

Office of Shaktisinh Gohil
National Spokesperson, AICC

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Press Note

07th March, 2014

- Number of children suffering from severe malnutrition- red zone- has increased manifold from 0.65 percent to 4.66 percent.
- There is 44 percent increase in number of children suffering from malnutrition in tribal areas. And number of suffering from severe malnutrition has increased by five percent. All this is because of anti-tribal approach of the government.
- Gujarat is a developed state since years. However, there is imbalanced growth of Gujarat for last 12 years rule because of anti poor and corrupt BJP rule.
- Despite a 2004 ruling of the Supreme Court, BJP government is not giving supplementary nutrition to 63.37 lakh children.
- In Gujarat every third child is suffering from malnutrition, every second teenage girl is underweight and every third woman suffers from malnutrition.
- Money provided for women and child welfare is siphoned off by a coterie through corrupt practice.
- Gujarat Chief Minister squandered Rs 500 lakh allotted for women welfare in women conventions.
- Against need for 75480 anganwadis Gujarat has only 50225.
- NABARD gave permission to build 3333 anganwadis, but only 1979 have been set up.
- Money provided for nutritious food is eaten away by BJP favourites in the name of Ayurvedic biscuits.

Gujarat is a developed state since years. The governments in the past always worked for balanced development of the state. However, there is imbalanced growth of Gujarat for last 12 years rule because the BJP government has favoured a few industrialists. The divide between rich and poor has increased considerably and as a result malnutrition among women and children has also gone up considerably.

Congress spokesperson Shaktisinh Gohil produced documents of state government before media which showed that number of children suffering from severe malnutrition- red zone- has increased manifold. In 2007-2008 it was merely from 0.65 percent which increased to 4.66 percent in 2010-2011. In Gujarat every third child is suffering from malnutrition, every second teenage girl is underweight and every third woman suffers from malnutrition, he said.

Due to anti-tribal approach of the government in 11 districts where 80 tribal projects are going on the percentage of malnourished children should have decreased but in fact in 2011-2012 there is 44 percent increase in number of children suffering from moderate malnutrition in tribal areas. And number of children suffering from severe malnutrition has increased by five percent. The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) in its report has also severely criticized the state government's anti tribal approach due to which the percentage of malnourished children has increased considerably.

The fact is that the money provided by centre for women and child welfare is being used by the state government for its publicity and for corrupt practices for its few favorites. Consequently the percentage of malnutrition among women and children is increasing instead of decreasing. The Chief Minister and the state government is busy after some favoured industrialists ignoring welfare of poor families.

Despite a 2004 ruling of the Supreme Court to provide supplementary nutrition to each eligible beneficiary in aanganwadis, the BJP government is not giving supplementary nutrition to all. Between 2007 and 2012, 223.16 lakh children of age of six months to 3 years were registered and were entitled for benefits. But the government selected only 170.32 lakh and out of them only 159.79 lakh were given benefits. Due to negligence of

the government 63.37 lakh children were denied of benefits of the scheme. There is a provision of providing supplementary nutrition for 25 days in a month and 300 days in a year but there are reports of 96 days less of providing nutrition.

As per the norms, children who are identified as malnourished should be provided food of 800 calories and 20 to 25 gms of protein. But children of Gujarat could not get this benefit because of criminal negligence and corruption of Gujarat government. CAG made a study of eight districts in which children with grade three malnutrition were surveyed during 2008 and 2012. The number of such children was 69453. Of these only 25,673(37 per cent) were provided nutritious food and that too far below the standard. Their food had 500 calories instead of prescribed 800 and protein 12 to 15 gms instead of 25.

In 2006 January, Government of India had provided its share of 50 percent to provide micronutrients rich supplementary diet to children upto six years and pregnant women. But Gujarat government did nothing. As a result there is enormous increase in the number of malnourished children and underweight women in Gujarat.

CAG audit has also exposed serious irregularities of Gujarat government in this regard. Against need for 75480 anganwadis Gujarat has only 50225. NABARD had given permission to build 3333 anganwadis, but only 1979 have been set up.

There is gross misuse of money provided for various scheme. Schemes for material like Ayurvedic biscuits and fortified flour are cleared for favoured businessmen without going through any tender process. Gujarat Chief Minister squandered Rs 500 lakh allotted for women welfare in women conventions.

Note: Evidences in this regard are available on the website www.shaktisinhgohil.com, which may kindly be downloaded.

To,
The Editor,

Request to kindly publish this press note in your esteemed newspaper.

(Sunil Rami) Personal Assistant