

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 715
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29TH NOVEMBER 2024**

MORTALITY RATE OF UNDERNOURISHED CHILDREN

715. MS SAYANI GHOSH:

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

- (a) whether the Government has collected any data on the number of undernourished children who died before completing the age of 5 which is called Under 5 Mortality Rate (U5MR) during the last five years and if so, the details thereof, year-wise;
- (b) whether the Government is aware that according to an estimate, 70% of deaths under the age of 5 were due to malnutrition in 2021, if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether the Government aims to take steps to tackle U5MR in the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

**ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY
WELFARE
(SMT. ANUPRIYA PATEL)**

(a) and (b) As per Sample Registration System (SRS) report of Registrar General of India (RGI), Under 5 Mortality Rate at National Level for the year 2016 to 2020 is placed as below:

Status of Under 5 Mortality Rate at National Level (per thousand live births)					
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
India	39	37	36	35	32
Source: Sample Registration System (SRS) of Registrar General of India					

Further, malnutrition is not a direct cause of death in children; however, it can increase morbidity and mortality by reducing resistance to infections. Data on the number of undernourished children who died before completing the age of 5 is not maintained as it is not a direct cause of mortality.

(c) to (e) The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is implementing Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, Adolescent Health and Nutrition (RMNCAH+N) strategy in a life

cycle approach under National Health Mission (NHM), which includes interventions to improve child survival all across the country as placed below:

- **Facility Based New-born Care:** Special New-born Care Units (SNCUs) are established at District Hospital and Medical College level, New-born Stabilization Units (NBSUs) are established at First Referral Units (FRUs)/ Community Health Centres (CHCs) for care of sick and small babies.
- **Community Based care of New-born and Young Children:** Under Home Based New-born Care (HBNC) and Home-Based Care of Young Children (HBYC) program, home visits are performed by ASHAs to improve child rearing practices and to identify sick new-born and young children in the community.
- **Social Awareness and Actions to Neutralize Pneumonia Successfully (SAANS)** initiative implemented since 2019 for reduction of childhood morbidity and mortality due to Pneumonia.
- **STOP Diarrhoea** initiative is implemented for promoting use of ORS and Zinc and for reducing morbidity and mortality due to childhood diarrhoea.
- **Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK):** Children from 0 to 18 years of age are screened for 32 health conditions (i.e. Diseases, Deficiencies, Defects and Developmental delay) under Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) to improve child survival. District Early Intervention Centres (DEICs) at district health facility level are established for confirmation and management of children screened under RBSK.
- **Nutrition Rehabilitation Centers (NRCs)** are set up at public health facilities to provide in-patient medical and nutritional care to children under 5 years suffering from Severe Acute Malnourishment (SAM) with medical complications. In addition to curative care, special focus is given on timely, adequate and appropriate feeding for children; on improving the skills of mothers and caregivers on complete age-appropriate caring and feeding practices.
- **Mothers' Absolute Affection (MAA) Programme** is implemented to improve breastfeeding coverage which includes early initiation of breastfeeding and exclusive breastfeeding for first six months followed by counselling on age-appropriate complementary feeding practices.
- **Lactation Management Centres:** Comprehensive Lactation Management Centres. (CLMC) are facilities established to ensure availability of safe, pasteurized Donor Human Milk for feeding of sick, preterm and low birth weight babies admitted in Neonatal

Intensive Care Units and Special Newborn Care Units. Lactation Management Unit (LMU) are established for providing lactation support to mothers within the health facility for collection, storage and dispensing of mother's own breastmilk for consumption by her baby.

- **Anemia Mukh Bharat (AMB)** strategy is implemented to reduce anemia among six beneficiaries age group - children (6-59 months), children (5-9 years), adolescents (10-19 years), pregnant and lactating women and in women of reproductive age group (15-49 years) in life cycle approach through implementation of six interventions via robust institutional mechanism.
- Under **National Deworming Day (NDD)** albendazole tablets are administered in a single fixed day approach via schools and Anganwadi centres in two rounds (February and August) to reduce the soil transmitted helminth (STH) infestation among all children and adolescents (1-19 years).
- **Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Days (VHSNDs)** are observed 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.