have been further instructed to avoid HFSS foods across all age groups and to promote moderation in the consumption of edible oils, especially saturated fats and avoid trans-fats.

- States and UTs have also been encouraged to undertake targeted campaigns on healthy lifestyles and balanced diets for field functionaries, Anganwadi Workers and community at large. An innovative initiative in this regard has been the installation of oil and sugar boards at Anganwadi centres, government offices, child-care institutions, ration shops, and other public locations. These boards aim to generate discussions on dietary choices and sensitise households to the hidden sugar and oil content in commonly consumed foods.
- State and UTs are conducting and reporting regular sensitisation activities under Jan Andolans during Poshan Maahs and Poshan Pakhwadas. During the latest Poshan Pakhwada (8th–22nd April 2025) and Poshan Maah (17th September–16th October 2025) activities across the country were focused on the themes of healthy lifestyle, preventing childhood obesity, and reducing sugar and oil consumption. The participation of people in all such activities is reported on Jan Andolan Dashboard of Poshan Tracker. More than 150 crore activities have been reported in the past Jan Andolan campaigns, held under Poshan Abhiyaan since 2018.

Poshan Tracker Application has provision for identification and monitoring of overweight/obese children, in addition to stunting, wasting and under-weight categories.

Further, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare undertakes the following awareness measures:

- 'Eat Right India' movement aims to inculcate healthy eating habits among consumers.
- 'Aaj se Thoda Kam' campaign encourages consumers to gradually reduce their intake of fat, salt, and sugar through dietary modifications.
- Social media campaign on “Stop Obesity” & “Fight Obesity”
- Child-friendly animated videos are developed and published on social media to educate kids about the dangers of obesity and the value of healthy eating and regular physical activity.
- #HarLabelKuchKehtaHai" awareness campaign is also carried out under the ‘Eat Right India’ movement to empower citizens with label literacy for informed choices. It aims to educate consumers on key elements like nutritional information (calories, fats, sugars, protein, serving size), ingredient lists, allergen warnings, and date markings.

Guidelines of PM POSHAN recommend establishment of School Nutrition Garden (SNGs), also called Kitchen Garden, so that children learn the skill of growing their own food. As on 31st March, 2025 more than 6.28 lakh schools have set up SNGs under the Scheme. Also, Poshan Vatikas or Nutri-gardens are being set up under Mission Poshan 2.0 at Anganwadi Centers across the country to encourage consumption of local and seasonal fruits, vegetables, thereby improving diet-diversity and increase the intake of micronutrients. As on February, 2026, a total of 3,18,176 Poshan Vatikas have been established at Anganwadi Centers.
