

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4751

ANSWERED ON:27.04.2005

DEATHS DUE TO UNSAFE ABORTIONS

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

- (a) whether Government is aware that 20 thousand women die every year in the country due to unsafe abortions and this number is constantly on the rise;
- (b) if so, whether the Government proposes to take any concrete measures to check this ;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the time by which these measures will be taken ; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE(SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

(a) According to the Sample Registration System of the Registrar General of India for 1998, the Maternal Mortality Rate in the country is 407 per 1,00,000 live births and unsafe abortions account for about 8.9% of all maternal deaths in the country. Reliable estimates on the extent of unsafe abortions are not available. However, based on the above data of Registrar General of India about 12,100 maternal deaths take place due to unsafe abortion.

(b) to (e) Under the ongoing Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) Programme which has been under implementation in all States & UTs since 1997, efforts are being made to increase availability and accessibility to safe abortion services by providing MTP equipment and undertaking need-based training to assist states in making MTP facilities available at Primary Health Center level. Funds are also being provided to the states for hiring services of private doctors trained in MTP techniques for visiting Primary Health Centers/Community Health Centers periodically. Information, education and communication and counseling services are also provided. These efforts will continue in the 2nd Phase of Reproductive and Child Health Programme during April 2005-2010

To cut down the delays in approval of private MTP Clinics, the MTP Act - 1971, has been amended as recently as December 2002, wherein the authority to approve clinics has been decentralized to the districts.

Manual Vacuum Aspiration (MVA), a simple and safe technique for termination of early pregnancy at PHC level has been made part of the programme. A Pilot Project on MVA technique is now being implemented in sixteen districts of eight selected states to study the feasibility for expanding the same to the rest of the country.

On the recommendation of ICMR, Drug Controller of India has permitted the use of Oral Abortion Pills for termination of early pregnancies with the provision that these pills will be sold only on prescription of an expert (Gynaecologist) and used in hospitals / institutions with backup facilities for blood transfusion and MTP services.

Contraceptive services are being provided as part of the Family Welfare Programme free of cost to people in the reproductive age group.