

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

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3644
TO BE ANSWERED ON 24.03.2026**

INCREASING CASES OF LEAD POISONING

3644. SMT. SAGARIKA GHOSE:

Will the **MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:-

- (a) whether over 275 million children in the country have blood Lead levels exceeding the WHO safe limit of 5 µg/dL, with Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Chhattisgarh accounting for 40 percent of affected population;
- (b) the number of blood Lead testing and treatment centres established under the National Health Mission;
- (c) the number of food and spice samples found to exceed the 10 PPM Lead threshold under the Food Safety and Standards Regulations, 2011 since 2021; and
- (d) whether the Ministry has moved to establish at least one Lead testing laboratory at every district hospital, as recommended by the NITI Aayog–CSIR study?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY
WELFARE
(SHRI PRATAPRAO JADHAV)**

(a): The National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog and the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), India have jointly prepared a report "Assessment of Lead Impact on Human and India's Response" (in July, 2022) based on 89 data sets from 36 researches that were carried out between 1970 and 2014 and found that 275 million children under 19 years of age in India have blood Lead levels that are abnormally high i.e., greater than 5 micrograms per deciliter (µg/dl).

(b) & (c): Health is a State subject, the responsibility of strengthening public healthcare system lies with the respective State/ UT Governments. Under National Health Mission (NHM), the Government provides technical and financial support to States/UTs for strengthening their healthcare systems based on the proposals submitted by them. No blood Lead testing and treatment centres have been established under the NHM. However, few Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) laboratories have blood lead testing capacity [National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), National Institute of Occupational Health (NIOH), National Institute for Implementation Research on Non-Communicable Diseases (NIIRNCD), etc].

As per the Pan India surveillance drives conducted by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) during 2021-25, for various food products including spices, in 1.1% of samples, the levels of lead were found higher than the prescribed limit specified in Food Safety and Standards Regulations (FSSR).

(d) No, such proposal is under consideration in the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.
