

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 348**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21.07.2023

**NUTRITION INTERVENTIONS UNDER MISSION POSHAN**

348. SHRI DIBYENDU ADHIKARI:

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

- (a) whether COVID-19 pandemic has added to the economic and social woes for 47 million women and girls and pushed them into extreme hunger and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the action including effective nutrition interventions taken by Government to combat high rates of malnutrition in the country;
- (c) whether a meagre 1.08 percent increase in budget allocation under the Mission Poshan 2.0, a crucial social security programme for women and children is adequate to overcome the crisis of malnutrition amongst women and children and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the proposed remedial measures to be adopted by Government for mitigation of this issue?

**ANSWER**

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

(a) During the Covid-19 pandemic, the issue of food security at the household level has been addressed by Government by ensuring access to adequate quantity of quality foodgrains at subsidised rates. Free ration was provided to 80 crore people under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, (PMGKAY) which was launched with the specific purpose of ameliorating the hardships faced by the poor and needy due to economic disruptions caused by Covid-19 outbreak in the country. The allocation of free foodgrains under PMGKAY was in addition to normal allocation done under the National Food Security Act, 2013.

In addition to this, as part of the Economic measures (Atma Nirbhar Bharat), allocation of foodgrains, free of cost, was made available to all the States/UTs, for the month of May and June, 2020 for stranded migrants who were not covered under the National Food Security Act or any other State Scheme. Such beneficiaries were eligible for 5 kg of foodgrains per person per month.

Further, the One Nation One Ration Card Plan for nationwide portability of the NFSA benefits is presently enabled in all the 36 States/UTs, covering the entire NFSA population in the country.

Also, during COVID-19, the distribution of food items and nutrition support were provided by Anganwadi Workers once in 15 days at the doorstep of beneficiaries, i.e., children, women and lactating mothers.

(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 and Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) as direct targeted interventions to address the problem of malnutrition in the country. 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.

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. It rests on the pillars of Convergence, Governance, and Capacity-building. POSHAN Abhiyaan is the key pillar for Outreach and will cover 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.

Under Poshan 2.0, focus is on diet diversity, food fortification, 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 common among women and children.

(c) & (d) The Budget for Mission Poshan 2.0 is based on estimates arising from the implementation of the programmes under the Mission (Anganwadi Services, Poshan Abhiyaan and the Scheme for Adolescent Girls) in the States/UTs. In case of additional requirement by States/UTs, revised budget allocation is sought from the Ministry of Finance at the time of Supplementary Grants. During the FY 2022-23 and 2023-24, Rs. 20263.07 and Rs. 20554.31 respectively have been allocated for the Scheme.

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