

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2372
TO BE ANSWERED ON 13TH FEBRUARY, 2026**

CASES OF AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

†2372. **SHRI MURARI LAL MEENA:**

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the continuous increase in case of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) among children in the country, particularly in Rajasthan and Dausa Parliamentary Constituency during the last three years and if so, the details thereof, year-wise;
- (b) the details of the programmes/schemes being run by the Government for early diagnosis and screening of autism in children;
- (c) whether adequate arrangements exist for special treatment, counselling, therapy and specialist doctors for children suffering from autism in Government hospitals and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard;
- (e) whether children suffering from autism are being given appointment dates extending to three years or above for conducting tests and if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the action plan of the Government to expand health facilities and increase awareness about autism across the country, particularly in Rajasthan?

**ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND
FAMILY WELFARE
(SH. PRATAPRAO JADHAV)**

(a) to (f) As per the National Mental Health Survey, 2016 conducted by the Government through National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Bangalore in 12 States of the country, the prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorder in the age group of 13-17 years was 1.6%.

Under Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) Mobile Health Teams (MHT) conduct health screening of children from birth to 18 years for the four D's: Defects at birth, Diseases, Deficiencies, and Development delays at Anganwadi and Schools. Autism is one of the health conditions included under Developmental Delays.

Children identified are provided with early intervention services and follow-up care at District Early Intervention Centers (DEIC). DEICs offer a multitude of services by providing developmentally supportive care at the district level for follow-up management of referred and treated cases.

The National Health Mission (NHM) supports the strengthening of health infrastructure and the availability of adequate human resources in healthcare facilities to enhance the accessibility, affordability, and quality of healthcare services. Its focus is particularly on serving poor and vulnerable populations in urban, rural, tribal, and hilly areas, including Rajasthan and the Dausa Parliamentary Constituency. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare provides technical and financial assistance to States and Union Territories to further strengthen the public healthcare system, especially in rural areas.

As per information provided by National Trust for the welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation (Intellectual Disability) and Multiple Disabilities, various schemes and programmes are implemented for the welfare and rehabilitation of the persons with disabilities covered under the National Trust Act, including Autism in the country. Under the National Trust Act, there is a provision for appointment of Legal Guardians for these persons with disabilities who need it, through Local Level Committee (LLC) constituted at District Level under Chairmanship of District Magistrate/ District Collector. The National Trust is also implementing schemes namely- Disha (Early Intervention and School Readiness) scheme, Vikaas (Day Care) scheme, Disha-cum-Vikaas (Day Care) scheme, Samarth (Respite Care) scheme, Gharaunda (Group Home for Adults) scheme, Samarth-cum-Gharaunda (Residential) scheme and Niramaya - Health Insurance scheme.

The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) runs 28 Cross Disability Early Intervention Centers (CDEIC) under National Institutes/Composite Regional Centers (CRC) which also cater to ASD. Under CDEIC, the screening and identification are undertaken by qualified professionals including Clinical/Rehabilitation Psychologists, Pediatricians, Audiologists & Speech Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists as per approved guidelines. CDEICs are rehabilitative and intervention-oriented centres and function in coordination with existing health facilities.

The DEPwD also implements the Scheme of 'Assistance to Persons with Disabilities for Purchase/Fitting of Aids and Appliances (ADIP)' under which funds are released to various Implementing Agencies to assist the eligible persons with disabilities including persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder in procuring durable, sophisticated and scientifically manufactured, modern, standard aids and appliances that can promote their physical, social and psychological rehabilitation by reducing the effects of disabilities and enhancing their economic potential throughout the country. The Department provides various kinds of assistive devices as per the biomechanical deficiency of the beneficiary like Wheelchair, Teaching and Learning Material kits etc to support the rehabilitation of the person with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

The Ministry of Education under Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Samagra Shiksha has dedicated inclusive education component for the education of Children with Special Needs (CwSN) with one or more disabilities. Special Educators are appointed in Schools as per the minimum requirements laid down by Rehabilitation Council of India. Workshops and Training programs are organized for teachers to sensitize them towards the needs of diverse learners. Teachers are trained to adopt inclusive teaching methods and create individualized education plans (IEPs) for students with special needs. Various examination accommodations are provided for students with disabilities, such as extra time, use of a scribe or option to use computer. The Board provides relaxations in all the benchmark disabilities in the Board examinations (classes X and XII) (RPWD Act-2016).
