

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
LOK SABHA  
STARRED QUESTION No.368  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 13/12/2019**

**WOMEN IN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH**

†\*368. SHRI RAVI KISHAN:  
SHRI CHANDRA PRAKASH JOSHI:

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

- (a) whether any task force has been constituted for the promotion of women talent in scientific research;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the status thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has accepted the reports submitted by the said task force for the purpose;
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the action taken by the Government thereon;
- (e) whether the Government proposes to include more women talent in scientific research in the country; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof along with the action taken in this regard?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE; MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY; AND MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES  
(DR. HARSH VARDHAN)**

स्वास्थ्य और परिवार कल्याण मंत्री; विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्री; और पृथ्वी विज्ञान मंत्री  
डॉ. हर्ष वर्धन

(a) to (f): A statement is laid on the Table of House.

**STATEMENT AS REFERRED IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (f) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.368 FOR 13/12/2019 REGARDING WOMEN IN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH**

**(a) Yes Sir.**

**(b) 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 with 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 women while entering and pursuing a science career.**

**(c) & (d): 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 line with 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) to support women scientists and technologists in S&T through various programmes namely, Women Scientists Scheme, Indo-US Fellowship for Women, Mobility Scheme and so on. These programmes address challenges like break in career, unemployment, relocation, etc. faced by women in the realm of scientific career and encourage them to sustain their career. In line with other recommendation of Task Force to attract girls into science career, the Women Scientists Scheme (WOS) of DST provides career opportunity to girls. In addition to WOS, a new scheme 'Vigyan Jyoti' has started in the year 2019 to motivate and empower girls to take up Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) subjects in the higher education especially in underrepresented areas of S&T for girls in the top ranking institutions. Furthermore, DST has also started a new initiative for gender advancement in S&T Institutions in 2019-20 to make institutional reforms for gender advancement - in response to the third recommendation of the Task Force. This will assess and**

rank institutions' performance in the area of gender advancement and quantify their commitments towards gender parity. This will also encourage institutions to take proactive and corrective measures to promote more women into scientific research.

(e) & (f): 1. Yes. There are numerous schemes which aim to attract and support women talent in scientific research in the country. 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. Around 2200 women scientists have been supported under the three components of WOS in last five years including the current year. Additionally, the DST is also providing R&D infrastructure support to women universities through 'Consolidation of University Research through Innovation and Excellence in Women Universities (CURIE)' Programme, which has enhanced women's participation in R&D activities in these universities.

2. In 2016, DST launched 'Mobility Scheme' to support women scientists working in government institutions and desire to relocate to different location due to personal or family reasons. The scheme provides them upto 5 years project grant at the new institution of her choice to sustain career. To provide international exposure to women scientists, DST started 'Indo-US Fellowship for Women in STEMM (WISTEMM)' in 2017. Forty (40) women scientists have received fellowship under WISTEMM in two batches. Further, DST has started 'Vigyan Jyoti' Scheme in 50 districts of the country for girl students of Class XI during 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).

3. The DST has also started a new initiative in area of gender advancement in S & T institutions 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. Furthermore, KIRAN Scheme also has a capacity building programs under 'National Program for Training of Women Scientists & Technologists working in Government Sector' to provide short term training in the fields of R&D, entrepreneurship, managerial skills and leadership. During the last five years 962 women scientists have received training under the programme.

4. The Department of Biotechnology (DBT) is also implementing since 2010 a programme called 'Biotechnology Career Advancement and Re-orientation Programme (BioCARE)' to enhance the participation of Women Scientists in Biotechnology research. This programme is mainly for career development of employed/unemployed women scientists for whom it is the first extramural research grant. Since the inception, 339 women scientists have been supported under this programme. The DBT has 'National Women Bioscientist Award' to recognize outstanding research contributions of women scientists below 45 years of age. Sixty three (63) women scientists have received this Award. The Science & Engineering Research Board (SERB) under the DST has launched "SERB Women Excellence Award" to reward young women scientists (below age 40) who have excelled in science and have received recognition from any of the National Science Academies in India. Since the inception, 57 women scientists have received this Award. The DST has instituted an award 'National Award for Women's Development through Applications of Science & Technology' to recognize the contributions of individuals or institutions, working at the grass root level for women's development through application of Science & Technology. Further, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has created supernumerary seats for girls in Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) to ensure 14% participation of girls. This new initiative will include more women talent in S&T and reduce the existing gender gap.

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