

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 81
TO BE ANSWERED ON 07.02.2020

POSHAN ABHIYAN

*81. SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU:

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

- (a) whether about two thirds of deaths among children in India are attributable to malnutrition;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the mechanism adopted by the Government to address the situation more effectively;
- (c) whether the Government has taken up the matter with the States to pay special attention towards effective implementation of the Poshan Abhiyan to reduce the instances of stunting, undernutrition, anaemia and low birth weight in children; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the response of States thereto and the extent to which the Government has been able to tackle the problem of malnutrition in the country?

ANSWER

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

(a)to (d): A statement is laid on the table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to part (a) to (d) of Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 81 due for answer on 07.02.2020, raised by Shri Chandra Sekhar Sahu regarding Poshan Abhiyan.

(a) to (d) Malnutrition is not the direct cause of death among children under five years of age. It can increase morbidity and mortality by reducing resistance to infections. Malnourished children are more vulnerable to any infection than normal children. The overall under five mortality rate has reduced from 74.3 (NFHS-3) to 49.7 (NFHS-4) deaths per thousand live births.

Malnutrition is a complex and multi-dimensional issue, affected by a number of generic factors including poverty, inadequate food consumption due to access and availability, inequitable food distribution, improper maternal infant and child feeding and care practices, inequity and gender imbalances, poor sanitary and environmental conditions; and restricted access to quality health, education and social care services.

The Government has accorded high priority to the issue of malnutrition and is making serious efforts to eradicate malnutrition. Several schemes with direct as well as indirect interventions are being implemented across the country. Schemes like Anganwadi Services, Scheme for Adolescent Girls and Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojna (PMMVY) under the Umbrella Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme as direct targeted interventions are being implemented to address the problem of malnutrition among women and children in the country.

Anganwadi Services, aims to improve the nutritional and health status of children in the age-group 0-6 years, pregnant women & lactating mothers and reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity and malnutrition. Under the Scheme, a package of six services is provided through a network of Anganwadi Centers, which include supplementary nutrition, pre-school non-formal education, nutrition & health education, immunization, health check-up and referral services. National Food Security Act, promulgated in 2013, has mandated the nutritional entitlement for the beneficiaries of Anganwadi Services as legal entitlement. The scheme is universal and open to all the eligible beneficiaries.

Scheme for Adolescent Girls is implemented for out-of-school adolescent girls in the age group of 11-14 years for self-development and empowerment of adolescent girls; improvement of nutritional and health status; to promote awareness about health, hygiene & nutrition; support to out of school Adolescent Girls for successful transition back to formal schooling or bridge learning/skill training; upgrade their home-based skills and life skills.

The objective of **Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)** is to provide cash incentive to improve health seeking behaviour amongst the Pregnant Women & Lactating Mothers (PW&LM) and to compensate partially the wage loss in terms of cash incentive so that the woman can take adequate rest before and after delivery of the first child.

Government is implementing POSHAN Abhiyaan (earlier known as National Nutrition Mission) since 18th December 2017 to address the problem of malnutrition in the country. To ensure a holistic approach, all districts of 37 States/UTs have been covered in the Abhiyaan. The goals of POSHAN Abhiyaan are to achieve improvement in nutritional status of Children from 0-6 years, Adolescent Girls, Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers in a time bound manner with fixed targets as under:

S.No	Objective	Target
1.	Prevent and reduce Stunting in children (0- 6 years)	@ 2% p.a.
2.	Prevent and reduce under-nutrition (underweight prevalence) in children (0-6 years)	@ 2% p.a.
3.	Reduce the prevalence of anemia among young Children(6-59 months)	@ 3% p.a.
4.	Reduce the prevalence of anemia among Women and Adolescent Girls in the age group of 15-49 years.	@ 3% p.a.
5.	Reduce Low Birth Weight (LBW).	@ 2% p.a.

The Abhiyaan aims to reduce malnutrition in the Country in a phased manner, through a life cycle approach, by adopting a synergised and result oriented approach. The Abhiyaan ensures mechanisms for timely service delivery and a robust monitoring as well as intervention infrastructure. Target is to bring down stunting of the children in the age group of 0-6 years from 38.4% to 25% by the year 2022.

Meetings have been held between Minister of Women & Child Development and Chief Ministers of 16 States during the last eight months to review the progress of POSHAN Abhiyaan, in which apart from the senior officers of Ministry, representatives of Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and NITI Aayog also participated. National Council under the Chairmanship of Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog and the Executive Committee under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of Women & Child Development (MWCD) also monitors the progress of POSHAN Abhiyaan. Secretary, MWCD has also reviewed the progress of POSHAN Abhiyaan with the Chief Secretaries and Secretaries of Women and Child Development of States during visits to the States.

Recently, a national conference was organised on 13th and 14th November, 2019 with State Secretaries of Women and Child Development for in-depth review of POSHAN Abhiyaan and to other Schemes. Series of Video Conferences have also been organized review and accelerate the progress of POSHAN Abhiyaan. Further, letters are sent regularly to Chief Secretaries and Secretaries of Women and Child Development of States regarding monitoring and effective implementation of POSHAN Abhiyaan. Ministry pursues regularly with States/UTs to complete all the activities in the States/UTs.

As per the recent report of Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey (CNNS) (2016-18), the prevalence of underweight, stunting and wasting among children is 33.4%, 34.7% and 17.3% respectively, which indicates a reduction when compared to the levels reported by NFHS-4.
