

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1619
TO BE ANSWERED ON 16.12.2022

RANK IN GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX

1619. SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY:

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

- a. whether the Government has identified any problems with the methodology used to calculate the Global Hunger Index which led to slip in India's ranking therein and if so, the details thereof;
- b. whether the Government is planning on carrying out a food consumption survey and if so, the details thereof with the timeline of the survey;
- c. the details of the undernourished and malnourished population of India along with the steps taken by the Government to tackle hunger; and
- d. the details of the key decisions taken at the NITI Aayog high level meeting on Global Hunger Index along with the progress made therein?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) to (d) Global Hunger Index (GHI) does not reflect India's true picture as it is a flawed measure of 'Hunger'. It should not be taken at face value as it is neither appropriate nor representative of hunger prevalent in a country. Out of its four indicators, only one indicator, i.e., undernourishment, is directly related to hunger. The two indicators, namely, Stunting and Wasting are outcomes of complex interactions of various other factors like sanitation, genetics, environment and utilisation of food intake apart from hunger which is taken as the causative/outcome factor for stunting and wasting in the GHI. Also, there is hardly any evidence that the fourth indicator, namely, child mortality is an outcome of hunger.

The latest survey on Household Consumption Expenditure 2022-23 has been launched in August 2022 by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation to collect information on consumption of food items at household level.

Data on nutritional indicators in the country are captured periodically under the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) conducted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. As per the recent NFHS-5 (2019-21) report, the nutrition indicators for children under 5 years have improved as compared with NFHS-4 (2015-16). Stunting has reduced from 38.4% to 35.5%, Wasting has reduced from 21.0% to 19.3% and Underweight prevalence has reduced from 35.8% to 32.1%.

Government has accorded high priority to the issue of malnutrition and is making serious efforts to address this issue. The efforts under the Supplementary Nutrition Programme under Anganwadi Services and POSHAN Abhiyaan have been rejuvenated and converged as 'Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0' (Mission Poshan 2.0). It seeks to address the challenges of malnutrition in children, adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers through a strategic shift in nutrition content and delivery and by creation of a convergent eco-system to develop and promote practices that nurture health, wellness and immunity.

Poshan 2.0 focuses on Maternal Nutrition, Infant and Young Child Feeding Norms, Treatment of MAM/SAM and Wellness through AYUSH. It rests on the pillars of Convergence, Governance, and Capacity-building. POSHAN Abhiyaan is the key pillar for Outreach and covers innovations related to nutritional support, ICT interventions, Media Advocacy and Research, Community Outreach and Jan Andolan. Steps have been taken to improve nutritional quality and testing in accredited labs, strengthen delivery and leverage technology under the 'Poshan Tracker', a robust ICT enabled platform to improve governance with regard to real time monitoring of provisioning of supplementary nutrition for prompt supervision and management of services.

Government released Streamlined Guidelines dated 13.1.2021 for greater transparency, accountability and quality in the nutrition support programme and service delivery. These guidelines emphasize on ensuring the quality of supplementary nutrition, highlight roles and responsibilities of duty holders, IT enabled data management and monitoring, leveraging of traditional knowledge through AYUSH, procurement and convergence for achieving good nutritional outcomes.

Key decisions taken at the NITI Aayog high level meeting on Global Hunger Index inter alia included regular conduct of national level food consumption surveys and a massive mass awareness campaign on nutrition and healthy diet. Progress made on these are already elaborated above.
