

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2626

ANSWERED ON:11.03.2011

WHO RECOMMENDATION ON JUNK FOOD

Botcha Lakshmi Smt. Jhansi;Mcleod Smt. Ingrid;Sayeed Muhammed Hamdulla A. B.

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

- (a) whether as per the report of the World Health Organisation (WHO), about forty-three million pre-school children are obese or overweight throughout the world including India due to exposure to junk and fast food;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the WHO has made certain recommendations including ban on junk/ fast food in schools and playground and strict monitoring of marketing and advertising of food high in saturated fats, sugar or salt to cut child obesity;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the follow up action taken/proposed by the Government in this regard?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD)

(a) & (b): Yes. WHO has estimated that in 2010 more than 42 million children under the age of five years are overweight or obese throughout the world due to unhealthy diets of whom nearly 35 million are living in developing countries.

(c) & (d): WHO has recommended that the policy aim should be to reduce the impact of marketing of foods high in saturated fats, trans-fatty acids, free sugars or salt on children. In order to achieve this aim, step-wise or comprehensive approaches are to be considered by member states. All stake holders in the development of policy must make earnest attempts to free the zones, where children gather, from all forms of marketing of such foods. Member states should discourage cross - border marketing of high saturated foods. An effective monitoring system should be put in place to ensure compliance. The policy framework should include a system for evaluation in order to study the impact and effectiveness of the policy.

(e): The Government has written to Health Ministers of all States & UTs & Ministry of Human Resource Development to consider issuing instructions for withdrawing of junk food/fast food and carbonated drinks from school and colleges.

Further, under the School Health Programme, Health education sessions and counseling on nutrition are given to cultivate healthy eating habits, to encourage physical activity and to promote consumption of balanced diet in order to prevent both under-nutrition and obesity in students.