

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3360
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29.03.2023

GLOBAL GENDER GAP INDEX

3360 SHRI K.R. SURESH REDDY:

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the reasons for the country's poor ranking in the Global Gender Gap Index for 2022;
- (b) the measures that are being taken to improve gender parity across dimensions such as economic participation, economic opportunities, educational attainment, health and political empowerment; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefore?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) to (c) As per the Global Gender Gap Report 2022 released by the World Economic Forum on 13th July 2022, India's rank has improved on the Global Gender Gap Index in 2022 compared with 2021.

India stands at 135 out of 146 countries on the Global Gender Gap Index in 2022 with a score of 0.629 out of 1. The Global Gender Gap Report 2021 ranked India at 140 out of 156 countries with a score of 0.625.

Government of India has given utmost priority to bridge the gender gap in India, reducing disparity between men and women, improving the health of women, increasing their socio-economic status and participation in various fields. Some major initiatives taken by the Government of India for removing the gender gap in all aspects of economic and political life, health and education are as follows:

Economic Participation and Opportunities

The Government has taken several initiatives to enhance women's participation in labour force. The labour laws have specific provisions relating to women workers besides all other rights under labour laws which, inter alia, include:

- **The Maternity Benefit Act, as amended in 2017**, has enhanced paid maternity leave from 12 weeks to 26 weeks for two surviving children. It also has enabled provision of "Work from Home", after availing of the maternity benefit by the woman, where the nature of work being assigned of such nature, for such period and on such conditions mutually agreed upon by the employer and the woman employee.

- Vide **notification dated 29th January 2019 under Mines Act 1952**, the Government allowed the employment of women in the aboveground mines including opencast workings between 7 pm and 6 am and in below ground mines working between 6 am and 7 pm in technical, supervisory and managerial work where continuous presence may not be required.
- The Government has also enacted the four Labour Codes, namely the **Code on Wages 2019**; the **Industrial Relations Code 2020**; the **Code on Social Security 2020**, and the **Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code 2020**, which inter alia promote participation of women in workforce in a dignified manner through a number of provisions, some of which are as follows:
 - No discrimination on the ground of gender in matters relating to wages, recruitment and in the conditions of employment,
 - Women are entitled to be employed in all establishments for all types of work even before 6 AM and beyond 7 PM subject to their consent and other adequate safety measures.

Some major initiatives taken by the Government for improving economic empowerment of women are as follows:

- **Sakhi Niwas** (Working Women's Hostel) scheme provides safe and affordable housing for working women and thereby encourages more women to seek employment.
- **Palna**, the National Crèche Scheme, ensures that women take up gainful employment through providing a safe, secure and stimulating environment to the children.
- **Hubs for Empowerment of Women (HEW)** at National, State and District level have been approved under Mission Shakti. The support under HEW is available for guiding, linking and hand holding women to various institutional and schematic set-up for their empowerment and development including equal access to healthcare, quality education, career and vocational counselling/training, financial inclusion, entrepreneurship, backward and forward linkages, health and safety for workers, social security and digital literacy at various levels across the country.
- **Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY)** has been initiated by Government, inter alia, for facilitation of self-employment. Under PMMY, collateral free loans upto Rs. 10 lakh are extended to micro/small business enterprises and to individuals to enable them to setup or expand their business activities. Majority of the beneficiaries under this yojana are women.
- **Stand Up India** scheme promotes entrepreneurship amongst women, SC and ST categories, i.e., those sections of the population understood to be facing significant hurdles due to lack of advice/ mentorship as well as inadequate and delayed credit.
- **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana** aims to enable a large number of Indian youths including women to take up industry-relevant skill training in securing a better livelihood.

- **Deen Dayal Antyodaya National Urban Livelihoods Mission** focuses on creating opportunities for women in skill development, leading to market-based employment.
- **Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana** aims to provide housing under the name of woman also.
- **Sukanya Samridhi Yojna** - Girls have been economically empowered by opening their bank accounts under this scheme.
- **Skill Upgradation & Mahila Coir Yojna** is an exclusive training programme of MSME aimed at skill development of women artisans engaged in coir Industry.
- **Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme** is a major credit-linked subsidy programme aimed at generating self-employment opportunities through establishment of micro-enterprises in the non-farm sector.

Political Empowerment

- The country has just elected a woman as the Head of the State.
- In order to bring women in the mainstream of political leadership at the grass root level, Government has reserved 33% of the seats in Panchayati Raj Institutions for women. Capacity Building of Panchayat Stakeholders including Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) of Ministry of Panchayati Raj is conducted with a view to empowering women to participate effectively in the governance processes.

As per the latest available report of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, the share of seats held by women in the Panchayati Raj Institutions is 44.4% which indicates significant participation of rural women in the political system of the country.

Health

- **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)** ensures protection, survival and education of girl child.
- **Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0** aims to address the challenges of malnutrition in children, adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers through a strategic shift in nutrition content and delivery and by creation of a convergent eco-system to develop and promote practices that nurture health, wellness and immunity.
- **Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojna (PMMVY)** provides partial compensation for the wage loss and seeks to improve health seeking behaviour among the pregnant women and lactating mothers. The revamped PMMVY under Mission Shakti also aims to promote positive behavioural change towards girl child by providing additional cash incentives for the second child, if that is a girl child.
- Rollout of Comprehensive Primary Health Care including health promotion through **Ayushman Bharat-Health & Wellness Centers (AB-HWC)**.
- **Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (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 Ujjwala Yojana** empowers women and protects their health by providing LPG cylinder free of cost.

Education

- **Samagra Shiksha:** The Department of School Education and Literacy, M/o Education launched an integrated Centrally Sponsored Scheme for school education, i.e., “Samagra Shiksha” with effect from the FY 2018-19. The scheme subsumes the three erstwhile Centrally Sponsored Schemes viz. “Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan” (SSA), “Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan” (RMSA) and “Teacher Education”.

To ensure greater participation of girls in schools and to reduce drop-out rate of girls, various interventions have been targeted under Samagra Shiksha which include opening of schools in the neighbourhood as defined by the State, provision of free text-books & uniforms to girls up to Class VIII, provision of gender segregated toilets in all schools, teachers’ sensitization programmes to promote girls’ participation, provision for self-defence training for the girls from classes VI to XII, stipend to CwSN (Children with Special Needs) girls from class I to Class XII, construction of residential quarters for teachers in remote/hilly areas/in areas with difficult terrain, vocationalization of secondary education, special projects for equity such as life skills, awareness programmes, incinerators, sanitary pad vending machines.

- **Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram (New India Literacy Programme - NILP):** The Union of India has approved a new Centrally Sponsored Scheme, namely - Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram (New India Literacy Programme - NILP) to align with the National Education Policy 2020 and to support all the States and Union Territories in promoting literacy among non-literates across the country covering 5.00 crore non-literates under Foundational Literacy and Numeracy of the scheme with a financial outlay of Rs.1037.90 crore including Central Share of Rs.700.00 crore and State Share of Rs.337.90 crore during the implementation period from 2022-23 to 2026-27.
