

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS  
**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO- 3652**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON- 20/12/2021

**DEATH OF CHILDREN IN KERALA**

3652. SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH:

Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware of deaths of more than 121 children in Attappady tribal hamlets in Kerala over the last eight years;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has sought a report from the Government of Kerala on this matter;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and reaction of the Government in this regard;
- (d) the details of the prevailing issue of child malnutrition among tribal children in Attappady leading to stunting and infant death is to be addressed by any targeted intervention other than existing programs;
- (e) if so, the details thereof;
- (f) whether it is fact that many expectant and young mothers in Attapady belonging to the Scheduled Tribes are suffering from malnutrition and diseases like sickle cell anaemia; and
- (g) if so, the details thereof and action taken to provide targeted nutrition for them?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRIBAL AFFAIRS  
(SMT. RENUKA SINGH SARUTA)

(a) to (c): Ministry of Tribal Affairs has called for a detailed factual report from the State of Kerala based on the recent news items on the deaths of children in Attapady. The State of Kerala has been asked to investigate the cause of such deaths in Attapady and about malnutrition in tribal children.

(d) to (g): Public health is a State subject and Government of India provides funds and technical support to States to address the health needs. Government accords high priority to the issue of malnutrition and has been implementing several schemes / programmes. These schemes, inter alia, include Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) of Ministry of Women and Child Development, National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) of Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Mid Day Meals Scheme of Ministry of Human Resource Development, Drinking Water & Total Sanitation Campaign of Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation and Targeted Public Distribution System of Department of Food & Public Distribution etc. Apart from that Ministry of Tribal Affairs provides funds to the States under the scheme 'Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub-Plan (SCA to TSP)' and 'Grants under Article (275(1) of the Constitution of India' towards welfare and development of tribals including assistance for addressing malnutrition and sickle cell anaemia among Scheduled Tribe (ST) people based on the proposal received from them.

As informed by Government of Kerala, Nutritious food is provided to all pregnant women and lactating mothers, adolescent girls and infants through Anganwadi Centres. A nutrition mix called "Amrutham" is also being distributed to all infants. Apart from these, community kitchen providing cooked food to needy tribes and Food Support Programme of Scheduled Tribes Development Department is also in place as special packages. There are 16 sickle cell anaemic patients among 231 pregnant ST Women in Attappady. "Janani Janma Raksha" a programme targeting pregnant and lactating women is being implemented by Scheduled Tribes Development Department for providing financial assistance of Rs.2000/- per month for 18 months (From 3rd month of pregnancy till the child attaining 1 year) to meet their nutritional and therapeutic support.

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