

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:337

ANSWERED ON:27.02.2008

UNICEF REPORT ON MORTALITY AMONG CHILDREN

Nandy Shri Amitava;Owaisi Shri Asaduddin;Rao Shri Sambasiva Rayapati

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

(a) whether 2.1 million children in India die annually before reaching their fifth birthday as against global figure of 9.7 million annually as per the findings of UNICEF reported in "The Times of India" dated January 23, 2008;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) the concrete steps taken or being taken by the Government in this regard?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE(SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

(a) & (b): Yes, as per the State of the World's Children 2008 Report, 2.1 million children in India die annually before reaching their fifth birthday out of globally 9.7 million annually.

(c) The Government has instituted measures to reduce neonatal, infant and under five mortality as integral components of the Reproductive and Child Health Programme.

(d) Steps being taken by the Government in this regard are implementation of the Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Illnesses (IMNCI) strategy, which adopts a holistic approach to the management of the commonest causes of neonatal and childhood mortality – sepsis, acute respiratory infections, diarrhoea, measles and malaria, all compounded by malnutrition. IMNCI shall be implemented throughout the country in a phased manner. In addition, thrust is being given to ensure institutional deliveries and train health personnel on essential newborn care so that skilled attendance at birth is available and all newborns receive specialized care. Efforts to deliver newborn care, both facility based as well as home based, are being made. Micronutrient supplementation with Vitamin A, Iron Folic Acid and Zinc are being made. Infant and Young Child Nutrition are being stressed. Immunization is one of the thrust areas of the ongoing Reproductive & Child Health Programme. The National Rural Health Mission, launched in April, 2005 for a period of 7 years (2005 to 2012) is an overarching intervention with a holistic approach and has envisaged reduction in Infant Mortality and Neonatal Mortality as one of the prime goals to be achieved.