

After PM Narendra Modi's Fit India, govt focuses on eat right initiatives, launches 'Poshan Maah'

Government aims to promote healthy and balanced eating through initiatives launched in the month of September, declared as the Poshan Maah (nutrition month), it also features an attempt to fight malnutrition in far-flung villages by training the front line health workers.

Sep 06, 2019

Rhythma Kaul

Hindustan Times, New Delhi



Union minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan with the delegates of 72nd Session of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia. The minister also launched initiatives aimed to promote healthy eating on Thursday. (ANI Photo)

A few days after Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Fit India movement to inculcate a culture of fitness among citizens, the health ministry under Dr Harsh Vardhan launched an aligned 'Poshan Maah' (nutrition campaign) on Thursday to promote healthy eating. Among its different goals, under the umbrella objective of promoting healthy and balanced eating, features an attempt to fight malnutrition in far-flung villages by training the front line health workers.

The significance of the initiative is underscored by a World Health Organisation's (WHO) nutrition report that says 3.7 million deaths could be prevented by 2025 if governments boost their focus on healthier eating. September has been declared as Poshan Maah

(nutrition month) and Dr. Harsh Vardhan will hope that his ministry's initiative to spread the benefits of eating right, using technology in a fun way, delivers the results for India.

“Eat Right India campaign, observing Poshan Maah, PM's Fit India movement all of these have the same underlying intention, to ensure India eats healthy and stays healthy, said Harsh Vardhan, stressing on the need for India to eat right for a healthy lifestyle. Eat Right India campaign was launched in 2018.

Targeting the urban population, especially the college-going youth, the country's top food regulator— Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)—has designed the app-based, Eat Right quiz that can be downloaded from Alexa Skill store, to enhance the knowledge of basics of food safety and nutrition.

That's not all, FSSAI has also launched the 'Eat Right Online Store' that offers goods such as coffee mugs, t-shirts, tote bags, fridge magnets, coasters etc. carrying campaign messages.

To deal with malnutrition cases, especially in children living in villages, a four-week online learning course to train front line health workers like Anganwadi workers and midwives was also launched.

The course will focus on basic concepts of nutrition, importance of nutrition in first 1000 days, reducing consumption of high fat salt and sugar foods and overall food safety. “It is an interactive course to train our front line workers..., as they will be able to spread the message among the community,” said Pawan Aggarwal, CEO, FSSAI. Noting that healthy diet was one of the four main factors useful in preventing diseases like diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, cancer etc, Poonam Khetrpal Singh, regional director of WHO, said, “The Eat Right India movement's message is close to the heart of what the WHO has been saying all along. Now, this has been put into action by FSSAI, for which I congratulate the Government of India.”