

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 610
TO BE ANSWERED ON 09.12.2022

UNDERNOURISHED CHILDREN

610. SHRI M. BADRUDDIN AJMAL:

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the continuous price rise of food items is causing millions of more children to be undernourished in the country;
- (b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto and remedial measures taken in this regard during last five years and the current year;
- (c) whether the Ministry has taken note of plight of undernourished children and formulated any plan to curb their problem in consultation with other concerned Ministries and departments during last five years including the current year; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (b) Malnutrition is a complex issue and affordability of food is only one of its many causes. The issue of food security at the household level has been addressed by Government by ensuring access to adequate quantity of quality food grains at subsidized rates. Government has provided for supply of fortified rice throughout the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), Anganwadi Services Scheme (AWS), Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman-PM POSHAN [erstwhile Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDM)] and Other Welfare Scheme of Government of India in all States and Union Territories (UTs). Further, during the COVID Pandemic, and even thereafter free ration is being provided to 80 crore people under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) which has been extended till December 2022. The total expenditure on PMGKAY is estimated to be Rs 3.91 Lakh Crores.

(c) to (d) Government has accorded high priority to the issue of malnutrition and is making serious efforts to address this issue. POSHAN Abhiyaan, a flagship scheme of the Government was launched in 2018 to address the challenges of malnutrition by adopting a synergised and result oriented approach. POSHAN Abhiyaan provides a

platform to converge the activities of various stakeholders towards attaining the goal of 'Suposhit Bharat'. Convergent interventions with various Ministries/Departments have been mapped. To ensure effective convergence at State level, the State Chief Secretary is required to chair the Convergence Action Plan (CAP) meeting with line Departments. The District Nutrition Committee chaired by District Magistrates/Deputy Commissioners is responsible for the nutrition outcomes in the district and activities under the programme are monitored through team of field officers.

Further, to address various policy and systemic needs, the Integrated Child Development Scheme and Anganwadi Services schemes were re-evaluated in respect of programme design, implementation process, outcome and impact and for re-assessing the relevance of the programme in achieving its aims and goals. The efforts under the Supplementary Nutrition Programme under Anganwadi Services, Scheme for Adolescent Girls and POSHAN Abhiyaan have therefore been re-aligned as 'Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0' for maximizing nutritional outcomes. It seeks to address the challenges of malnutrition in children, adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers through a strategic shift in nutrition content and delivery and by creation of a convergent eco-system to develop and promote practices that nurture health, wellness and immunity.

Poshan 2.0 focuses on Maternal Nutrition, Infant and Young Child Feeding Norms, Treatment of MAM/SAM and Wellness through AYUSH. It rests on the pillars of Convergence, Governance, and Capacity-building. POSHAN Abhiyaan will be the key pillar for Outreach and will cover innovations related to nutritional support, ICT interventions, Media Advocacy and Research, Community Outreach and Jan Andolan.
