

## Working on Mission Immunization 2020 says health secretary

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"No child should die because of non immunization," opined Mr Lov Verma at the PEDICON 2015, an annual event organized by the Indian Academy of Pediatrics (IAP) at New Delhi. He also appreciated the efforts of IAP and mentioned that these were in sync with his ministry's initiatives.

"In 2009, we were having 50 percent cases of polio but we eradicated it shortly as it was a sort of public movement. Current mortality rate per lakh of child births is 167. There has been sharp decline due to government schemes. Earlier in 1999, it was 590 per lakh births. Right interventions have helped a lot in the sharp decline and increased success in achieving goals," said Mr Verma at the 52nd national conference of IAP.

There are close to 23,000 members of IAP in India. In its 52nd year of existence, the association has put the task of ensuring accountability and affordability in healthcare as a primary responsibility. It is working on the action plan with 3 point agenda including increasing partnerships, reducing infant mortality by 20 percent and building capacity by 2020.

Talking about the Mission 2020, Mr Verma said, "The Mission 2020 is laudable. New approach to interlink the departments will help in strengthening the efforts. Our department had launched Mission Indradanush Programme on December 25, 2014 which is an alternate programme to vaccinate left over children. We shall start special campaigns by June, 2015 to increase immunization coverage. It will include training of health workers."