

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 247
TO BE ANSWERED ON 03.02.2023

AWARENESS PROGRAMME ON SAM

247. SHRI PALLAB LOCHAN DAS:

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

- (a) the initiatives undertaken by the Government for children suffering from Severe Acute Malnourishment (SAM);
- (b) the details of Awareness programme undertaken by the Government to raise awareness regarding Severe Acute Malnourished (SAM) children; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) The Government has accorded high priority to the issue of malnutrition and is implementing several schemes/programmes of different Ministries/Departments through States/UTs to address various aspects related to nutrition. Children with Severe Acute Malnutrition are treated at the Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres established by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

POSHAN Abhiyaan was launched on 8th March 2018 with an aim to achieve improvement in nutritional status of Children under 6 years, Adolescent Girls, Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers in a time bound manner by adopting a synergised and result oriented approach.

In order to address the challenges of malnutrition, Government has taken steps to improve nutritional quality and testing, strengthen delivery and leverage technology under Poshan Tracker to improve governance. Streamlined Guidelines were issued on Quality Assurance, Roles and Responsibilities of Duty Holders, procedure for procurement, integrating AYUSH concepts and Data Management and Monitoring for transparency, efficiency and accountability in delivery of Supplementary Nutrition on 13.01.2021.

Government has advised States/UTs to launch a drive for identification of SAM children for referral to hospitals (if required) and AYUSH centres in accordance with the detailed action plan approved by the District Nutrition Committee, constituting of converging line Ministries, health experts etc to be finalized in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer.

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'. 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. Under Poshan 2.0, focus is on diet diversity, food fortification, leveraging traditional systems of knowledge and popularizing use of

millet. Nutrition awareness strategies under Poshan 2.0 aim to develop sustainable health and well-being through regional meal plans to bridge dietary gaps. Dietary diversification in the Anganwadi platform encourages the consumption of micronutrient rich foods, viz., dark green leafy vegetables, lentils and vitamin C rich fruits. States/UTs have been advised to use fortified foods ingredients e.g., Fortified Wheat Flour, Fortified Rice, Double Fortified Salt and Fortified Edible Oil, under the Supplementary Nutrition Programme

Further, greater emphasis is being given on the use of millets for preparation of Hot Cooked Meal and Take Home rations at Anganwadis for Pregnant Women, Lactating mothers and children below 6 years of age, as millets have high nutrient content which includes protein, essential fatty acid, dietary fibre, B-Vitamins, minerals such as calcium, iron, zinc, folic acid and other micro-nutrients thus helping to tackle anemia and other micro-nutrient deficiencies common among women and children. As per the Mission Saksham Anganwadi & Poshan 2.0 guidelines, millets need to be mandatorily supplied at least once a week and suitably integrated in Take Home Ration (not raw ration) and Hot Cooked Meals in a palatable form

(b & c) One of the major activities undertaken under POSHAN Abhiyaan is Community Mobilization and Awareness Advocacy leading to Jan Andolan to educate the people on nutritional aspects. Under the Abhiyaan, a well-researched, designed and tested communication plan & IEC materials have been developed and intensive Mass Media Campaigns are conducted through various mass media channels like radio, television and social media. An important focus has therefore been on 'Behaviour Change Communication' or BCC to address inadequate and inappropriate infant and young child feeding practices, nutrition and care during pregnancy and adolescence.

Community Based Events or CBEs have served as a significant strategy in changing nutrition practices. CBEs help to celebrate critical milestones in the life of children below two years of age. The gatherings serve as a platform for disseminating essential messages on appropriate nutrition and health behaviour. The events are organised every month at the Anganwadi centres (AWC) and primarily focus on promotion of maternal nutrition (Godh bhara) and/ or initiation of appropriate complementary feeding (Annaprasan). Around 3.70 crore Community Based Events (CBEs) have been organized since the launch of the Abhiyaan in Anganwadi Centres

Also, through the use of Poshan Tracker, videos are disseminated, wherein the beneficiaries are counseled on nutrition related issues like breastfeeding, complementary feeding, infant and young childcare. Poshan Tracker has embedded videos related to Infant and Young Child care and nutrition for educating the beneficiaries residing in rural, urban and tribal regions of the country.

At a national level, the *Rashtriya Poshan Maah* is celebrated in the month of September across the country while *Poshan Pakhwada* is celebrated in the month of March. Themes have included overall nutrition, hygiene, water and sanitation, anaemia prevention, importance of breast-feeding, growth monitoring, role of Poshan Panchayats, AYUSH for Well-being, 'Back to Basics – Yoga for Health', importance of Poshan Vatikas for cultivation of local vegetables, medicinal plants/herbs and fruits at the community level, Poshan ke Paanch Sutra, cycle rallies, defeat diarrhea campaigns, Nukkad Natak/Folk Shows, SHG meetings, etc. More than 50+ crore activities have been carried out under Poshan Maah and Poshan Pakhwada across the country.
