

Regarding the need to take steps for mental health awareness in the country

DR. SHARMILA SARKAR (BARDHAMAN PURBA): Thank you very much, Madam, for giving me the opportunity to speak on a very important yet neglected issue, which is mental health awareness.

The prevalence of mental health disorders in India has surged, especially after COVID-19, affecting about 15 per cent of the population. Individuals with mental health issues face considerable personal distress, hindering their ability to maintain relationships, pursue education, and engage socially. These challenges impact communities and the nation by reducing productivity through absenteeism and diminished work efficiency. Ultimately, this hinders the economic growth of the nation.

Socially, the stigma and discrimination surrounding mental health compromise individuals' ability to seek help, leading to delays in diagnosis and treatment, and perpetuating their suffering. This significant mental health burden ultimately affects the nation's growth. What steps has the Government taken to increase awareness?