

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO- †1618
TO BE ANSWERED ON- 01/08/2024

MALNUTRITION OF POOR TRIBAL FAMILIES

†1618. SHRI RAJKUMAR ROAT

Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that most of the poor tribal families of scheduled areas are facing the problem of malnutrition;
- (b) if so, whether the Government proposes to distribute foodgrains/food items full of nutrition to the poor families living in remote areas by formulating a special plan with an objective to eradicate the problem of malnutrition completely from scheduled areas;
- (c) if so, the time by which the said plan would be formulated and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to execute the said scheme to eradicate malnutrition completely from scheduled areas in proper manner by allocating a fixed budget every year for the scheme; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRIBAL AFFAIRS
(SHRI DURGADAS UIKEY)

(a) to (e): On comparison of Key Indicators of NFHS I to V shown in the table below following show that there has been improvement in nutritional status of ST children and women over the years, however, there are still significant gaps:-

Key Health Indicators as per NHFS (I to V) Total and ST

S. No	Key Health Indicators	NFHS-1 (1992-93)		NFHS-2 (1998-99)		NFHS-3 (2005-06)		NFHS-4 (2015-16)		NFHS-5 (2019-21)	
		Total	ST	Total	ST	Total	ST	Total	ST	Total	ST
1	Nutritional Status of Children - Prevalence of stunting in children under (5) years of age (%) (Height for age)	52.0	52.8	45.5	52.8	48.0	53.9	38.4	43.8	35.5	40.9
2	Prevalence of wasted children under (5) years of age (%) (weight for height)	17.5	22.0	15.5	21.8	19.8	27.6	21.0	27.4	19.3	23.2
3	Prevalence of underweight children under (5) years of age (%) (Weight for age)	53.4	56.8	47.0	55.9	42.5	54.5	35.7	45.3	32.1	39.5
4	Percentage of children age 6-59 months having any anaemia (<11.0 g/dl)	NA	NA	74.3	79.8	69.5	76.8	58.5	63.3	67.1	72.4
5	Nutritional status of women with BMI below 18.5 (%)	NA	NA	35.8	46.3	35.6	46.6	22.9	31.7	18.7	25.5
6	Percentage of women age 15-49 having any anaemia (<12.0 g/dl)	NA	NA	51.8	64.9	55.3	68.5	53.1	59.9	57.0	64.6

The Government of India implements various schemes for improving nutrition status including tribal population. Based on inputs received from Department of Food and Public Distribution, Govt of India has enacted the National Food Security Act, of 2013 which provides food and nutritional security in the human life cycle approach by ensuring access to adequate quantities of quality food at affordable prices for people to live a life with dignity. The Act provides for coverage of up to 75% of the rural and up to 50 % of the urban population, i.e. about two-thirds of the total population of the country, for receiving foodgrains i.e. rice/wheat/coarse grains at prices specified in Schedule-I of the Act (Free of cost w.e.f. 1st January 2023 to 31st December, 2028). The Central Government, under the **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana** (PMGKAY) has decided to continue to provide free food grains to about 81.35 crore beneficiaries (i.e. Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) households and Priority Households (PHH) beneficiaries) for a period of next five years with effect from 1st January, 2024, as per their entitlement (i.e. 35 kg of food grains per AAY household per month and 5 kg of food grains per person per month in case of Priority Household).

In addition to this, the NFS Act provides that pregnant women and lactating mothers and children in the age group of 6 months to 14 years are entitles to meals as per prescribed nutritional norms

under **Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)** and **PM-POSHAN Schemes**. Higher nutritional norms are prescribed for malnourished children up to 6 years of age.

Department of Food & Public Distribution also allocates foodgrains to States/ UTs for Welfare Institutions and SC/ST/OBC Hostel that has been revamped w.e.f. 1st September 2017 by clubbing two schemes namely Welfare Institutions Scheme and SC/ST/OBC Hostels Scheme into a single scheme i.e. Welfare Institutions & Hostels Scheme. Welfare institutions viz. Charitable Institutions such as beggar homes, Nari-Niketan and other similar welfare institutions sponsored by State Governments/ Union Territory Administrations that are not covered under TPDS or any other Welfare Scheme. Similarly, the scheme for allocation of foodgrains is made to States/ UTs at BPL rates for the residents of SC/ST/OBC hostels owned/ run/ aided/ sponsored by the government having 2/3rd residents belonging to SC/ST/OBC category. The scale of demand of wheat and rice (as proposed by the State based on food habits in different areas) is allocated as per the requirements of the inmates, subject to a maximum of 15 kg per inmate per month.

To address the challenge of anemia and micronutrient malnutrition in vulnerable populations, the Government of India is supplying fortified rice (enriched with Iron, Folic Acid and Vitamin B-12) throughout the **Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS)**. Also, in order to improve the level of nutrition, an advisory has also been issued to all the States/UTs to procure millets and distribute them to beneficiaries as per local consumption preferences and as per guidelines issued by the Central Government from time to time.

As informed by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, it is implementing Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, Adolescent Health and Nutrition strategy in a life cycle approach under **National Health Mission**, which includes interventions for improving childhood malnutrition across the country, including tribal areas through the programs viz. **Anemia Mukd Bharat** programme to reduce prevalence of anemia among six beneficiary groups - Children 6-59 months, Children 5-9 years, Adolescents 10-19 years, Pregnant women, lactating mother and Women of Reproductive Age (20-49 years); **Mothers' Absolute Affection** to improve breastfeeding coverage which includes early initiation of breastfeeding and exclusive breastfeeding for first six months followed by age-appropriate complementary feeding practices through capacity building of frontline health workers and comprehensive IEC campaigns; **Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres** to provide in-patient medical and nutritional care to children under 5 years of age suffering from Severe Acute Malnutrition with medical complications. In addition to curative care, special focus is given on timely, adequate and appropriate feeding for children, correction of micronutrient deficiencies, improving the skills for mother and caregivers on complete age-appropriate caring and feeding practices; **Under National Deworming Day** in a single fixed day approach via schools and anganwadi centres in two rounds (February and August) to reduce the soil transmitted helminth infestation among all children and adolescents (1-19 years), including children from tribal community using the platforms of schools and Anganwadi centres; **Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Days** for provision of maternal and child health services and creating awareness on maternal and child care including nutrition in convergence with Ministry of Women and Child Development; and **Mother and Child Protection Card** which is the joint initiative of the Ministry of Health & Family welfare and the Ministry of Women and Child Development which address the nutrition concerns in children and is used across the country.

According high priority to the issue of malnutrition, Govt of India is also implementing several schemes like POSHAN Abhiyaan, Anganwadi Services, Scheme for Adolescent Girls, under

Mission Poshan 2.0 and Pradhan MantriMatruVandanaYojana (PMMVY) as direct targeted interventions to address the problem of malnutrition throughout the country including in tribal areas through Ministry of Women and Child Development..

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 included tribal areas. POSHAN Abhiyaan is a mission mode approach to malnutrition through interventions of technology, multi-ministerial convergence and focus on converting the agenda of improving nutrition into Jan Andolan through Community Mobilization/Sensitisation and thus bringing nutrition-linked Behavioral Change across India. Under Jan Andolans, PoshanMaah and PoshanPakhwada are celebrated annually in the month of September and March respectively. An amount of Rs, 2,380 crore has been allocated under Development Action Plan for STs for 2024-25. For details,the website of Ministry stmis.gov.in may be visited.
