

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE**

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1069
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20TH SEPTEMBER, 2020**

PANDEMIC RELATED RISE IN MENTAL ILLNESS CASES

1069 SHRI SANJAY RAUT:

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

- (a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards any recent survey by the Indian Psychiatry Society (IPS) in which they found that the number of mental illness cases had increased by 20 per cent since the lockdown, and that at least one in five Indians were affected
- (b) if so, details thereof and Government's response thereto
- (c) whether the IPS has warned that loss of livelihood and increasing levels of economic hardship and isolation amid the pandemic could trigger a new mental health crisis in India and may substantially increase the risk of suicide in the country and
- (d) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

**ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND
FAMILY WELFARE
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)**

- (a) to (d): The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has not received any such survey report from the Indian Psychiatric Society. However, realizing the impact that COVID-19 may have on the mental health of the people, the Government has taken a number of initiatives to provide psychosocial support during COVID-19. These initiatives include:
- (i) Setting up of a 24/7 helpline to provide psychosocial support, by mental health professionals, to the entire affected population, divided into different target groups viz children, adult, elderly, women and healthcare workers.
 - (ii) Issuance of guidelines/ advisories on management of mental health issues, catering to different segments of the society.
 - (iii) Advocacy through various media platforms in the form of creative and audio-visual materials on managing stress and anxiety, and promoting an environment of support and care for all.
 - (iv) Issuance of detailed guidelines by the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Bengaluru- "Mental Health in the times of COVID-19 Pandemic - Guidance for General Medical and Specialized Mental Health Care Settings".

- (v) All the guidelines, advisories and advocacy material can be accessed on Ministry of Health and Family Welfare website under “Behavioural Health – Psychosocial helpline” (<https://www.mohfw.gov.in/>).
- (vi) Online capacity building of health workers by NIMHANS in providing psychosocial support and training through (iGOT)-Diksha platform.