

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 2452
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21.12.2022**

PROMOTION OF WOMEN IN THE FIELD OF RESEARCH

† 2452. **DR. MANOJ RAJORIA:**
SHRI SUMEDHANAND SARASWATI:
SHRIMATI RANJEETA KOLI:

Will the Minister of **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY** विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्री be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has constituted any task force for promotion of women in the field of research and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has adopted the reports submitted by the task force;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government thereon;
- (d) whether the Government is working or proposes to work on any plan to increase the participation of women in scientific researches; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND EARTH SCIENCES
(DR. JITENDRA SINGH)**

विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी तथा पृथ्वी विज्ञान मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (स्वतंत्र प्रभार)
(डॉ. जितेंद्र सिंह)

(a) **Yes Sir. The Department of Science and Technology (DST) has constituted 'National Task Force for Women in Science' in the year 2005 to recommend appropriate measures to promote and encourage women to take up scientific and technological professions. The Task Force had members representing different disciplines of science, institutions and regions of the country. The first meeting of the Task Force was held in 2006 wherein it was decided to interact and get inputs from a wide spectrum of women scientists**

and students from various locations in the country. Ten meetings of the Task Force were conducted to get inputs on the difficulties faced by the women while entering and pursuing a science career.

(b)& (c): Yes, the Task Force has submitted its report in the year 2011. The major recommendations of the Task Force were i) Fostering and supporting women resources in Science and Technology (S&T), ii) Measures to attract girls into science career and, iii) New policies, rules and initiatives. The Task Force also recommended constitution of a Standing Committee under the Ministry of Science & Technology to take proactive measures to correct any imbalances that still persisted and hindered women in science. In 2016, the DST has constituted 'Standing Committee for Promoting Women in Science' to recommend special measures to ensure growth of women in science and to design programmes specifically for fostering, utilizing and supporting women in science and thus reduce the gender gap.

In the line of recommendations made by the Task Force and the Standing Committee, the Department of Science and Technology has initiated an umbrella scheme KIRAN (Knowledge Involvement in Research Advancement through Nurturing) which is now renamed as 'Women in Science and Engineering-KIRAN (WISE-KIRAN)' to support women scientists and technologists in S&T through various programmes. The programmes under WISE-KIRAN especially, Women Scientists Scheme and Indo-US Fellowship for Women are meant to address challenges like break in career, unemployment, relocation, etc. faced by women in the realm of scientific career. In the line of second recommendation of Task Force to attract girls into science career, a new programme 'Vigyan Jyoti' has started in the year 2019-20 to motivate and encourage girls to take up Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) subjects in the higher education and career especially in the areas where women are underrepresented. Furthermore, DST has also started a new initiative 'Gender Advancement for Transforming Institutions (GATI)' in 2019-20 to make institutional reforms for gender advancement - in response to the third recommendation of the Task Force. GATI will assess and rank institutions' performance in the area of gender advancement and quantify their commitments towards gender parity.

In an attempt to enhance the participation of Women Scientists in

Biotechnology Research, the Department of Biotechnology has launched 'Biotechnology Career Advancement and Re-orientation Programme (BioCARE)' for women scientists in 2010. The programme is mainly for career development of employed/ unemployed women scientists for whom it is the first extramural research grant.

(d) & (e) Yes. There are numerous schemes which aim to attract and support women in S&T domain in the country and enhance their participation in research. The Department of Science and Technology (DST), through its 'Women Scientist Scheme (WOS)' provides career opportunities to unemployed women scientists and technologists, especially those who had a break in career, for pursuing research in frontier areas of Science and Engineering. There are three major components of WOS, namely, i) Women Scientists Scheme-A (WOS-A) for conducting research in Basic & Applied Sciences, ii) Women Scientists Scheme-B (WOS-B) for research projects that entail S&T interventions for Societal Benefit and iii) Women Scientists Scheme-C (WOS-C) that enables them to become Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) professional after one year of training with fellowship. Additionally, the DST is also providing R&D infrastructure support to women universities and women PG colleges through 'Consolidation of University Research through Innovation and Excellence (CURIE)' Programme, which has enhanced women's participation in R&D activities in these institutions.

In 2017, DST started 'Indo-US Fellowship for Women in STEMM (WISTEMM)' to provide international exposure to women scientists. Further, DST is implementing 'Vigyan Jyoti' Programme in 200 districts of the country for girl students of Class IX-XII since 2019-20. The scheme is implemented through Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti with active support of institutions of national importance like IITs, IISERs, National Labs, Universities, etc. as the Knowledge Partners (KPs). The DST has also started 'Gender Advancement for Transforming Institutions (GATI)' in 2019-20 to introduce a gender equality framework that will assess, rate and motivate S&T institutions to undertake actions to improve gender parity.

Further, 'SERB-POWER (Promoting Opportunities for Women in Exploratory Research)' scheme of Science and Engineering Research Board of DST aims to address lower participation of women scientists in research activities and to

mitigate gender disparity in science and engineering. The Department of Biotechnology (DBT) is also implementing 'Biotechnology Career Advancement and Re-orientation Programme (BioCARE)' to enhance the participation of Women Scientists in Biotechnology research. The DBT has also instituted 'Janaki Ammal National Women Bioscientist Award' to recognize the contributions of senior and young women scientists in the country who are working in the areas of Biology and Biotechnology. The Department of Health Research is also implementing Women Scientists Scheme in the area of medicine & health.
