

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1944
ANSWERED ON:21.07.2004
DECREASING FEMALE POPULATION
Dubey Shri Chandra Shekhar

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

- (a) whether the female population in comparison to male has continuously been decreasing due to the female foeticide;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has conducted any survey in this regard; and
- (c) if so, the measures taken to check it?

Answer

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

(a) Sex ratio (number of females per 1000 males) of the country has been declining since 1901. It declined from 972 in 1901 to 927 in 1991. However, the sex ratio has since improved to 933 as per 2001 Census.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) In order to contain the practice of female foeticide, which is one of the main reasons for fall in sex ratio adverse to female population the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994 was brought in to operation from 1.1.1996. The said Act has since been amended to make it more stringent. The Implementation of the Act rest with the States and Union Territories through the Appropriate Authorities appointed under the Act at State, district as well at sub-district levels. They have been requested to ensure wide publicity to the provisions of the Act and Rules and to effectively implement the same in letter and spirit.

It is, nevertheless, recognized that mere legislation is not enough to deal with this problem that has roots in social behavior and prejudices. Various activities have been undertaken to create awareness against the practice of pre-natal determination of sex and female foeticide through Radio, Television, and print media units. Workshops and seminars are also been organized through Voluntary Organizations at State/regional/district/ block levels to create awareness against this social evil. Cooperation has also been sought from religious leaders, as well as medical fraternity to curb this practice.

Recently, the Government of India has launched 'Save the Girl Child Campaign' with a view to lessen son preference by highlighting achievements of young girls.