

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

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1409
TO BE ANSWERED ON 14th MARCH, 2017**

SAATHIYA PROJECT TO DEMYSTIFY SOCIAL TABOOS

1409. SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM:

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

- (a) whether Government has designed very sensibly the resource material to aid and assist around 1.72 lakh peer educators called Saathiya aimed to demystify several Indian social taboos;
- (b) whether the material prepared with UN Population Fund approaches many sensitive issues boldly and sensibly like same-sex attraction with gentleness and wisdom;
- (c) whether beyond the misconceptions over Section 377 declaring homosexuality a crime, the material talks frankly about safe sex, abortions and contraception, causing no moral embarrassment; and
- (d) whether Saathiya concepts deserve emulation by other social welfare establishments of Government?

**ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND
FAMILY WELFARE
(SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE)**

- (a) & (b): Yes. The materials developed by the Ministry of Health for the Peer Educator component of the Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK) are age appropriate and are based on the six thematic areas namely Nutrition, Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH), Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), Substance Misuse, Injuries, Violence and Mental Health.
- (c): There is no mention of Section 377 in the resource material. Material does however talk about adolescent physical, mental, psychological and social development. Pertinent information about healthy life style practices to help adolescent grow into a healthy and productive adult are mentioned.
- (d): The situation specific context is to be considered for its further emulation.