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**Chick Distribution Programme Flagged Off by Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain
7 Lakh Beneficiaries to Get 5 Chicks Each
to Combat Malnutrition and Anaemia**

Bhubaneswar, 02/03/2024:

Minister, Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment and Fisheries and Animal Resources Development Sri Ranendra Pratap Swain has flagged off the program of distribution of chicks to more than seven lakh families under Nutrition at Doorstep Programme in order to combat malnutrition and anaemia. Officials from all the districts of the state connected through video conferencing distributed chicks to beneficiaries in their respective districts, after the flagging off by Minister Sri Swain at Krushi Bhawan today.

On this occasion, Minister Sri Swain said that extensive steps have been taken by the State Government to eliminate malnutrition and anaemia. These include distribution of fruit and vegetable saplings and poultry chicks. The families suffering from malnutrition and anaemia have already been distributed with saplings of drumstick, raw banana, papaya, sweet potato etc. From this they can get vegetables as their nutrition. Along with this, chicks are being distributed to provide nutrition filled with animal protein. More than 7 lakh identified families across the state will be benefited under this scheme. Each family will get five number of 28-day old chicks free of cost under this programme. Day-old chicks are difficult to rear as their mortality rate is high, so 28-day-old chicks are being provided by the Fisheries and Animal Resources Development Department. These chicks will grow well with negligible mortality. Eggs from these backyard chickens will play an important role in supplementary nutrition. From this scheme, the State's egg production will be increased by about 4.5 lakh eggs/day or 16 crore eggs/year. Around Rs. 24 Crore will be spent by Government of Odisha in current financial year for implementation of the programme to provide chicks to combat malnutrition and anaemia of 7 lakh affected families of the State.

Minister Sri Swain also said that these chicks are being supplied at the doorstep of the beneficiaries. The beneficiaries, who attended through virtual mode thanked the Chief Minister Sri Naveen Patnaik and Minister Sri Ranendra Pratap Swain for such innovative steps taken for their benefit. During the programme Minister Sri Swain interacted with the beneficiaries of 30 Gram Panchayats of 30 districts.

At the outset, Principal Secretary, Fisheries and Animal Resources Development Department Sri Suresh Kumar Vashishth said that about 7 lakh families of the state will get protein supplementation through poultry rearing. Director, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services Sri Ramashis Hazra and other departmental officers were present on the occasion. Dr. Satchidananda Sarangi, Addl. Director, Poultry Development proposed vote of thanks.

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