

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2244

ANSWERED ON:24.08.2012

UNDERWEIGHT BABIES

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

- (a) whether most of the babies born in northern, central and eastern States of the country are underweight as per the annual health survey 2012;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise along with the reasons therefor and the response of Government thereto;
- (c) whether percentage of underweight babies has increased in comparison to the national average for underweight newborns in National Family Health Survey-III in 2005-06;
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons for the same; and
- (e) the fresh corrective steps taken/ proposed to be taken by Government to bring down the percentage of underweight newborns in the country?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY)

(a) & (b). Annual Health Survey 2012 report did not capture information regarding nutritional status of children in main survey. Therefore, the information is not available.

(c) & (d). As Annual health Survey has not covered malnutrition component, comparison of underweight children from National Family Health Survey –III in 2005-06 cannot be done.

(e) Malnutrition is multidimensional and intergenerational and requires interventions through various Ministries to address its many underlying causes in different stages of the life cycle.

Under NRHM, the remedial steps taken are as follows:

# Promotion of appropriate infant and young child feeding practices that include early initiation of breastfeeding and exclusive breastfeeding till 6 months of age.

# Management of malnutrition and common neonatal and childhood illnesses at community and facility level by training service providers in IMNCI (Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Illnesses) training.

# Treatment of children with severe acute malnutrition at special units called the Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres (NRCs), set up at public health facilities. Presently 564 such centres are functional all over the country.

# Specific program to prevent and combat micronutrient deficiencies of Vitamin A and Iron & Folic Acid. Vitamin A supplementation for children till the age of 5 years and Iron & Folic Acid supplementation for children 6 to 60 months.

# Village Health and Nutrition Days and Mother and Child Protection Card are the joint initiative of the Ministries of Health & Family welfare and the Ministry of Woman and Child for addressing the nutrition concerns in children, pregnant women and lactating mothers.

# Nutrition Education on VHNDs (Village Health and Nutrition Days) to increase the awareness and bring about desired changes in the dietary practices including the promotion of breastfeeding.

# Growth monitoring of children up to three years by promoting use of Mother and Child Protection card.