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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
RAJYA SABHA
QUESTION NO 2008
ANSWERED ON 18.08.2011

[READY TO USE THERAPEUTIC FOOD.](#)

2008 SHRI D. RAJA

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

- (a) whether any one from UNICEF has been held responsible for illegally bringing into India Ready to Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) in 2009;
- (b) whether all the items that were imported have been sent back and audited;
- (c) whether any of the imported such foods and milks were destroyed, if so, why;
- (d) whether any or some of these items was consumed in India; if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether any study has been conducted on the children who received the RUTF on their body chemistry or other functions;
- (f) whether any institutional mechanism has been established to prevent such actions in the future; and (g) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

(SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH)

(a) to (g): UNICEF had procured and supplied Ready to Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) called 'Plumpy Nut' in the States of Madhya Pradesh (Khalwa Block) and Bihar (Kosi flood affected areas) between September, 2008-May, 2009, without any request or approval of Government of India and in contravention of Government guidelines. As soon as the procurement and distribution of RUTF by UNICEF came to the notice of Government, UNICEF was confronted for an explanation. Since, their explanation was not found satisfactory and since the decision for procurement and distribution of supplies was taken by UNICEF in an unauthorized manner, UNICEF was conveyed that it was not correct on their part to have introduced this new component in contravention of Government of India Policy on its own. It was further conveyed that any legal implications arising from this procurement shall rest with the UNICEF and not with the Government of India. Alongwith, UNICEF was directed to ship out the supplies out of the country by 15th June, 2009 and restore the funds of equivalent value of the RUTF supplies to GOI-UNICEF India Country Programme for Child Development and Nutrition 2008-12. In compliance of these directions, the UNICEF reported that the stocks of RUTF have been sent outside the country and an amount of US \$880,000 has been restored to GOI-UNICEF Country Programme for Child Development and Nutrition. Further, in order that it does not recur, the following decisions of the Government of India were conveyed to the UNICEF:

- (i) UNICEF should not act on any request received directly by it from State Governments. Any request for supplies or activities would be referred to the concerned Ministry of GOI for a decision under intimation to the nodal Ministry i.e. Ministry of Women and Child Development. States/UT Government have also been apprised of this decision of the Government of India
- (ii) UNICEF should, in future, respond to request for Vitamin A solution by State Governments only after specific clearance by Ministry of Women and Child Development and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- (iii) UNICEF should ensure that State/UT specific Annual Work Plans are in accordance with the UNICEF Annual Work Plan approved by the Government of India.
- (iv) Disbursal of medicines and other health and family welfare related supplies are to be made under the supervision of the State Health and Family Welfare Authorities with the knowledge/concurrence of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India. UNICEF has confirmed discontinuation of use of RUTF and also that there would be no further imports of the RUTF by UNICEF unless and until there is an official request from the UNION Government. They have also assured their full compliance in this regard.

Government of India has not conducted any study on the children who received RUTF.

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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-3724

ANSWERED ON-07.08.2009

READY TO USE THERAPEUTIC FOOD .

3724 . SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA

- (a) whether a new branded food in the name `ready to use therapeutic food` has been imported into the country by international agencies worth crores of rupees;
- (b) if so, the details of the importing agencies and its timing;
- (c) whether this has been supplied to different States of the country;
- (d) whether this was done within the ambit of national policy and approval of the Union Government; and
- (e) what is the action being taken by Government to prevent such commercialization of child malnutrition and to ensure necessary regulation of international aid/assistance in future?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE

(SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD)

(a) to (c) As per information received from the Ministry of Women & Child Development, 'Ready To Use Therapeutic Food' (RUTF), costing approximately Rs. 11.5 crores, was imported by UNICEF India into the country between August 2008 and January 2009. RUTF was supplied and used in Madhya Pradesh and Bihar to treat children with severe acute malnutrition.

(d) RUTF was used in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh without any request or approval of Government of India. Use of RUTF is not a policy of Government of India.

(e) The whole issue was examined in consultation with the Ministry of External Affairs. UNICEF has been directed to discontinue the use of RUTF and ship the stocks out of the country. UNICEF has further been asked not to act on any requests received directly by them, from State Governments. Disbursal of medicines and other health and family welfare related supplies be made under the supervision of the State Health and Family Welfare authorities with the knowledge/ concurrence of Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-3134

ANSWERED ON-31.07.2009

IMPORTED THERAPEUTIC FOOD FOR NRHM .

3134 . SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA

(a) whether it is a fact that some international agencies have interfered with established norms of national flagship programmes such as NRHM/RCH by importing and providing a branded `ready to use therapeutic food` over the last one year;

(b) if so, what action has been taken in respect of the imported food; and

(c) what measure Government has taken to safeguard national flagship programmes from such interference by vested commercial interests in future?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE

(SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD)

(a) to (c): As per information received from the Ministry of Women and Child Development, 'Ready To Use Therapeutic Food' (RUTF) was imported by UNICEF India into the country costing approximately Rs.11.50 crores.

The whole issue was examined in consultation with the Ministry of External Affairs.

The Government of India has asked UNICEF India to send all stocks of RUTF procured by them out of the country latest by 15.6.2009. UNICEF.

India, and not the Government of India, has been deemed responsible for all legal liabilities and financial implications arising out of procurement and distribution of RUTF and UNICEF India shall restore funds of equivalent value of the stocks of RUTF sent back from India to the UNICEF - Government of Country Programme latest by the end of July 2009. In respect of multi -micronutrient sprinkles, that have not been delivered to India so far, funds of equivalent value of the procurement order cancelled shall be restored by the UNICEF to the UNICEF - Government of India Country Programme.

UNICEF has been asked not to enter into correspondence with any State/UT directly relating to supplies to be made. The concerned International Agency has been asked to ensure that the State/U. T. specific Annual Work Plan are in accordance with UNICEF Annual Work Plan approved by the Ministry of Women and Child Development. Disbursal of medicines and other health and family welfare related supply should be made under the supervision of the State Health and Family Welfare authorities with the knowledge/concurrence of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.

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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO 6549
ANSWERED ON 05.05.2010
ASSISTANCE BY UN AGENCIES

6549 Shri GURUDAS DAS GUPTA

P. LINGAM

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:-

- (a) whether the Government has written to the States not to directly work with UN or International Agencies;**
- (b) if so, the details thereof;**
- (c) whether the UN agencies are providing assistance at the State Level, in the field of health and nutrition, violating the Government's directives in this regard;**
- (d) if so, the action taken by the Government and the UN Coordinator (India) to ensure implementing the national policy;**
- (e) whether there is a suitable mechanism for audit and accountability for addressing such direct interventions and assistance at the State level; and**
- (f) if so, the details thereof?**

ANSWER

THE MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA)

(a) & (b): Yes. As the nodal Department for external multilateral and bilateral assistance, the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) has issued instructions from time to time to the State Governments requesting them not to negotiate any kind of assistance with external agencies without routing the same through the DEA.

(c) & (d): A recent instance of the violation of Government's directives concerned the supply to some State Governments of Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) called plumpy nut by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

UNICEF was requested by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, the nodal Ministry for UNICEF, to discontinue the use of RUTF, to ship it out and to restore funds of equivalent value to the GOI-UNICEF Country Programme. UNICEF were also advised to adhere to the provisions of GOI-UNICEF Country Plan.

UNICEF has confirmed to the nodal Ministry its compliance with the Government's directives.

(e) & (f): Concerned nodal Ministries of the Government are responsible for ensuring the observance by international organizations of the Agreements/MoUs which govern their operations in India.


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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO 121

ANSWERED ON 27.11.2009

DISTRIBUTION OF PACKAGED FOOD

121 . Shri UDAY SINGH ALIAS PAPPU SINGH

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

- (a) whether the Government has permitted United Nations Children Education Fund (UNICEF) to distribute packaged imported food for severely malnourished children in several States;
- (b) if so , the details thereof;
- (c) whether guidelines have been issued regarding distribution of packaged food to malnourished children;
- (d) if so, whether the guidelines have been followed in respect of the food being distributed to malnourished children by UNICEF;
- (e) if not, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and
- (f) the corrective steps taken by the Government to ensure compliance of guidelines by UNICEF?

ANSWER

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

(a), (b), (c), (d), (e) & (f): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a), (b), (c), (d) &(f) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 121 BY SHRI UDAY SINGH REGARDING DISTRIBUTION OF PACKAGED FOOD

(a) to (f) UNICEF had procured and supplied Ready to Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) called `Plumpy Nut` in the States of Madhya Pradesh (Khalwa Block) and Bihar (Kosi flood affected areas) between September, 2008-May, 2009, without any request or approval of Government of India and in contravention of Government guidelines. As soon as the procurement and distribution of RUTF by UNICEF came to the notice of Government, UNICEF was confronted for an explanation.

Since, their explanation was not found satisfactory and since the decision for procurement and distribution of supplies was taken by UNICEF in an unauthorized manner, UNICEF was conveyed that the mandate on declaration of emergency in any part of the country rests with the Government of India and not with the UNICEF. It was, therefore, not correct for UNICEF to have introduced this new component in contravention of Government of India Policy on its own. Further, as use of RUTF/Sprinklers are not accepted policy of the Government of India, any legal implications arising from this procurement shall rest with the UNICEF and not with the Government of India. Alongwith, UNICEF was directed to take following actions:

(i) Ship out the supplies out of the country by 15th June, 2009 and restore the funds of equivalent value of the RUTF supplies to GOI-UNICEF India Country Programme for Child Development and Nutrition 2008-12.

(ii) Put all the activities relating to Child Development and Nutrition (CDN) on hold (unless otherwise specifically requested by the Ministry) till all the issues relating to supplies procured under the CDN Work Plan 2008 are clarified and Annual Work Plan for 2009 is approved.

In compliance of these directions, the UNICEF has reported that the stocks of RUTF have been sent outside the country and an amount of US \$880,000 has been restored to GOI-UNICEF Country Programme for Child Development and Nutrition. UNICEF has further assured that Annual State Work Plans are accordance with their Annual Work Plan for the country. Further, in order that it does not recur, the following decisions of the Government of India have been conveyed to the UNICEF.

(a). UNICEF should not act on any request received directly by it from State Governments. Any

request for supplies or activities would be referred to the concerned Ministry of GOI for a decision under intimation to the nodal Ministry i.e. Ministry of Women and Child Development. States/UT Government have also been apprised of this decision of the Government of India.

(b). UNICEF should, in future, respond to request for Vitamin A solution by State Governments only after specific clearance by Ministry of Women and Child Development and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

(c). UNICEF should ensure that State/UT specific Annual Work Plans are in accordance with the UNICEF Annual Work Plan approved by the Government of India.

(d). Disbursal of medicines and other health and family welfare related supplies are to be made under the supervision of the State Health and Family Welfare Authorities with the knowledge/concurrence of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.

UNICEF has confirmed discontinuation of use of RUTF and also that there would be no further imports of the RUTF by UNICEF unless and until there is an official request from the UNION Government. They have also assured their full compliance in this regard.