

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4361
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20TH DECEMBER, 2024**

BIOMEDICAL INNOVATIONS

4361. SHRI MUHAMMED HAMDULLAH SAYEED:

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

- (a) whether the Government through the Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) has launched the First in the World Challenge to promote pioneering biomedical innovations in the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the specific objectives of this initiative including the focus on breakthrough technologies and other interventions;
- (c) whether such initiative includes criteria to avoid funding incremental innovations instead of prioritizing transformative research proposals; and
- (d) if so, the process by which research proposals will be selected and the role of Selection Committee in evaluating high risk, high reward projects?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
(SHRI PRATAPRAO JADHAV)**

(a) to (d): Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has informed that it has launched the "First in the World Challenge" to promote groundbreaking biomedical innovations in the country. This initiative is designed to identify and fund novel, high-impact research ideas that have the potential to achieve unprecedented advancements in health sciences.

The "First in the World Challenge" aims to inspire and support researchers to conceptualize and develop pioneering solutions for complex health challenges. The specific objectives include:

1. Encouraging futuristic and transformative ideas to generate new knowledge and breakthrough health technologies.
2. Supporting the discovery and development of novel vaccines, diagnostics, drugs, therapeutics, and interventions with global relevance and wide-ranging impact.
3. Avoiding incremental innovations by funding projects with bold, high-risk ideas that hold the potential for revolutionary outcomes.

4. Establishing India as a global leader in biomedical science through "first-of-its-kind" achievements.

This initiative is inherently high risk, high reward-accepting the uncertainty of outcomes for the possibility of significant, groundbreaking success.

Only projects that demonstrate novelty and originality, and the potential to achieve "never-before" outcomes in health sciences, qualify. A Selection Committee, comprising eminent scientists, innovators, policymakers, and domain experts, is mandated to evaluate the proposals, assessing the feasibility, transformative potential, and risk-reward ratio of each submission as per the programme norms. The evaluation is done as per the programme norms available on ICMR website https://epms.icmr.org.in/extramuralstaticweb/callforproposal/FIW_30102024V2.pdf
