

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO: 4310**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 01.04.2026

**RISING MALNUTRITION IN WEST BENGAL**

4310. SHRI SAMIK BHATTACHARYA:

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) data indicates that malnutrition indicators—namely stunting, wasting, and underweight—have worsened or remained above 30 per cent in several districts of West Bengal, with at least 13 districts showing an increasing trend in one or more child growth failure indices as compared to NFHS-4;
- (b) the district-wise prevalence of stunting, wasting, and underweight in West Bengal as per NFHS-5, and the districts identified as high-priority intervention zones;
- (c) the specific district-level action plans prepared under Mission POSHAN 2.0 for these high-burden districts; and
- (d) the amount of Central funds released for targeted nutrition interventions and the status of their utilisation?

**ANSWER**

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

(a) to (d): The National Family Health Survey (NFHS) is a large-scale, multi-round survey conducted in a representative sample of households throughout India. It provides report on fertility, infant and child mortality, the practice of family planning, maternal and child health, reproductive health, nutrition, anaemia, utilization and quality of health and family planning services. As per NFHS-4 and NFHS -5, the district-wise prevalence of stunting, wasting, and underweight among children in West Bengal is placed at **Annexure I**.

To strengthen nutrition and address the challenge of malnutrition in the country including high burdened districts of West Bengal, the Ministry of Women and Child Development is implementing Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0. The Mission includes beneficiaries; Children under 6 years of age, pregnant women, lactating mothers and adolescent girls (age 14-18 years in Aspirational Districts and North-Eastern region). The Mission is being implemented in the whole country including all districts of West Bengal. The responsibility of implementation of the Mission lies with States and UTs.

Under Mission Poshan 2.0 a new strategy has been made for reduction in malnutrition and for improved health, wellness and immunity through activities like community engagement, outreach, behavioural change and advocacy. It focuses on Maternal Nutrition, Infant and Young Child Feeding practices, treatment of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM)/ Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) and wellness through AYUSH practices to reduce prevalence of wasting, stunting, anaemia and underweight.

Further, Supplementary Nutrition is provided to Children (6 months to 6 years), Pregnant Women, Lactating Mothers and Adolescent Girls in accordance with the nutrition norms contained in Schedule-II of the National Food Security Act, 2013. These norms have been revised in January 2023. The old norms were largely calorie-specific; however, the revised norms are more comprehensive and balanced in terms of both quantity and quality of supplementary nutrition based on the principles of diet diversity.

Also, Ministry of Women & Child Development and Ministry of Health & Family Welfare have jointly released the Protocol for Management of Malnutrition in Children to prevent and treat severely acute malnutrition in children.

To encourage diet-diversity and consumption of wholesome local produce, Poshan Vatikas have been developed at Anganwadi Centres (AWCs). Poshan Vatikas helps to meet the important dietary diversity gap by providing different fruits, nuts, herbs, medicinal plants and vegetables round the year.

Under this Mission, one of the major activities undertaken is Community Mobilization and Awareness Advocacy to educate people on nutritional aspects as adoption of good nutrition habit requires sustained efforts for behavioural change. State and UTs including high burdened districts of West Bengal are conducting and reporting regular sensitisation activities under Jan Andolans during Poshan Maah and Poshan Pakhwada celebrated in the months of September and March-April respectively. Community Based Events (CBEs) have served as a significant strategy in changing nutritional practices and all Anganwadi workers are required to conduct two Community Based Events every month. A total of 9.8 crore CBEs have been conducted from 2018 to February 2026 and more than 150 crore Jan Andolan activities have been conducted since 2018 through 15 Jan Andolans.

During financial year 2025-26, an amount of Rs 1,029.28 Crore was released to the State Government of West Bengal, under the Mission. Details are as below:

S.No	Financial Year	Funds Released (in Crore)	Funds Utilized* (In Crore)
1	2022-23	1227.59	1455.89
2	2023-24	1237.56	1522.40
3	2024-25	1513.80	-
4	2025-26	1,029.28	-

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## Annexure I

S. No	Districts of West Bengal	Stunted Children under 5 (height for age) (%)		Wasted Children under 5 (weight for height) (%)		Underweight Children under 5 (weight for age) (%)	
		NFHS-4	NFHS-5	NFHS-4	NFHS-5	NFHS-4	NFHS-5
1	Bankura	34.0	30.3	27.0	26.0	39.8	38.8
2	Birbhum	40.5	37.0	29.5	25.5	43.1	41.8
3	Dakshin Dinajpur	32.9	31.9	17.1	22.8	28.1	30.2
4	Darjeeling	29.1	34.3	11.3	20.6	25.7	31.6
5	Haora	34.6	27.5	14.6	21.3	28.4	27.3
6	Hugli	30.1	28.9	18.5	20.0	28.7	33.4
7	Jalpaiguri	31.2	28.9	17.7	18.3	24.6	25.4
8	Koch Bihar	32.9	28.7	20.1	16.8	29.3	22.5
9	Kolkata	24.2	29.6	17.4	29.3	19.6	32.9
10	Maldah	37.8	40.5	22.8	20.0	37.2	35.3
11	Murshidabad	41.9	39.8	17.5	16.3	34.6	32.4
12	Nadia	23.3	26.1	10.7	17.6	19.3	25.1
13	North 24 Parganas	23.8	32.4	13.6	13.3	18.3	23.6
14	Paschim Barddhaman	0.0	39.7	0.0	25.5	0.0	41.0
15	Paschim Medinipur	29.4	31.1	28.0	30.3	40.3	40.0
16	Purba Barddhaman	0.0	32.7	0.0	21.1	0.0	31.6
17	Purba Medinipur	29.9	25.8	24.5	15.5	32.8	30.6
18	Puruliya	45.5	36.9	34.6	29.4	58.2	46.3
19	South 24 Parganas	27.3	36.7	20.1	21.2	27.8	32.2
20	Uttar Dinajpur	40.4	44.8	14.0	16.0	34.7	32.0

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