

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1463
ANSWERED ON:15.07.2009
MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS
Lagadapati Shri Rajagopal

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

- (a) whether as per the Report 'The Countdown to 2015: Maternal, Newborn and Child Survival', India has to strive hard to achieve Millennium Development Goals;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the percentage of infants under six months breastfed by mothers in the country is very low;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the action taken by the Government to encourage breastfeeding?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD)

(a) & (b): As per the report 'The Countdown to 2015: Maternal, Newborn and Child Survival (2008)', India is among the 68 priority countries which have to accelerate the pace of decline of their maternal and infant mortality to be able to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). According to the report India has an Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) of 57 per thousand live births (2006), a Neonatal Mortality Rate of 43 per thousand live births (2000) and a Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) of 450 (2005) while as per the latest available SRS (Sample Registration System) data from the office of the RGI, India has an Infant Mortality Rate of 55 per thousand live births (2007), a Neonatal Mortality Rate of 36 per thousand live births (2007) and a Maternal Mortality ratio of 254 per 100,000 live births (2004-06). As per the MDG goals, India is committed to achieving an IMR of 30 per thousand live births and a MMR of 100 per 100,000 live births. The Government is currently working holistically through the Reproductive and Child Health programme and the National Rural Health Mission to achieve these goals.

(c) & (d) : As per the District Level Health Survey 3 (DLHS-III) conducted in the year 2007-08, which is the latest available survey, the percentage of children under 6 months of age exclusively breastfed is 46.4 (rural 47.8%, urban 42.5%). Early initiation of breastfeeding has improved from 27.8% (DLHS-II, 2002 - 07) to 40.2% (DLHS-III 2007-08)

(e) The Government promotes breastfeeding through interpersonal communication by health care workers and awareness generation done through the mass media. Training of healthcare personnel on Infant and Young Child Feeding is undertaken as part of the maternal and child health trainings. Promotion of breastfeeding is also implemented as part of Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Illnesses (IMNCI) programme. The opportunity provided by the marked increase in the number of institutional deliveries through the Janani Surakshi Yojana (JSY) is utilized to counsel mothers on important aspects of caring for herself and her newborn, including counseling on breastfeeding. Special action to promote breastfeeding is undertaken through the breastfeeding week which is celebrated from 1-7 th of August every year.