

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5655
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.04.2025**

EDUCATION AND HEALTH SCHEMES FOR CHILDREN

5655. SHRI BIDYUT BARAN MAHATO:
MD. RAKIBUL HUSSAIN:

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

- (a) whether the Government is ensuring that all children particularly from disadvantaged or tribal communities, have access to free and quality education under the Right to Education Act in Dhubri Assam;
- (b) the details of the steps being taken to reduce malnutrition and improve the health and nutrition status of children in said areas including Jharkhand especially in tribal and rural areas where child mortality rates remain high;
- (c) whether any targeted interventions or schemes, such as the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and Anganwadi programmes, being implemented effectively in the said areas to support early childhood care and development, particularly in the most vulnerable communities; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SAVITRI THAKUR)

(a) The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act), is implemented by the Department of School Education and Literacy (DSEL) under the Ministry of Education. The Right to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 extends to the whole of India including disadvantaged or tribal communities of Dhubri Assam and mandates the appropriate Government to provide free and compulsory elementary education to every child of the age 6 to 14 years in a neighborhood school till the completion of his or her elementary education.

Education is in the concurrent list of the Constitution and majority of the schools are under the domain of the respective State and UT Government which is the appropriate government under the RTE Act, 2009. Ministry of Education issues various advisories/

guidelines to all the States/UTs to ensure the implementation of all the provisions of the RTE Act, 2009 in their respective jurisdiction from time to time.

(b) Under the 15th Finance Commission, various components like Anganwadi services, Poshan Abhiyaan and Scheme for Adolescent girls (of 14-18 years in Aspirational Districts and North-Eastern region) have been subsumed under the umbrella Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 (Mission Poshan 2.0) to address the challenge of malnutrition. It is a Centrally Sponsored mission, where the responsibility for implementation of various activities lies with the States and UTs. This mission is a universal self-selecting umbrella scheme where there are no entry barriers for any beneficiary to register and receive services. This mission is being implemented across the country including rural and tribal areas of Jharkhand.

The objectives of Mission are as follows:

- To contribute to development of human capital in the country;
- Address challenge of malnutrition;
- Promote nutrition awareness and good eating habits for sustainable health and wellbeing

Under Mission Poshan 2.0 a new strategy has been made for reduction in malnutrition and for improved health, wellness and immunity through activities like community engagement, outreach, behavioral change, and advocacy. It focuses on Maternal Nutrition, Infant and Young Child Feeding Norms, treatment of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM)/ Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) and wellness through Ayush practices to reduce prevalence of wasting, stunting, and being underweight.

Under this mission, Supplementary Nutrition is provided to Children (6 months to 6 years), Pregnant Women, Lactating Mothers and Adolescent Girls to beat the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition by adopting a life cycle approach. Supplementary nutrition is provided in accordance with the nutrition norms contained in Schedule-II of the National Food Security Act. These norms have been revised in January 2023. The old norms were largely calorie-specific; however, the revised norms are more comprehensive and balanced in terms of both quantity and quality of supplementary nutrition based on the principles of diet diversity that provides for quality protein, healthy fats and micronutrients.

Fortified rice is being supplied to AWCs to meet the requirement of micro-nutrients and to control anaemia among women and children. Greater emphasis is being laid on the use of millets at least once a week for preparation of Hot Cooked Meal and Take Home ration at Anganwadi centers.

Ministries of Women & Child Development and Health & Family Welfare have jointly released the protocol for Community Management of Malnutrition (CMAM) to prevent and treat severely acute malnutrition in children and for reducing associated morbidity and mortality.

Under this Mission, one of the major activities undertaken is Community Mobilization and Awareness Advocacy to educate people on nutritional aspects as adoption of good nutrition habit requires sustained efforts for behavioural change. State and UTs are conducting and reporting regular sensitisation activities under Jan Andolans during Poshan Maahs and Poshan Pakhwadas celebrated in the months of September and March-April respectively. Community Based Events (CBEs) have served as a significant strategy in changing nutritional practices and all Anganwadi workers are required to conduct two Community Based Events every month.

During the 15th Finance Commission cycle, 2 lakh Anganwadi Centres @ 40,000 AWCs per year are to be upgraded as Saksham Anganwadis for improved nutrition delivery and for imparting early childhood care and development. 16775 AWCs have been sanctioned in the State of Jharkhand to be upgraded as Saksham Anganwadis.

(c) & (d) Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi initiative of Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 was launched to bring focus of the Anganwadi system on early childhood care and education and transform the Anganwadi Centre into a Learning Centre having high quality infrastructure, play equipment, and well-trained Anganwadi Workers to stimulate the creative, social, emotional and cognitive development of children under 6 years of age including divyang children.

To empower the Anganwadi workers and ensure optimal learning for all children including Divyang children, this Ministry has developed two curriculum frameworks - "Navchetana- National Framework for Early Childhood Stimulation for Children from Birth to Three Years, 2024" and "Aadharshila- National Curriculum for Early Childhood Care and Education for Children from Three to Six Years 2024" under Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi programme. "Navchetna" is regarding holistic early stimulation, through responsive caregiving and opportunities for early learning, for optimal development of children. Whereas, "Adharshila" covers all domains of development including physical/motor, cognitive, language and literacy, socioemotional, cultural/aesthetic as well as positive habits.
