

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1283
ANSWERED ON:05.03.2013
CONFERENCE ON AUTISM
Mitra Shri Somendra Nath

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the South Asian Autism Network Conference was held in Delhi recently;
- (b) if so, the details and the outcome thereof; and
- (c) the response of the participating countries including India on the decision taken in the conference?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI P. BALRAM NAIK)

(a) to (c) Yes, Sir. A conference on the proposal to constitute a South Asian Autism Network (SAAN) was held in New Delhi on 11th February, 2013. The conference was held as a follow up to declaration adopted in the International Conference on Autism, Spectrum Disorder and Developmental Disabilities held in Dhaka in July, 2011 and the resolution on Autism and other Developmental Disabilities adopted by the WHO-South East Asia Region (WHO-SEAR) Member States during the 65th Regional Committee Meeting held in Yogyakarta, Jakarta, Indonesia in September, 2012.

The delegates from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Myanmar, Thailand, Timor Leste & Sri Lanka and representatives of the concerned Central Ministries of the Government of India, World Health Organization, Heads of several Central Government Institutes/ Hospitals, Specialists in the field of Paediatrics and Child Psychiatry and representatives of NGOs working in the field of Autism Spectrum Disorders also participated in the conference.

The conference was marked with presentation of country statements by the Ministers of Health of South Asian Countries and discussions on `State of Autism - Update on the latest in Autism Science and Early Detection`, `State of Art Early Intervention Strategies in Autism` and `Best practices in public health for Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)`. During the conference the SAAN Charter was unanimously adopted by all network member States. Statement indicating details of the Charter is at Annexure.-I.

The conference concluded with the unanimous adoption of Delhi Declaration Statement indicating details` of the Declaration is at Annexure II.