

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2190
TO BE ANSWERED ON 12.12.2025

PROGRAMMES FOR WOMEN

2190. SHRI KAUSHALENDRA KUMAR:

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

- (a) the details of the programmes being implemented by the Government to raise the standard of living of women in the country;
- (b) the details of the success achieved by all these programmes in raising the standard of living of women;
- (c) whether it is a fact that incidents of domestic violence, rape and character assassination against women have increased significantly in the country; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d): The Central Government gives highest priority to the safety, security and empowerment of women and girls in the country. The Government has adopted a multi-pronged approach on a life-cycle continuum basis to raise the standard of living of women in the country by addressing the barriers related to their educational, social, economic and political empowerment. As a result, India is witnessing a rapid transition from women's-development to women led development with the vision of a new India where women are the leading the way in fast paced and sustainable national development.

The greatest leap forward for women's political empowerment was taken by enactment of "the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, 2023" (Constitution One Hundred and Sixth Amendment) Act 2023, for reservation of one-third of seats for women in the House of People (Lok Sabha) and in the State Legislative Assemblies including Legislative Assembly of NCT of Delhi.

In order to encourage employment of women, the four Labour Codes - 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 have been implemented with

effect from 21st November 2025, rationalizing 29 erstwhile labour laws. As part of the reforms, the codes prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender, mandate equal pay, and open doors for women to work across all sectors of economy at all times, including underground mining and heavy machinery duties & night shifts; subject to their consent and adequate safety measures by employers.

In order to reduce drudgery and enhance the ease of living for the women particularly in the rural areas, under the Swacch Bharat Mission more than 11.8 crore toilets have been constructed, over 10.3 crore households have been provided with clean cooking gas connection in the name of women under Ujjawala Yojana and over 15 crore households have been provided with safe and potable tap water connection under Jal Jeevan Mission.

Prime Minister Awaas Yojana Gramin (PMAY-G) and Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana Urban (PMAY-U) aim to provide 'Housing for All' through provision of all weather pucca house with basic amenities to all houseless families and households living in kutchha and dilapidated house in rural areas and also to the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) including slum dwellers in the urban areas.

The schemes such as Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana have incentivized financial investments into the girls' future. Schemes like Samagra Shiksha, provision of separate toilet for girls in schools, various scholarship schemes, provision of affordable and quality sanitary napkins under Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Pariyojana, etc. have also contributed towards behavioural changes resulting in increased enrolment of girls in educational institutions.

Under Ayushman Bharat, the Government is providing free of cost treatment through over 1200 medical packages to over 55 crore citizens. Out of these, over 141 medical packages are exclusively designed for addressing medical needs of women. Seven types of screening (TB, Hypertension, Diabetes, Oral Cancer, Breast Cancer, Cervical Cancer and Cataract) are provided under the scheme, which have benefitted crores of women. There are over 150,000 Health and Wellness Centres (AB-HWCs), also referred to as Ayushman Arogya Mandir, in both urban and rural areas, which bring health care closer to the community.

Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PMJAY) is the world's largest public funded health assurance scheme, with special focus on poor and disadvantaged women. There are over 16,000 Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Kendras (PMBJK) functional across the country. The PMBJK besides providing affordable medicines and medical devices, including about 40 women specific items also have provision for sale of Sanitary Napkins named 'Suvidha Sanitary Napkins' at extremely affordable price of Rupee 1 per pad. National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), Atal Pension Yojana (APY), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) and Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) have been implemented to provide social protection through insurance coverage and pension.

To ensure economic independence of women through skill development and vocational training, the Government has also introduced Skill India Mission. Government has also set up the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendras under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana across the country. Emphasis has been laid on creating additional infrastructure both for training and apprenticeship for women. Similarly, Government implements the Pradhan Mantri Gramin

Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA) to provide digital literacy to rural population. These schemes have also helped women and girls in gaining necessary skills required for jobs and entrepreneurship.

One of the most successful schemes of the Central Government is Deendayal Antyodaya Yojna - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM), under which approximately 90 lakh women self-help groups having nearly 10 crore members are changing the rural landscape for employment/ self-employment. Government has also implemented women specific schemes such as Namo Drone Didi, Lakhpati Didi, Bank Sakhi, Bima Sakhi, to economically empower women particularly in rural areas.

Schemes such as MUDRA Yojna, Stand-Up India, Start-up India, Pradhan Mantri Street Vendors AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi), Credit Guarantee Fund Scheme for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGMSE), Pradhan Mantri Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) etc provide employment/ self-employment opportunities and credit facilities. Majority of the beneficiaries under these schemes are women.

The Government of India, through the Public Procurement Policy, has mandated that all Central Ministries/ Departments/ Public Sector Enterprises procure at least 3% of their annual procurement from women-owned Micro and Small Enterprises.

India is promoting greater roles for girls in the armed forces. The Government has also made enabling provisions for allowing women's participation in non-conventional sectors such as fighter pilots in Indian Air Force, Commandos, Central Police Forces, admissions in Sainik Schools, entry of Girls in NDA etc.

The National Agriculture Market or eNAM is an online trading platform for agricultural commodities, scheme "Kisan Call Centres" answering farmers' queries on a telephone call in their own dialect, mobile applications like KisanSuvidha, Agri Market, National Crop Insurance Portal, UMANG (Unified Mobile Application for New-Age Governance). These digital innovations are helping women overcome or compensate the barriers they face in accessing markets. Farmers' welfare schemes like Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi, Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maan Dhan Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana, Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, etc. continue to nurture an enabling environment for women farmers. Through the initiatives Government is improving farm women's access to productive resources including agricultural extension services thereby bringing overall improvement in the lives of rural women.

For safety and security of women and girls, Government has taken several steps, one of which is to modernize and improve the criminal justice system. The Government has enacted Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) which came into effect from 1st July, 2024. In BNS 2023, the offences against women and children earlier scattered in Indian Penal Code, 1860 have been brought together and consolidated under Chapter-V. It has introduced new provisions to strengthen laws related to women and children, specifically, Section 111 related to "organized crime", Section 69 related to sexual intercourse on false promise of marriage, employment,

promotion or by suppressing the identity, Section 95 related to hiring, employing or engaging a child to commit an offence etc. In respect of the crimes related to buying a child for the purposes of prostitution (Section 99), gang rape (Section 70) and exploitation of a trafficked person (Section 144), punishment has been increased. Further, in respect of certain severe crimes against women like buying child for the purposes of prostitution (section 99 of BNS), organised crime (Section 111), kidnapping or maiming a child for purpose of begging (Section 139), mandatory minimum punishments have been prescribed. Also, Sections 75 and 79 of BNS 2023 provide additional legal protections against harassment, covering actions like unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, sexually coloured remarks and also word, gesture or act intended to insult modesty of a woman. A woman facing sexual harassment at workplace has an option to file a complaint under these provisions.

The BNSS takes a victim-centric approach, safeguarding victims' rights throughout the legal process. It introduces e-FIR and zero FIR provisions to facilitate swift registration of complaints for serious offenses against women, ensuring timely police action. Additionally, provisions under section 398 BNSS which introduce Witness Protection Schemes, acknowledging the critical need to shield witnesses from threats and intimidation and Section 2(1)(d) of BSA which now enables electronic or digital record on emails, documents on computers, laptop or smartphone, messages and voice mail messages stored on digital devices under definition of documents can also be referred for protection of women from harassment at workplace.

With a view to ensure safety of women at workplace, the Ministry of Women and Child Development has put in place an electronic platform "SHe-Box portal" duly encompassing various provisions of 'the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013' (SH Act). This portal provides a publicly available centralised repository of information related to Internal Committees (ICs) and Local Committees (LCs) formed across the country, whether in government or private sector. It also provides a common platform to file complaints and track the status of such complaints. The portal includes a feature where complaints registered on it will be automatically forwarded to the IC/ LC of the workplaces concerned within the Central Ministries/ Departments, States/ UTs and in Private sector. The portal provides for designating a nodal officer for every workplace who is required to ensure updation of data/ information on a regular basis for real time monitoring of complaints. The portal is available in 22 languages for facilitating its access to the working women in remote and far flung areas.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development implements an umbrella scheme, "Mission Shakti" for safety, security and empowerment of women. Under the scheme, the Government has set up One Stop Centres across the country to provide integrated help and support to women facing violence or those in distress, a 24x7 women helpline with telephonic short code 181 which, besides providing emergency and non-emergency support to the needy women by connecting them with appropriate authorities, also provide information related to various government schemes, policies and programmes to enable them to avail the benefits. The Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) component of the scheme, is for preventing gender biased sex-selection and also focuses on awareness generation on gender equality and discouraging child

marriage. The BBBP has played a pivotal role in the psyche of citizens towards valuing the girl child. The component of Shakti Sadan provides help and support to women in distress, destitute and victims of unfortunate circumstances including the victims of trafficking. The Sakhi Niwas component is for providing safe and affordable accommodation with childcare facilities to the working women and women and girls pursuing higher education and training for employment and self-employment. The Palna component provides childcare facilities in the Anganwadi – cum-crèches to promote women’s participation in the workforce. The Hubs for Empowerment of Women at the national, state and district levels address the issue of information asymmetry with regard to government schemes pertaining to women in rural and urban areas. Under the Pradhan Mantri Mantru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), cash benefits through direct benefit transfer (DBT) mode are provided to pregnant women and lactating mothers.

Recognizing language as a fundamental force for positive cultural change, striving to cultivate an environment where diverse perspectives are acknowledged, valued, and empowered, Government launched a Guide on Gender-Inclusive Communication, in November 2023, aimed at changing entrenched linguistic norms to promote and provide practical insights and strategies to overcome the deeply rooted biases present in language.

Together, these measures demonstrate a comprehensive approach to women’s empowerment, which also extends to increasing representation of women in non-traditional sectors such as Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), through Women Scientist Scheme, Vigyan Jyoti scheme, Overseas Fellowship Scheme etc.
