

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE**

**RAJYA SABHA  
UNSTARRED Q. No 1685  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 3<sup>rd</sup> AUGUST, 2021**

**SOCIAL DISTANCING AS A MEASURE TO CONTAIN COVID-19 VIRUS**

**1685 SHRI PRABHAKAR REDDY VEMIREDDY:**

Will the Minister of **HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:

- a) the response of the Ministry at the finding of US Centre for Disease Control and Prevention that even six feet distance does not keep COVID-19 virus away
- b) whether it is a fact that the pathogen transmits through poorly ventilated and crowded indoor settings and
- c) if so, how does the present social distancing help to contain this virus?

**ANSWER  
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND  
FAMILY WELFARE  
(DR. BHARTI PRAVIN PAWAR)**

(a) to (c) Physical/social distancing is one of the established non-pharmaceutical interventions to minimize the spread of communicable diseases transmissible through respiratory route. Similar strategies have also been used in the past in India as well as in other countries to minimize the spread of respiratory infections.

As per US, Center for Disease Control (CDC), *COVID-19 spreads when an infected person breathes out droplets and very small particles that contain the virus. These droplets and particles can be breathed in by other people or land on their eyes, noses, or mouth. In some circumstances, they may contaminate surfaces where such droplets /particles land. CDC maintains that people who are closer than 6 feet from the infected person are most likely to get infected.* (Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-covid-spreads.html>). The World Health Organization also maintains that COVID-19 spreads mainly between people who are in close contact with each other.

Physical distancing of 6 feet therefore continues to be a part of COVID appropriate behavior as recommended by Union Ministry of Health.

Ventilation does play an important role in minimizing the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19. The World Health Organization therefore recommends avoiding crowded, poorly ventilated places.

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has accordingly recommended ensuring effective cross ventilation and to allow for maximal intake of fresh air in all its SOPs/guidelines/advisories.