

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3212
TO BE ANSWERED ON 13.12.2024

GLOBAL GENDER GAP INDEX

3212. SHRI GAURAV GOGOI:

Will the Minister of Women and Child Development be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the government is aware that India's global ranking on gender inequality has been falling in recent years indicating a decline in women's political, economic and educational empowerment;
- (b) if so, the details of measures taken by the Government to address the widening gender gap in the country;
- (c) whether the Government has identified any specific factors behind the falling rank in the Global Gender Gap Index, if so, the details of the areas identified which require immediate attention and intervention;
- (d) whether the Government has any measures to collect and analyze gender-disaggregated data to monitor progress and identify areas of concern, if so, the details thereof;
- (e) the manner in which the Government is evaluating the effect of gender equality initiatives; and
- (f) if so, the details of the mechanisms put in place to hold officials accountable for progress?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SAVITRI THAKUR)

(a) to (f): The Global Gender Gap Report 2024 is released by the World Economic Forum, a non-government organization. It ranked India at 129 out of 146 countries on its Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI). The Global Gender Gap Report 2023 had ranked India at 127 out of 146 countries and 135 out of 146 countries in 2022.

Government of India has given utmost priority to bridge the gender gap in India, by reducing disparity between men and women and by increasing socio-economic status of women and their participation in various fields. Some major initiatives taken by the

Government of India for bridging the gender gap in economic and political life and education are as follows:

Economic Empowerment

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.
- 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; such as 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. 20 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. 84% of the loans sized Rs 10 lakh to Rs. 1 crore were made available to women.

- **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 Awas Yojana** aims to provide housing for all, incentivising women's property ownership through encouraging sole and joint ownership of property registered under the name of woman.
- **Sukanya Samriddhi Yojna** – Families are incentivised economically to financially invest in the future of girls 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.
- **The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005** (MGNREGA) mandates that at least one third of the jobs generated under the scheme (MGNREGS) should be given to women.

Political Empowerment

- The country currently has a woman as the Head of the State.
- In order to bring women in the mainstream of political leadership at the grassroot 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. Today, out of the 31 lakh elected representatives in PRIs, 14 lakhs, or 46% are women, much higher than the constitutional mandate, and the highest absolute number of women in local governments globally.
- In 2023, Parliament of India passed the Constitution (One Hundred and Sixth Amendment) Act, 2023, "**Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam**", marking a historic milestone in its national journey to foster equitable women's representation in public life at all levels of the federal structure. This landmark legislation rotationally reserves one-third of all seats for women in the Lower House of Parliament, Lok Sabha, and in all federal State Legislative Assemblies, including Legislative Assembly of National Capital Territory of Delhi, thus

institutionalizing representation of women in politics at the highest levels of public decision-making.

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 during the implementation period from 2022-23 to 2026-27.
- Under the **Swachh Vidyalaya Mission**, it was ensured that all schools have at least one functional toilet for girls by August, 2015. As per UDISE+2021-22, 97.48% Government Schools have the facilities of separate Girls’ toilets and 98.2% Government Schools have the facilities of drinking water.
- **Vigyan Jyoti** was launched in 2020 to balance low representation of girls in different streams of Science and Technology from 9th to 12th standards benefiting over 80,000 girl students.
- **Gender Advancement for Transforming Institutions (GATI) (2020)** initiative encourages transformational changes at institutional level towards achieving Gender Equality in the STEM area. In its pilot phase, 30 scientific institutions are working under GATI pilot towards achieving Gender Equality in STEM.
- **Women Technology Parks (2017-18)** have been established as resource centers where all necessary support is made available to women on Science & Technology based training, capacity building in various technologies.

Ministries/departments under Government of India collect data, including gender disaggregated data, for monitoring the performance and implementation of their respective schemes and programmes. Gender disaggregated data is also collected by undertaking surveys and censuses by various agencies.

Under the Global Indices for Reforms and Growth (GIRG), it has been decided to leverage the monitoring of select Global Indices to drive reforms and growth in the country and improve service delivery.
