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Govt emphasises on immunisation through IMI 2.0

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The health of children and pregnant women continues to be the top most priority of the Government: Dr. Harsh Vardhan



Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare inaugurated a special community outreach programme on Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI 2.0) at Shastri Park, Delhi, on 24 Feb, through a video message. The three-day event is being organised by Song & Drama Division of Bureau of Outreach & Communication (BOC), under Ministry of Information & Broadcasting.

A video message of Dr Harsh Vardhan was shared with the participants in which he emphasised the importance of immunisation of children and pregnant women as part of the IMI 2.0 and the high priority being accorded by Government of India for achieving Full Immunisation Coverage (FIC) targets.

He said that under the leadership of the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, IMI was launched from Vadnagar in 2017 and immunization has been given a strong push in the Gram Swaraj Abhiyaan and Extended Gram Swaraj Abhiyaan. A more expansive version, IMI 2.0, is being carried out in 272districts across 27 States/UTs and 650 blocks of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh across 109 districts since December 2019, he added.

"While we have targets to achieve 90% immunisation coverage target, we should all aim to ensure that not even one child is deprived of a vaccine against vaccine preventable diseases. Especially when we have a basket of vaccines as part of our routine Universal Immunisation Program (UIP)", Dr Harsh Vardhan said in his video message. “With the launch of Intensified Mission Indradhanush 2.0, India has the opportunity to achieve further reductions in deaths among children under five years of age, and achieve the Sustainable Development Goal of ending preventable child deaths by 2030”.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan also added that currently we are providing vaccines against 12 vaccines preventable diseases, nationally against 10 diseases (Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Polio, Measles, Rubella, severe form of Childhood Tuberculosis, Rotavirus diarrhea, Hepatitis B and Meningitis & Pneumonia caused by Hemophilus Influenza type Band) and sub-nationally against two diseases (Pneumococcal Pneumonia and Japanese Encephalitis); of which Pneumococcal Conjugate vaccine is in the process of expansion while JE vaccine is provided only in the endemic districts.

The Union Health Minister stated the Government has made immunization a people's and a social movement. He made a strong appeal to all those present in the audience and the countrymen and women to own the programme in order to make all efforts to reduce maternal and child mortality. He also thanked the efforts put on by Bureau of Outreach & Communications who are relentlessly contributing through their Regional Outreach Bureaux (ROB) across the States/UTs in enhancing the awareness and informing people about the importance of Immunisation.

He also elaborated that we can take lessons from our immense experience of the polio campaign where in addition to wholehearted efforts from the states, various non-state partners and stakeholders had joined hands to achieve set targets. "Let us learn from the best practices of the States, their experience of earlier rounds of Mission Indradhanush (MI) and share this knowledge for achieving last mile goals during IMI 2.0 rounds.” he emphasised.

He also informed that coverage evaluation survey conducted in 190 IMI districts of the country shows an overall Full Immunization Coverage (FIC) increase by 18.5 percentage points (as compared to NFHS 4 data) in190 districts, whichis testimony of the highest level of political commitment. He further added that three rounds of IMI 2.0 have already been conducted from December 2019 and February 2020, wherein 29.74 lakh children and 5.90 lakh pregnant women have been vaccinated. One more round of IMI 2.0 is planned to be conducted in March 2020.