

अनिल मलिक, भा.प्र.से.
सचिव
Anil Malik, I.A.S.
Secretary

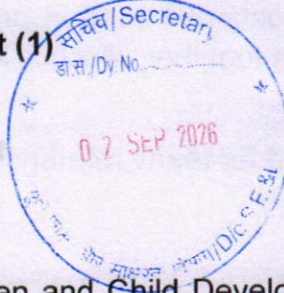


भारत सरकार
महिला एवं बाल विकास मंत्रालय
जीपीओए-3, नेताजी नगर
नई दिल्ली-110023
Government of India
Ministry of Women & Child Development

31st August, 2026

DO No. PA/381/2026-CPMU-Part (1)

Dear Secretary,



JS(RMPY)

The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) celebrates Poshan Maah every year in the month of September in collaboration with all stakeholders to improve nutritional outcomes in a holistic manner. Over the years, Rashtriya Poshan Maah has emerged as an important platform for bringing together Governments, communities and citizens in a shared endeavour to promote better nutritional practices and strengthen community participation. I am pleased to share that this year the Ministry of Women and Child Development is celebrating 9th Rashtriya Poshan Maah from **9th September to 8th October 2026**, with a focus on improving the nutritional well-being of women and children. This month-long Jan Andolan aims to sensitise and mobilise communities around key themes, while strengthening inter-sectoral convergence among Ministries, Departments, States and UTs and grassroots stakeholders.

2. The 9th Rashtriya Poshan Maah 2026 will be held under the overarching theme "**Hamari Anganwadi, Hamari Jimmedari**", which seeks to place Anganwadi Centres at the heart of community-led action for nutrition, care and early stimulation for childhood development, while strengthening collective ownership of Anganwadis. For this Poshan Maah, focused activities are proposed around the following themes:

1. Dietary Diversity & Adequate Protein
2. Fresh Hot Cooked Meals (HCM) at Anganwadi Centres
3. Community Ownership & Accountability
4. Nutrition and Early Stimulation for Childhood Development
5. Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY): Cash Transfers for Maternal Health

3. This is to further share that the **launch event will be webcast live on 9th September, 2026 from 11:00 AM onwards**. The webcast may be accessed at: <https://webcast.gov.in/mwcd>. You are requested to encourage your officials and field functionaries to join the event through webcast to ensure wider participation of your Ministry.

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4. As we prepare for this Poshan Maah, I warmly invite you to join us once again to mobilize communities across the country for a strong and meaningful Jan Andolan. I would deeply appreciate your continued support and coordination in bringing our teams and State & UT counterparts together, which is instrumental for wellbeing of the women and children of our country.

5. A Concept Note is **enclosed** for ready reference.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

Encl. As above



(Anil Malik)

Shri T.K. Anil Kumar

Secretary,
Department of School Education & Literacy,
Room No.21102, 1st Floor, Kartavya Bhawan,
Dr. Rajendra Prasad Road,
New Delhi.

CONCEPT NOTE

9th POSHAN MAAH (September 2026)

Overarching Theme: "Hamari Anganwadi Hamari Jimmedari"

BACKGROUND

Malnutrition remains one of India's most significant public health challenges, affecting the health, growth, learning and productivity of women and children across the life cycle. To mount a coordinated response, the Government of India launched POSHAN Abhiyaan in March 2018 as a multi-ministerial convergence mission placing nutrition at the centre of the development agenda. Under Poshan Abhiyaan, **Rashtriya Poshan Maah** (National Nutrition Month) is observed every September as a dedicated platform to mobilise communities and reinforce key nutrition, health and caregiving behaviours among pregnant women, lactating mothers, children, adolescents, and their families.

Over successive Poshan Maah campaigns, awareness and positive behaviour change have been strengthened on maternal nutrition, infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices, anaemia prevention, growth monitoring and hygiene, alongside broader efforts to improve nutrition outcomes across the country.

At the same time, improving the quality of diets remains a national priority. While food security has improved, diets across many households continue to be cereal-dominant, with inadequate dietary diversity and insufficient intake of protein-rich foods, fruits and vegetables. Addressing malnutrition therefore requires moving beyond calorie sufficiency towards nutrient-rich, diverse and locally available foods. Supplementary Nutrition Programme (SNP) under the Anganwadi system provides an important platform to demonstrate healthy diets, promote local nutritious foods and encourage positive dietary practices among women and young children.

The release of the revised SNP Guidelines under Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 presents a timely opportunity to strengthen nutrition service delivery through improved transparency, accountability and community engagement. For the first time, the Guidelines introduce definition of Hot Cooked Meals (HCM) for eligible beneficiaries, mandate the display of SNP Menu Boards and the formation of Anganwadi Management Committees (AMCs) to promote community oversight of nutrition services at Anganwadi Centres (AWCs). These reforms create an enabling environment for citizens to actively engage with, monitor and support the quality of nutrition services delivered through Anganwadi Centres.

Adequate nutrition during the first six years of life is fundamental for optimal physical growth, brain development and school readiness. Coupled with responsive caregiving, stimulation and early learning, quality nutrition services can significantly improve developmental outcomes for children.

9th Rashtriya Poshan Maah 2026, under the overarching theme "**Hamari Anganwadi Hamari Jimmedari**," seeks to place Anganwadi Centres at the heart of community-led action for nutrition, care and early childhood development, while strengthening collective ownership and accountability for Poshan. It is proposed to be anchored in five mutually reinforcing priorities: (i) promotion of dietary diversity, with a focus on adequate protein intake, diverse food groups and local foods; (ii) promotion of fresh, diverse HCM under the SNP through menu rotation,

hygiene and quality assurance; (iii) strengthening community ownership and accountability for Poshan through the newly constituted AMCs (guidelines issued on 23 June 2026) and the display of SNP Menu Boards; (iv) promoting cognitive development and adequate nutrition as fundamental pillars of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), highlighting the inseparable link between what a child eats and how a child learns; and (v) Rashtriya Poshan Maah 2026 will also commemorate 10 years of the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), India's flagship maternity benefit programme, highlighting its contribution to supporting maternal nutrition, promoting health-seeking behaviours, and providing income support during pregnancy, while reinforcing the critical importance of maternal nutrition and care during the first 1,000 days of life for healthy growth, cognitive development, and lifelong well-being.

Proposed Themes for Rashtriya Poshan Maah 2026

Theme 1: Dietary Diversity & Adequate Protein

A diverse diet that includes cereals and millets, pulses, fruits and vegetables, nuts and seeds, and milk and milk products, along with adequate protein from both plant and animal sources, is essential for meeting nutrient requirements, supporting healthy growth and development, and preventing all forms of malnutrition. Promoting dietary diversity across the life course, particularly during the complementary feeding period, is fundamental to improving nutrition outcomes and fostering healthy eating habits from an early age.

Activities may include –

- **Healthy and Diverse Recipe Demonstrations:** Conduct live demonstrations of healthy and diverse recipes at Anganwadi Centres, using affordable, locally available ingredients drawn from different food groups, cereals and millets, pulses, vegetables and fruits, nuts and seeds, milk and milk products, and eggs.
- **Poshan Melas:** Organise Poshan Melas showcasing local super nutritious foods through interactive displays and games, growth measurement corners, 'know your food' stalls with counselling on building a balanced and diverse meals for every age group.
- **'Protein-Rich Foods' Campaign:** Conduct awareness activities on protein-rich foods from plant and animal sources — pulses, legumes, nuts and seeds, milk and milk products, and eggs — demonstrating practical and affordable ways to add protein to daily diets. Protein-rich plate competitions may also be organized in campaign mode.
- **Showcasing Poshan Vatika Produce and Local Foods:** Showcase produce from Poshan Vatikas and locally available seasonal foods, promoting their regular use in household meals and in complementary feeding for young children.

Theme 2: Fresh Hot Cooked Meals (HCM) at Anganwadi Centers

Ensuring that beneficiaries consistently receive fresh, diverse, and nutritious Hot Cooked Meals (HCM) is central to improving the quality, utilisation, and effectiveness of the SNP, while encouraging regular attendance at Anganwadi Centres. Emphasising freshly prepared, hygienic meals made from locally available ingredients, including millets, pulses, and seasonal vegetables, reinforces the importance of dietary diversity and supports the adoption of healthier eating practices at the household level. Poshan Maah 2026 provides an opportunity to strengthen the quality and acceptability of HCMs through weekly menu rotation, community participation and robust quality assurance mechanisms.

Activities may include –

- **Weekly Menu Rotation:** States/UTs should be encouraged to operationalise weekly menu rotation at Anganwadi Centres, ensuring a diverse Hot Cooked Meals (HCM) menu across days of the week using locally available ingredients, millets, pulses and seasonal vegetables.
- **Hot Cooked Meal (HCM) Demonstrations:** Live demonstrations of HCM prepared as per the SNP guidelines, highlighting appropriate ingredients, hygienic preparation practices, and balanced meal composition.
- **Community Hot Cooked Meal (HCM) Tasting Sessions:** Organize community tasting sessions of HCMs at Anganwadi Centres with participation from parents, Panchayats, SHGs and Anganwadi Management Committees.

Theme 3: Community Ownership & Accountability

The recent constitution of Anganwadi Management Committees (AMCs), as per the Ministry's guidelines issued on 23 June 2026, provides a timely opportunity to strengthen community ownership and accountability within the SNP. Chaired by the Anganwadi Supervisor, AMCs are intended to promote participatory oversight, strengthen community engagement, and improve the quality and effectiveness of service delivery at the Anganwadi Centre. Poshan Maah 2026 can serve as an important platform to operationalise these committees by encouraging their active participation in awareness generation, beneficiary mobilisation, and oversight of nutrition and early childhood care services.

Complementing this effort, the universal display and use of SNP Menu Boards at AWCs can enhance transparency by making beneficiary entitlements and daily menus visible to the community. Together, AMCs and Menu Boards can foster greater community participation in monitoring menu adherence, meal quality, and service regularity, while increasing awareness of supplementary nutrition, beneficiary entitlements, and responsive childcare practices.

Activities may include –

- **Activation of Anganwadi Management Committees (AMCs):** Activate AMCs across all Anganwadi Centres to lead community participation, review nutrition service delivery & support Poshan Maah activities. Additionally, ensure that at least one AMC meeting is conducted during Poshan Maah.
- **SNP Menu Board Display:** Ensure States/UTs to display SNP Menu Boards at all Anganwadi Centres to improve beneficiary awareness of day-wise HCM/THR menus and strengthen transparency and community monitoring of service delivery.
- **Community Monitoring of Meal Quality:** Engage AMCs and Mothers' Committees in monitoring meal quality, quantity, menu adherence and periodic social audit of Supplementary Nutrition Programme.

Theme 4: Nutrition and Early Stimulation for Childhood Development

Reflecting the direction of the Chief Secretaries' Conference that cognitive development and adequate nutrition are fundamental to Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), this theme highlights the inseparable link between what a child eats and how a child learns.

Good nutrition and responsive caregiving during the first 1,000 days are essential for optimal brain development, while undernutrition during this critical period can have lasting effects on cognitive, motor, and socio-emotional development. The revised Home Visit Scheduler, with its structured package of 34 developmental milestones for children aged 0–3 years, provides a tool for Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) to strengthen caregiver counselling, and promote early stimulation.

Activities may include –

- **Revised Home Visit Scheduler:** Accelerate the rollout of the revised Home Visit Scheduler to improve coordinated counselling and follow-up during the first 1,000 days and early childhood. Promote quality Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) through the implementation of the Navchetna and Aadharshila curricula, fostering age-appropriate learning, development, and school readiness.
- **Referral of Children with Developmental Delays:** Promoting referral pathways and mass awareness on identification and referral of children with developmental delays with health systems and Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) teams on Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Day (VHSND).
- **Awareness about the importance of nutrition on early stimulation:** Mass awareness campaign on the importance of adequate nutrition and early childhood stimulation for optimal brain development, and cognitive development.

Theme 5: Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY): Cash transfers for Maternal Health

Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) marks 10 years as India's flagship maternity benefit programme, supporting maternal nutrition, promoting health-seeking behaviours, and providing income support during pregnancy. Poshan Maah 2026 presents an opportunity to expand coverage among all eligible beneficiaries, strengthen citizen awareness, and celebrate a decade of progress in advancing maternal and child health.

Activities may include –

- **100% Saturation Drive:** Conduct special enrolment drives to identify and register all eligible pregnant and lactating women under PMMVY. Review pendency and expedite verification, approvals, and Direct Benefit Transfers (DBTs). Monitor regular progress reviews through PMMVY dashboards.
- **Citizen Awareness Campaign:** Conduct awareness campaigns on PMMVY eligibility, benefits, installments and the application process. Promote beneficiary testimonials and success stories through social and mass media.
- **Launch of PMMVY Toolkit:** Release of PMMVY toolkit for field implementation by States/UTs. Encourage States/UTs to localize and disseminate toolkit materials in regional languages.

*The launch of Rashtriya Poshan Maah 2026 is proposed to be held on **9th September 2026** at the **Rudraksh Convention Centre, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh**, in the presence of **Smt. Annpurna Devi, Hon'ble Union Minister of Women and Child Development**, **Smt. Savitri Thakur, Hon'ble Minister of State for Women and Child Development**, senior dignitaries from the Government of India and States/UTs, development partners, frontline functionaries and beneficiaries.*

9th Rashtriya Poshan Maah from 9th September to 8th October
2026 - D.O letter dated 31.08.2026 from Secretary, Ministry of
WCD

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Tue, 01 Sep 2026 6:55:38 PM +0530

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2 Attachment(s)

Concept Note Poshan Maah 2...
682.7 KB

DOSEL.pdf
1.2 MB

Respected Sir,

I am directed to forward herewith enclosed D.O letter No. PA/381/2026-CPMU-Part (1)
dated 31.08.2026 along with enclosure on the subject cited above.

With Regards,

Poshan Abhiyaan

Ministry of Women and Child Development
Government of India
GPOA Tower 3, Netaji Nagar, New Delhi