

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2609
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.08.2023

MALNOURISHMENT IN TRIBAL CHILDREN

2609. SHRI DIBYENDU ADHIKARI:

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

- (a) whether 4.7 million tribal children of India are suffering from chronic nutrition deprivation affecting their survival and growth; and
- (b) if so, the details of projects and action taken for designing and targeting preventive measures for malnourished tribal children therefor?

ANSWER

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

(a) The data on nutritional indicators is captured under the National Family Health Surveys conducted periodically by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. As per the recent report of NFHS-5, the prevalence of malnutrition among tribal children in the country has shown a declining trend, viz., the prevalence of stunting, wasting and underweight has reduced from 43.8%, 27.4% and 45.3% respectively in NFHS-4 to 40.9%, 23.2% and 39.5% respectively under NFHS-5.

(b) The Government has accorded high priority to the issue of malnutrition and is implementing several schemes like POSHAN Abhiyaan, Anganwadi Services, Scheme for Adolescent Girls, under Mission Poshan 2.0 and Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) under Mission Shakti, as direct targeted interventions to address the problem of malnutrition throughout the country including in tribal areas.

POSHAN Abhiyaan launched on 8th March 2018, aims to achieve improvement in nutritional status of Adolescent Girls, Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers in a time bound manner by adopting a synergised and result oriented approach. The Abhiyaan has been rolled out across 36 States/UTs included tribal areas.

POSHAN Abhiyaan is a mission mode approach to malnutrition through interventions of technology, multi-ministerial convergence and focus on converting the agenda of improving nutrition into Jan Andolan through Community Mobilization/Sensitisation and thus bringing nutrition-linked Behavioral Change across India. Under Jan Andolans, Poshan Maah and Poshan Pakhwada are celebrated annually in the month of September and March respectively.

In Poshan Maah 2022 and Poshan Pakhwada 2023 , *Jan andolan* around promoting nutritious local food for healthy mother and child in tribal areas was a key theme. In the recently held Poshan Pakhwada 2023, more than 13 lakh activities were focused around Tribal populations. These included Anaemia camps for Children, Adolescent girls and Women in tribal districts, Anaemia camp in Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS), Awareness camps on the role of Millets, Millet-based Tribal food fairs, Recipe contest/Mothers kitchen contest aimed at healthy traditional recipes for mother & child especially in tribal areas, Tribal food fairs with involvement of SHGs, Growth measurement camps etc

Further, 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. Technology is being leveraged under the 'Poshan Tracker', a robust ICT enabled platform to improve governance with regard to monitoring of provisioning of supplementary nutrition for prompt supervision and management of services.

Under Poshan 2.0, focus is on diet diversity, leveraging traditional systems of knowledge and popularizing use of millets. Nutrition awareness strategies under Poshan 2.0 aim to develop sustainable health and well-being through regional meal plans to bridge dietary gaps. Further, greater emphasis is being given on the use of millets (coarse grains) for preparation of Hot Cooked Meal and Take Home rations (not raw ration) at Anganwadi centres 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 in women and children. Under Supplementary Nutrition Programme of Mission Poshan 2.0, only fortified rice is being allocated to States/UTs
