

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO: 1205
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.02.2026

NUTRITION AND HEALTH PROGRAMME FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN

1205. SHRI RAM SHIROMANI VERMA:

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

- (a) whether the rate of malnutrition, anaemia/school dropout among women and children is higher than the National average in aspirational districts like Shravasti and Balrampur of Uttar Pradesh, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the implementation of Anganwadi centres, nutrition tracker, supplementary nutrition and maternity benefit schemes is satisfactory in these districts, if so, details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether any special nutrition/health programme is being run by the Government for adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers in the said areas, if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) whether the Government has any proposal to provide additional resources, manpower/ special packages for women empowerment, child protection and malnutrition eradication in the aspirational districts, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI ANNUPURNA DEVI)

(a) to (d): The Poshan Tracker Application data of malnutrition among those children under five in the aspirational districts like Shravasti and Balrampur of Uttar Pradesh, who attended Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) or received Anganwadi services at home is available at: <https://www.poshantracker.in/statistics>

Prevalence of anemia among women and children in Shravasti and Balrampur districts as per National Family Health Survey-5 (2019-21) is placed below:

Indicator	National Average	Balrampur	Shravasti
Children aged 6-59 months who are anemic (<11.0 g/dl) (%)	67.1	75.4	61.2

Non-pregnant women aged 15-49 years who are anemic (<12.0 g/dl) (%)	57.2	54.8	44.6
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National Average for school dropout is 0.3 in primary level (Class 1-5), 3.5 in upper primary and 11.5 in Secondary level (Class 9-10).

To address the challenge of malnutrition, 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). It is a Centrally Sponsored Mission where the responsibility for implementation of various activities lies with the States and UTs. This Mission includes beneficiaries; Children under 6 years of age, pregnant women, lactating mothers and adolescent girls (14-18 years, in Northeastern States and Aspirational Districts) of the country. The objectives of Mission are to contribute to development of human capital in the country, to address challenge of malnutrition and to promote nutrition awareness and good eating habits for sustainable health and wellbeing.

Relevance of Poshan Abhiyaan has been found satisfactory for tackling malnutrition in the country in a survey conducted by the World Bank a survey on Poshan Abhiyaan in 11 priority states and also in third party evaluation and impact assessment done by NITI Aayog in 2020 and 2025. The Poshan Tracker Application has been implemented for monitoring and tracking of all AWCs, AWWs and beneficiaries on defined indicators of stunting, wasting, under-weight prevalence among children. The App also offers counselling videos on key behaviours and services which help disseminate messages on birth preparedness, delivery, post-natal care, breastfeeding, and complementary feeding. Poshan Tracker Application data including district wise details of the State of Uttar Pradesh are available at: <https://www.poshantracker.in/statistics>

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, behavioural 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, anaemia 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 break the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition by adopting a life cycle approach. It is provided in accordance with the nutrition norms contained in Schedule-II of the National Food Security Act, 2013. 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 (Calcium, Zinc, Iron, Dietary Folate, Vitamin A, Vitamin-B6 and Vitamin B-12).

Further, 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.

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 Maah and Poshan Pakhwada 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 (AWWs) are required to conduct two Community Based Events every month.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare implements 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 address nutrition concerns among adolescent girls, pregnant women, lactating mothers and children under 5 years, across the country including aspirational districts. Details are placed below:

- **Anemia Mukt Bharat (AMB)** strategy is implemented to reduce prevalence of anemia among children and women in life cycle approach through implementation of six interventions; Prophylactic Iron and Folic Acid supplementation (IFA Syrup is provided biweekly to children 6-59 months, and IFA Red tablets are provided weekly to women of reproductive age), Deworming, Intensified behavioral change communication campaign, Testing for anemia and treatment as per protocols, mandatory provision of IFA fortified food in public health programmes and addressing non nutritional causes of anemia via robust institutional mechanism.
- **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 Moderate and Severe Acute Malnourishment with medical complications with special focus on improving the skills of mothers and caregivers on timely, adequate and appropriate feeding for children.
- **Mothers' Absolute Affection (MAA)** Programme is implemented to improve breastfeeding coverage and age-appropriate complementary feeding practices by building an enabling environment through awareness generation activities.
- Under **National Deworming Day (NDD)** albendazole tablets are administered in a single fixed day approach via schools and Anganwadi centers in two rounds (February and August) to reduce the worm 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 childcare including nutrition in convergence with Ministry of Women and Child Development.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development is implementing Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) across the country w.e.f. 01.01.2017. The PMMVY is a Centrally Sponsored Maternity Benefit Scheme under which cash incentives of ₹5,000/- is provided to the beneficiary as Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mode for first child. The eligible beneficiaries receive the remaining cash incentive, as per approved norms towards maternity benefit under Janani Suraksha Yojana after institutional delivery, so that on an average a woman gets ₹6,000/. Further, cash incentive of ₹6,000/- is also provided to eligible beneficiaries for second child subject to the second child being a girl". The number of beneficiaries paid since the inception of the scheme till 01.02.2026 are 31,744 in Shravasti and 77,979 in Balrampur districts of Uttar Pradesh.

The Ministry has taken various steps for women empowerment in the country including all Aspirational Districts which are placed below:

Shakti Sadan Scheme: Under the overarching 'Mission Shakti', erstwhile schemes of 'Swadhar Greh' for Women in difficult circumstances and 'Ujjawala Home' for Prevention of Trafficking, have been merged and named 'Shakti Sadan Scheme', which is an Integrated Relief and Rehabilitation Home for women in distress situations including trafficked women. It aims at creating a safe and enabling environment for the women in distress situations, to enable them to overcome the difficult circumstances. Presently, 413 Shakti Sadans are functional benefiting about 13,000 women across the country.

Sakhi Niwas Scheme: Sakhi Niwas Scheme (Working Women Hostel) under the overarching Mission Shakti, is a demand driven Centrally Sponsored Scheme, under which funds are released directly to the States/UTs for implementation of the scheme. The States/UTs assess their requirement as per local needs and proposals are approved by the Programme Approval Board (PAB) after discussion with States/UTs. The scheme aims to promote availability of safe and conveniently located accommodation for working women in urban, semi-urban and in rural areas where employment opportunity for women exists. Presently, 560 Sakhi Niwas are functional benefiting about 25,855 women across the country.

Anganwadi cum Creche (Palna): The Ministry has introduced Palna Scheme under the Samarthya Vertical of Umbrella Mission Shakti for all States and UTs w.e.f. 1st April, 2022 to provide day care facilities and protection to children. To address these difficulties faced by the working mothers in giving due childcare and protection to their children, day-care crèche facilities are being provided through Palna Scheme. Crèche services formalise the childcare responsibilities hitherto considered as part of domestic work. As on 31.01.2026, a total of 14,599 more Anganwadi-cum-Creches (AWCCs) are approved and out of them, 2820 AWCCs are functional across the country.
