

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 610
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.02.2022

MALNUTRITION

610 DR. KALANIDHI VEERASWAMY:

Will the Minister of Women and Child Development be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has any data of children with severe acute malnutrition within the country including Tamil Nadu;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the percentage of such children is still very high and if so, the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether the Government is aware that despite various Government programmes on malnutrition, country is missing its nutrition goals; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor along with the corrective measures taken by the Government in this regard?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b) The estimated number of severely wasted children under 5 years of age is obtained under National Family Health Survey (NFHS) conducted by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. As per the recent report of NFHS-5 (2019-21), 7.7% children are severely wasted whereas the state of Tamil Nadu reported 5.5% children as severely wasted.

(c) & (d) Malnutrition is a multi- faceted problem. The important determinants are inadequate food, low purchasing power, female illiteracy, high rate of population growth and low access of population to health education, safe drinking water, environmental, sanitation, hygiene and other social services. Key reasons for malnutrition setting in early life are early marriage; teenage pregnancy; low birth weight of child; faulty and sub-optimal infant and young child feeding practices; and childhood illnesses. The nutritional status of the population is outcome of complex and inter-related set of factors.

(e) Government has accorded high priority to the issue of malnutrition and is implementing several schemes/programmes of different Ministries/Departments through States/UTs to address various aspects related to nutrition. Children with Severe Acute Malnutrition are treated at the Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres established by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

In order to address the challenges of malnutrition, Government has taken steps to improve nutritional quality and testing, strengthen delivery and leverage technology under Poshan Tracker to improve governance. Streamlined Guidelines were issued on Quality Assurance, Roles and Responsibilities of Duty Holders, procedure for procurement, integrating AYUSH concepts and Data Management and Monitoring for transparency, efficiency and accountability in delivery of Supplementary Nutrition on 13.01.2021. Government has advised States/UTs to launch a drive for identification of SAM children for referral to hospitals (if required) and AYUSH centres in accordance with the detailed action plan approved by the District Nutrition Committee to be finalized in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer.

Further, Mission Poshan 2.0, an integrated nutrition support programme has been announced in budget 2021-2022 for all States/UTs. It seeks to strengthen nutritional content, delivery, outreach and outcomes with focus on developing practices that nurture health, wellness and immunity to disease and malnutrition.
