

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

**RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO.180
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 14TH DECEMBER, 2021**

STEPS TAKEN TO INCREASE WOMEN'S ACCESS TO HEALTH

180 SHRI SUJEET KUMAR:

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

- (a) whether Government has taken note of the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2021 which places India at 155th position out of 156 countries on female health and survival, if so, the details thereof and the reaction of Government thereto;
- (b) whether Government has examined a gendered perspective on access to health, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the existing policies aimed at increasing women's access to health; and
- (d) whether Government is planning to take any additional steps or policies besides the one mentioned in (c) for increasing women's access to health?

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

- (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 180* FOR 14TH DECEMBER, 2021**

- (a) to (d): Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) consists of four dimensions, namely,
- (i) Economic participation and opportunity
 - (ii) Educational Attainment
 - (iii) Health and Survival, and
 - (iv) Political Empowerment.

Health and Survival sub-index of Global Gender Gap Report provides an overview of the differences between women's and men's health. It is computed on two parameters namely Sex Ratio at Birth and Healthy life expectancy.

The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2021 places India at 155th position out of 156 countries on health and survival with a score of 0.937. This score implies that in "Health and Survival" dimension, 93.7% of gender gap has been closed in India.

As per available latest Sample Registration System Report (SRS) 2018, Life expectancy at birth for females in India (70.7 years) is more than males (68.2 years) for the period of 2014-18 and Sex Ratio at Birth was 899 females per 1000 males in 2016-18 which has improved by 3 points from 896 in 2015-2017. The recent findings of the National Family Health Survey (2019) indicate that the Sex Ratio at Birth has further improved to 929.

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Government of India, has given utmost priority and made strategic investments to bridge the gender gap and improving health of women by implementing several initiatives under National Health Mission.

Some major initiatives taken by Government in Health Sector with focus to improve women's health and survival are as follows:

- Continuum of care and life cycle approach under Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, Adolescent Health plus Nutrition (RMNCAH+N) strategies to enhance health and nutrition coverage for adolescent girls, women of reproductive age-group, pregnant women.

- Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakaram (JSSK) to eliminate out-of-pocket expenses for pregnant women delivering in public health institutions and sick infants accessing public health institutions for treatment.
- Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) to provide financial assistance to pregnant women for encouraging institutional delivery.
- Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA) to provide comprehensive and quality ANC to pregnant women on the 9th of every month.
- LaQshya initiative to improve the quality of care in Labour room and Maternity Operation Theatres.
- Enactment of Pre-conception and Pre-natal Diagnostic (PC & PNDT) Act 1994 for prohibition of pre-conception and pre-natal sex selection to improve Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB).
- Several new schemes and initiatives under family planning to provide services at various levels of health system with expanded basket of choices of contraceptive methods in order to ensure universal access to contraceptives.
- Promotion of Menstrual Hygiene scheme among adolescent girls in the age group of 10-19 years as part of the Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram, with specific reference to ensuring menstrual health for adolescent girls.
- Poshan Abhiyan to strengthen nutritional content, delivery, outreach and outcomes with focus on developing practices that nurture health, wellness and immunity to disease and malnutrition.
- Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojna aims to provide maternity benefit to pregnant and lactating mothers.

In addition to above, Government has taken recent steps for further strengthening of women's access to health services such as-

- Rollout of Comprehensive Primary Health Care including health promotion through Ayushman Bharat-Health & Wellness Centres (AB-HWC) for early screening of breast and cervical cancer in women as well as screening of diabetes and hypertension.
- Surakshit Matritva Aashwasan (SUMAN) to provide assured, dignified, respectful and quality healthcare for pregnant women and infants at no cost and zero tolerance for denial of services.
- Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, 1971 and MTP Rules, 2003 have been amended in 2021 to increase access and ambit of women for safe and legal abortion on various grounds.
