

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1183
ANSWERED ON:17.08.2012
CHILDREN IN BACKWARD AREAS
Singh Baba Shri K.C.

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken note of children living in very backward and poor areas in the country surviving on kernels collected by them from animal dung;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has conducted any survey in this regard particularly in the backward and poor areas of the country; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the corrective measures adopted by the Government for the welfare of such children?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH)

(a) & (b): An incident about children hand picking food grains from cow dung and feeding themselves in Shivpuri District of Madhya Pradesh was reported in a telecast by India TV on 10.6.2012.

Upon a report sought by the Ministry, the State Government informed that in some villages, people eat the seeds of "Ghont" picked from under the trees out of a cultural food practice. The fruit is edible and has no adverse health effects. However, as reported by the State Government, who had conducted an enquiry, they do not eat them in the manner shown in the telecast and contrary to what has been reported, children were not forced to eat the seeds on account of acute shortage of food.

(c): A Survey undertaken by the State Government of Madhya Pradesh through the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) in 2010-2011 revealed that 51.9% of children were underweight. The percentage of underweight children in the Shivpuri district was reported as 55% which was found to be lower than 19 other districts of the State.

(d): The Government has accorded high priority to the issue of malnutrition in the country and is implementing several schemes/ programmes of different Ministries/ Departments through State Governments/ UT Administrations. The Schemes/ Programmes include the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), Mid-Day Meal Scheme, Rajiv Gandhi Schemes for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (RGSEAG) namely SABLA, Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojna (IGMSY) as direct targeted interventions. Besides, indirect Multi-sectoral interventions include Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), National Horticulture Mission, National Food Security Mission, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Total Sanitation Campaign, National Rural Drinking Water Programme etc. All these have potential to address one or other aspect of Nutrition.

Besides, the State Government has also informed that they are committed to reduce malnutrition among children and making every possible effort in this direction.