

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:848

ANSWERED ON:27.11.2012

HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION

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Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether several reports/assessments including the one made by Global Food Safety Initiative have indicated widespread starvation and malnutrition in the country particularly among women and children;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) the details of the targets set and achieved under the Millennium Development Goals for eradication of malnutrition and hunger/starvation in the country; and
- (d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to curb malnutrition and hunger/starvation?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a) & (b): No such reports/assessments made by Global Food Safety Initiative regarding widespread starvation and malnutrition in the country have been reported and hence Government of India has no stand on it. According to the 2012 Report on Global Hunger Index(GHI), published by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), India's rank with a score of 22.9 calculated as 65 out of 120 countries.

(c): The United Nations (UN) heads of State and Government, including India, in its Resolution "United Nations Millennium Declaration" adopted in the General Assembly in the year 2000 had set 2015 as the time line for achieving various Goals under the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDG) including the goal:1 'eradicate extreme poverty and hunger'.

As per Millennium Development Goals – India Country Report 2011 brought out by the Central Statistical Organization(CSO), the MDG targets and indicators related to eradication of hunger are as follows:-

MDG	Targets	Indicators
Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger	Target 2: Halve between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger	Prevalence of under- weight children under three years of age

India is required to reduce the proportion of underweight children below 3 years of age from estimated 52% in 1990 to 26% by 2015. As per CSO's India Country Report 2011 the proportion of underweight children has declined by 3 percentage points during 1998-99 to 2005-06, from about 43% to about 40% and at this rate of decline, it is expected to come down to about 33% by 2015. The Report also states that 10 States in the country have already achieved the all India MDG targets in this regard.

(d) The problem of mal-nutrition is however, complex, multi-dimensional and inter- generational in nature, determinants of which include household food insecurity, illiteracy and lack of awareness especially in women, access to health services, availability of safe drinking water, sanitation and proper environmental conditions, adequate purchasing power, etc.

The Government of India has accorded high priority to the issue of hunger and malnutrition in the country and is implementing several schemes/programmes of different Ministries/ Departments through State Governments/UT Administrations to improve food security situation in the country. Under Targeted Public Distribution System(TPDS), foodgrains are allocated at subsidized prices to States/UTs for a total number of 6.52 crore BPL families including 2.5 crore Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families @ 35 kg. per family per month. Furthermore, allocations of foodgrains for APL families is also made at subsidized prices depending upon the availability of stocks and past offtake by the States/UTs. Government also implements other welfare schemes like Integrated Child Development Service Scheme (ICDS) for pre-school children and pregnant and lactating mothers through the Ministry of Women and Child Development, National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) through Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Mid Day Meal Scheme (MDM) for primary and upper primary children through Ministry of Human Resource Development, Annapurna Scheme for the senior citizens, Nutritional Programme for Adolescent Girls, Emergency Feeding Programme, etc.

To ensure food security in the country, Government has introduced the National Food Security Bill to provide for food and nutritional security in human life cycle approach by ensuring access to adequate quantity of quality food at affordable prices for people to live a life with dignity.