

'REPLACEMENT LEVEL FERTILITY ACHIEVED'

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Rights & Welfare of Women - Schemes & their Performance, Mechanisms, Laws Institutions and Bodies

India has achieved replacement level fertility, with 31 States and Union Territories reaching a Total Fertility Rate (an average number of children per woman) of 2.1 or less, Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Bharati Pravin Pawar said on Wednesday.

Speaking at the National Family Planning Summit 2022, the Union Minister said between 2012 and 2020, India added over 1.5 crore users for modern contraceptives, thereby increasing their use substantially.

She said government data showed an overall positive shift towards spacing methods, which would be instrumental in impacting positively maternal and infant mortality and morbidity.

Dr. Bharati emphasised that Mission Parivar Vikas (MPV) 2016 had given a further impetus to the National Family Planning Programme.

Under the scheme, innovative strategies such as the distribution of 'Nayi Pehel' kits, 'Saas Bahu Sammelan', and 'Saarthi' vans are helping in reaching out to the community and initiating dialogues on family planning and healthy birth spacing, and the importance of small families. "More than 17 lakh 'Nayi Pehel' kits have been distributed to newly weds, over seven lakh 'Saas Bahu Sammelans' conducted, and over 32 lakh clients had been counselled through 'Saarthi' vans since inception," she said.

Dr. Bharati introduced the National Family Planning helpline manual.

Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan stated that the Family Planning Programme in India was now over seven decades old, and in this period, India had witnessed a paradigm shift from the concept of population control to population stabilisation to interventions being embedded toward ensuring harmony of continuum care.

'Focus on demand side'

"Although India has achieved replacement level fertility, there is still a significant population in the reproductive age group who must remain at the centre of our intervention efforts. India's focus has traditionally been on the supply side, the providers and delivery systems but now it's time to focus on the demand side which includes family, community and society. Significant change is possible with this focus, instead of an incremental change," Mr. Bhushan noted.

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