

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4546
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20TH MARCH, 2020**

EDUCATION AND HEALTH-UNIVERSAL ACCESS AND QUALITY

4546. SHRI VINCENT H. PALA:

Will the Minister of **HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Group of Secretaries on 'Education and Health-Universal Access and Quality' has laid down guidelines to address the issue of micronutrient malnutrition through identified fortification of food;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the timeline for implementation of measures suggested by the Group of Secretaries; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

**ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND
FAMILY WELFARE
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)**

(a) to (c): The Group of Secretaries on 'Education & Health-Universal Access and Quality', inter-alia, identified fortification of staple food like rice, wheat, edible oil and milk with Iron folic acid and Vitamin-A as one of the measures to address the issue of micro-nutrient malnutrition in the country. A Task Force constituted for recommending actions/legislation on food fortification recommended that the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) should bring out a comprehensive regulation/legislation under Food Safety and Standard Act, 2006 and Food Safety and Standard Rules, 2011 to ensure effective and sustainable fortification which should be inclusive of standards and other related provisions for fortified wheat flour, rice, oil, milk and Double Fortified Salt and other fortified products which would subsume all other existing regulations for these items.

Accordingly, FSSAI has notified Food Safety and Standards (Fortification of Foods) Regulation dated 2nd August, 2018 on fortification of food in key staples like Oil and Milk (with Vitamin A and D), Wheat Flour and Rice (with Iron, Folic Acid and Vitamin B 12); and Double Fortified Salt (with Iodine and Iron). +F Logo has been released for identification of fortified products. Further, as a follow up, various advisories for premix suppliers, endorsement of +F logo, and Scientific Health Claims for label declaration of fortified foods approved by the Scientific Panel on Nutrition and Fortification have also been released.

As per information available with FSSAI, various nodal Ministries/Departments have taken action to introduce fortified food in food safety net programmes:

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development & Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Education and Literacy) have issued advisories to States/UTs for mandatory use of fortified wheat flour, fortified edible oil and double fortified salt in Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) and Mid Day Meal (MDM) vide letters dated 10th July, 2018 and 2nd August, 2017, respectively.

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development has issued advisory dated 28th February, 2019 for including fortified rice, in addition to use of fortified wheat flour, fortified edible oil and double fortified salt also under ICDS and SABLA.
- The Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution has issued circular dated 22nd December, 2016 asking States which are distributing wheat flour to use only fortified atta for distribution under Public Distribution Scheme (PDS).
- The Department of Food and Public Distribution has issued an advisory on 1st October, 2018 urging States/UTs to provide wide publicity to the beneficial aspects of consumption of fortified edible oils to tackle the problem of malnutrition in an effective way.
- Administrative approval has been given for a Centrally Sponsored Pilot Scheme on 'fortification of Rice and its Distribution under the Public Distribution System' for a period of three years beginning 2019-20.
- The National Council on India's Nutrition challenges at its 1st meeting held on 18th April, 2018, inter-alia, directed that in order to address the persistent high levels of anaemia and Vitamin-D deficiency in the country the fortification of staple food commodities may be taken up immediately under Anganwadi Services Scheme and Mid Day Meal (MDM) and wherever feasible.
- NITI Aayog has asked all States/UTs to scale up or initiate food fortification.

As on date, in the Government Safety net programmes, 19 States and 5 UTs have taken up fortification in their chosen commodities under the programmes.

Further, voluntary fortification has also begun and a number of fortified products are available in the market. As on date, 114 top & Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME) companies have introduced 157 fortified brands.