

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4038
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10.08.2018

OBESITY IN CHILDREN

4038. SHRI KALYAN BANERJEE:

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

- a) whether it is a fact that girl children in the country are suffering from obesity and are deprived from basic nutrition;
- b) if so, whether the Government has received any survey report on paucity of credible, authentic information on the health status of girl children;
- c) if so, the details thereof along with suggestions made therein; and
- d) the measures taken by the Government to provide adequate nutrition and sustain good health of the children?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI MANEKA SANJAY GANDHI)

- (a) to (c): The data on nutritional indicators is captured under the National Family Health Surveys (NFHS) conducted periodically by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. As per the report of the latest NFHS-4 (2015-16), 2.1% girls under 5 years of age are overweight in the country and 20.1% are underweight.
- (d) Government has accorded high priority to the issue of improving nutritional outcomes in the country and is implementing various interventions to provide adequate nutrition including prevention of obesity among children as under:
 - i. In order to address undernutrition among children Ministry of Women and Child Development is implementing Anganwadi Services, Scheme for Adolescent Girls and Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana as direct targeted interventions to improve nutritional outcomes in the country.
 - ii. Under the POSHAN *Abhiyaan*, convergence mechanism has been provided for inter-sectoral convergence of programmes and schemes related to nutrition administered by various Ministries/Departments to address the issues of under-nutrition.
 - iii. The Food and Nutrition Board under the Ministry of Women and Child Development with its 43 field units in the country is engaged in creating awareness on nutrition in collaboration with State Government/institutions through exhibitions, advertisement in audiovisual and print media, lectures promoting the consumption of healthy balanced diets and inclusion of fruits and vegetables, demonstrations of low cost nutritious recipes using locally available foods, training of field functionaries and celebration of nutrition related national events.

- iv. In order to promote and support breastfeeding, Government has implemented “MAA-Mothers’ Absolute Affection” programme which aims at improving breastfeeding coverage and appropriate breastfeeding practices in the country.
- v. Setting up of Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres at public health facilities for treatment of sick children with Severe Acute Malnutrition.
- vi. Vitamin A supplementation for children till the age of 5 years.
- vii. National Iron Plus Initiative for supplementation and treatment of anaemia among children, adolescents, pregnant and lactating women.
- viii. Bi-annual National De-worming Days are held across the country following a fixed day strategy to administer Albendazole tablets to all the children in the age group of 1-19 years to prevent anemia by reducing worm infestation.
- ix. Information on health and hygiene is provided to out-of-school girls under Rashtriya Kishore Swasthya Karyakram through peer education programme.
- x. Village Health and Nutrition Days and Mother and Child Protection Card are the joint initiative of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and the Ministry of Woman and Child Development for addressing the nutrition concerns in children, pregnant women and lactating mothers.
- xi. Food Safety and Standard Authority of India under Ministry of Health and Family Welfare have launched ‘The Eat Right Movement’ aiming to engage and enable citizens to improve their health and wellbeing by eating healthy and nutritious foods. The ‘Eat Right Movement’ aims to create public awareness that regular and excessive consumption of foods high in salt, sugar and fat leads to obesity.
- xii. Ministry of Women and Child Development had constituted a Working Group on addressing consumption of foods High in Fat, Salt and Sugar (HFSS) and promotion of healthy snacks in schools, which has given its report. The Working Group *inter alia* recommended that the aspects related to healthy eating and Junk Foods may be incorporated in the school curriculum. Accordingly, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has issued an advisory covering major recommendations of the report to all schools affiliated to it, encouraging them to implement the recommendations.
- xiii. To address the issue of High Fat, Sugar and Salt (HFSS) in food and associated health risks, FSSAI had constituted an Expert Group, the report of which is available on the website of FSSAI for the information of general public. FSSAI has also issued draft Guidelines titled ‘Guidelines for making available wholesome, Nutritious, Safe and Hygienic Food to School Children in India’.
