

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1151
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 9TH FEBRUARY 2024**

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANISATION

**1151. SHRI KURUVA GORANTLA MADHAV:
DR. SANJEEV KUMAR SINGARI:**

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

- (a) whether as per the report by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations, 74.1 percent of Indians were unable to afford a healthy diet in 2021;
- (b) if so, the measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government recently to improve access to nutritious food in the country;
- (c) whether the Government has taken note of the reasons for non-reduction of anaemia in women, growth and wasting in children despite the considerable growth rate in our food production in the country and if so, the details thereof and the remedial steps taken in this regard;
- (d) whether the Government has also looked into the current increase in food costs resulting in increased unaffordability of healthy food among people in the country; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof along with the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to combat this issue?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY
WELFARE
(DR. BHARATI PRAVIN PAWAR)**

(a) to (e)

The Government of India implements RMNCAH+N strategy under National Health Mission, which includes various activities to address the problem of anemia and malnutrition among women and children across the county. Interventions are as below:

1. **Mothers' Absolute Affection (MAA)** is implemented 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.

2. **Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres (NRCs)** are set up at public health facilities to provide in-patient medical and nutritional care to children under 5 years of age suffering from Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) 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. and counselling support is provided to mothers for identifying nutrition and health problems in child.
3. **Anemia Mukht Bharat (AMB)** programme 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. The steps taken to address the problem of anemia are:
 - i. Prophylactic Iron and Folic Acid Supplementation in all six target age groups
 - ii. Intensified year-round Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) Campaign for: (a) improving compliance to Iron Folic Acid supplementation and deworming, (b) enhancing appropriate infant and young child feeding practices, (c) encouraging increase in intake of iron-rich food through diet diversity with focus on harnessing locally available resources, and (d) ensuring delayed cord clamping after delivery in health facilities
 - iii. Testing using digital methods and point of care treatment, with special focus on pregnant women and school-going adolescents
 - iv. Addressing non-nutritional causes of anemia in endemic pockets with special focus on malaria, hemoglobinopathies and fluorosis
 - v. Providing incentives to the ANM for identification and follow-up of pregnant women with severe anemia in high priority districts (HPDs)
 - vi. Management of severe anemia in pregnant women by administration of IV Iron Sucrose/ Blood transfusion
 - vii. Awareness by ASHAs through community mobilization and IEC/BCC activities
 - viii. Convergence and coordination with other line departments and ministries for strengthening implementation
4. 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).

5. **Monthly Village Health, Sanitation and Nutrition Day (VHSND)** is an outreach activity at Anganwadi centers for provision of maternal and child care including nutrition in convergence with the ICDS.
6. **MCP Card and Safe Motherhood Booklet** are distributed to the pregnant women for educating them on diet, rest, danger signs of pregnancy, benefit schemes and institutional deliveries.

As informed by Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, the Government implements various schemes to improve the access to nutritious food, such as National Food Security Act (NFSA) 2013, which provides highly subsidized food grains under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) for coverage up to 75% of the rural population and up to 50% of the urban population and under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY), free food grains are provided to 81.35 crore beneficiaries of Antyodaya Anna Yojana households and Priority Households, for a period of five years with effect from 1st January 2024.

As informed by Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, under Krishi Vigyan Kendra Scheme, 16681 nutri-gardens are established across 30310 farm families and awareness activities are conducted on health and nutrition literacy.

As informed by Ministry of Women and Child Development, under Mission Poshan 2.0, Supplementary Nutrition Program provides nutritional support to children less than 6 years age, adolescent girls (14-18 years), pregnant women and lactating mothers as per nutrition norms under Schedule II of NFSA Act 2013.

Also, the Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) under Ministry of Education, provides one hot cooked meal in Government and Government-aided schools as per nutrition norms under Schedule II of NFSA Act, 2013 to school going children from Balvatikas (pre-school) to Class VIII.

The Government of India takes various measures to augment domestic availability and stabilize the prices of essential food commodities.
