

PRISM

A PPF Dispatch

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This issue of Policy Perspective Foundation's monthly newsletter - PRISM includes a special update on the COVID 19 or CORONA VIRUS pandemic situation in the South Asian Region along with the neighbourhood wrap.

The newsletter also includes an event report of a National Workshop on Highway Accidents & Emergency Medical Management that was organized by the PPF in association with the Ministries of Health & Family Welfare and of Road, Transport & Highways.

There are commentaries on India and Turkey's bilateral relations and the condition of working women in India

Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) in India and its neighbourhood

Most South Asian countries have locked their borders down as the number of confirmed coronavirus cases keep rising, particularly in Pakistan and India. The effort is to halt the movement of the virus from phase two of the virus outbreak, when transmission is traced to people who have arrived from foreign countries, to phase three, when the disease is spreading more widely among communities.

On March 15, 2020 a video conference of the eight-nation regional grouping South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) which includes Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bhutan, the Maldives, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and India was held on

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's initiative as he sought to rally the region's countries together to fight the coronavirus pandemic sweeping through the world. He had taken to Twitter to propose that the leadership of SAARC nations chalk out a strong strategy to fight Coronavirus. During the video conference, India pledged a contribution of \$10 million towards a 'SAARC Covid-19 Emergency Fund.'

PM Modi said that "COVID-19 has recently been classified by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as a pandemic. So far, our SAARC region has listed fewer than 150 cases but we need to remain vigilant. SAARC region is home to nearly 1/5 of all humanity. It is densely populated." "As developing nations, all of us have significant challenges in terms of access to health care



facilities. Our people-to-people ties are ancient and our society deeply interconnected. We must all prepare, act and succeed together." He announced, *"I propose we create a COVID-19 Emergency Fund. This could be based on voluntary contributions from all of us. India can start with an initial offer of 10 million US dollars for this fund."*

Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan did not participate in the SAARC leaders video conference. Pakistan was represented by Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Health Dr Zafar Mirza.

Bangladesh has announced that it will contribute 1.5 million dollars to the proposed Corona emergency fund for the prevention and combat of COVID-19 pandemic in the SAARC region. Nepal and Afghanistan have pledged 1 million dollar each while Maldives will contribute 2 lakh dollars and Bhutan 1 lakh dollar to the emergency fund. Sri Lanka has pledged 5 million dollars for the emergency fund.

The SAARC Disaster Management Centre has launched a website for information related to the COVID-19 pandemic in the region. The website shows the number of corona virus cases in the member states while updating the numbers regularly. According to the website is www.covid19-sdmc.org the Member States have reported 10,320 cases and a total of 248 deaths in the region.

India arranged the first consignment of medical supplies through the SAARC COVID-19 Emergency Fund facility for Royal Government of Bhutan. A video conference of health professionals representing all SAARC

countries at the level of Director General of Health Services (DGHS) was held on 26 March 2020.

SAARC region comprises of over 21% of the world's population which remains vulnerable towards COVID-19. The SAARC initiative of coming together in search of a joint strategy to control the virus is in itself significant for the region that is described as the least integrated region and one beset by deep political rivalries.

As of April 8, 2020 Pakistan, has reported 4072 cases of COVID 19 cases. Bangladesh, has reported 164 cases with fatalities (April 08, 2020). On March 28 Sri Lanka registered its first death due to COVID-19. The Pakistan army has started to move coronavirus positive patients from Punjab province to Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Gilgit Baltistan, where special quarantine centres have been set-up in Mirpur and other major cities

Nepal's government declared a countrywide lockdown with people barred from leaving their homes except to buy medicine or groceries. In Sri Lanka, which has reported 185 cases with 9 deaths, the government has extended a nationwide curfew to promote social distancing and Sri Lankan government has accepted a \$500 million loan from China for its public health efforts. Even in Afghanistan, where the Taliban are skeptical of global health organizations, a spokesman for the militant group confirmed that it was ready to cooperate with World Health Organization.

According to the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of India, as on April 08, 2020 there are 5194 cases in India with 149 fatalities. To stem the tide, the Government of India has



put in place strict travel regulations and domestic lockdown. Earlier in a televised address to the nation, on March 24 Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a strict 21 day nationwide lockdown. "If we are not able to manage the next 21 days, we will be pushed back by 21 years," he warned. "For 21 days, forget what it means to step outside your home."

Of about 4,400 COVID-19 positive cases in India, nearly a third are related to the Tablighi Jamaat religious gathering at the movement's headquarters or Markaz in New Delhi's Nizamuddin area.

State governments launched a massive search to identify all those who had visited the Markaz and people they came into contact with later.

Neighbourhood Wrap

The United States has started withdrawing troops from Afghanistan as part of the peace deal signed by the US and the Taliban in Doha on February 29, 2020. Under the terms of the deal all foreign forces will quit Afghanistan within 14 months provided the Taliban stick to their security commitments. US troops have started leaving one base in Lashkar Gah, the capital of Helmand province in the south, and another base in Herat in the west. US special envoy for Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad took to Twitter to announce that on March 22, 2020 the Afghan government and the Taliban held their first technical talks on arranging possible prisoner exchanges, via Skype video conferencing. Differences had arisen when the Afghan government issued a decree saying

that the government would release 1,500 captives and the rest later whereas the Taliban has been insistent that the prisoners should be released as a trust-building measure before intra-Afghan talks.

Talks between Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and his rival, Abdullah Abdullah failed despite efforts by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. The US has announced a \$1 billion cut in its aid to Afghanistan.

Bangladesh government's plans to hold a grand celebration on 17 March to mark the beginning of the 'Mujib Barsho', the yearlong centenary celebration of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the founder of Bangladesh were postponed due to the novel Coronavirus pandemic situation. Dhaka withdrew invitations to all world leaders who were supposed to attend the event over fears of spread of the virus. Prime Minister Narendra Modi conveyed his greetings to Bangladesh on the occasion of 'Mujib Barsha' via a video message. He said that the country is setting new benchmarks in economy and social indices, "We are all witnessing how making terror and violence weapons of politics and diplomacy, destroys a society and a nation. The world is also watching where the supporters of terror and violence are currently placed and in what state they are, while Bangladesh is scaling new heights."

On March 10, 2020 a two-judge bench of Dhaka High Court pronounced that 'Joy Bangla' will be the national slogan of Bangladesh. The Court has directed authorities to take necessary steps so that all the people holding constitutional posts and state officials use 'Joy Bangla' after their speeches on national days

and other appropriate occasions. 'Joy Bangla' was the main slogan during the liberation war of Bangladesh fought against Pakistan in 1971. The first President of Bangladesh Sheikh Mujibur Rahman also used 'Joy Bangla' in his speeches and specially during his historic 7th March speech in 1971 declaring the goal of independence for Bangladesh.

On March 23 Myanmar confirmed its first cases of coronavirus after weeks of increasing skepticism over the under-developed South-east Asian nation's claims to be free of the disease.

Myanmar's Ministry of Health and Sports has warned that the country is at very high risk of a "major outbreak" of COVID-19 as large numbers of migrant workers return from Thailand.

Myanmar has officially designated an armed ethnic rebel group known as the Arakan Army a terrorist organization. The Arakan Army says it is seeking self-determination. It has engaged in increasingly fierce combat with government forces since late 2018. An official designation as a terrorist group which criminalizes contact with them.

Facebook is in talks to buy a stake in India's Reliance Jio telecommunications firm, a deal that would be worth several billion dollars. Jio, which has captured a large cellular market share in India by slashing costs, is valued at more than \$60 billion. India is one of Facebook's most important markets, with more than 400 million users of services such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram.

Event Report

National Workshop on Highway Accidents & Emergency Medical Management

India International Centre, New Delhi; 28th Feb, 2020



The United Nation's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development had set an ambitious target of reducing the global number of deaths and injuries from road traffic crashes to half by 2020. However, according to a recent study report, while deaths due to road accidents increased by 8.1% globally during 1990-2017, it increased by 58.7% during this period in India. According to a report of World Bank 'India's roads are among the most dangerous in the world. Every year they claim the lives of about 1,50,000 people leaving more than five times their number injured or maimed for life'. With the plan of the Govt of India to infuse \$15 trillion in the highway sector in next 5 years, fatalities in highway accidents in India may increase significantly unless effective fatality resilient policy and measures are integrated in the highway construction right from the planning stage.

In this context, a one-day 'National Workshop on Highway Accidents & Emergency Medical Management' was organised at the India



International Centre, New Delhi on 28th Feb, 2020 by the Policy Perspectives Foundation (PPF) in association with Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and Ministry of Road, Transport & Highways.

In his inaugural address the Chief Guest Shri Rajiv Pratap Rudy (MP, Lok Sabha) said that road safety is a matter of national priority as it affects people of all walks of life. For this reason, road safety must be talked about and advocated not only by politicians and decision makers but also by larger public and more importantly youth in the country. He mentioned that systemic process of designing, planning and construction of roads by decision makers is not open and consultative and as a result it does not conform to the road safety standards. Road designs are developed in closed echo chambers without taking into account practical considerations and challenges of road users and their safety.



Hon. Chief Guest Shri Rajiv Pratap Rudy, M.P.
addressing the participants

The participants in this event included Panelists comprising technocrats, doctors, professionals and experts from reputed institutions like AIIMS Trauma Center, Institute of Road & Traffic Education, Asian Society for Emergency Medicine, School of

Planning & Architecture, National Crime Record Bureau, Sphere India, Save Life Foundation and Humanitarian Aid International etc.. Besides Dr Tanu Jain Asst DGHS, other prominent Panelists included Dr Rohit Baluja (IRTE), Dr MC Mishra, Dr Muzaffar Ahmad, Dr Amit Gupta and Dr Tamorish Kole etc.

During the deliberations it was impressed that a mission mode approach is called for to reduce fatalities in road accidents as per the UN Sustainable goal target. It was mentioned that trauma care or emergency care is one of the most important pillars of road safety plan as nearly 80 percent of road accidents death happen within the first hour of the injury. The first 10 minutes after the injury are platinum minutes. This is the time when prompt and efficient medical care has the highest likelihood of preventing death. As such, capacity building of all stakeholders in emergency response system is important. It was also mentioned that Indian trauma system is grappling with critical gaps. There is no legislation to govern establishment and functioning of the trauma system. It was suggested that a lead agency driving a trauma system including emergency medical care and ensuring coordination and collaboration between its various agency is pivotal. It was also suggested that the solution to reduction of number of road accident deaths depends on inter-sectoral collaboration and it should be devised based on participation of different stakeholders namely, MoRTH, MoHFW, civil society and community.

In course of deliberations several relevant suggestions were made. These include all

highways to have inbuilt fatality-resilient measures right from the planning stage by earmarking a certain percentage (5-10%) of the project cost to ensure integrated seamless emergency medical measures for the accident victims within the golden hour. Prompt communication means like vandal-proof emergency call boxes for prompt communication of accident related information to EMS Ambulances and designated road side hospitals and other agencies to be provided preferably at a distance of around 250 to 500 mtrs alongside the highways. Village level community health care centres to be made self-sufficient with EMS facilities with tel- communication facilities to the nearest hospital/trauma care centre. A network of designated hospitals under Public-Private partnership model to be developed along the highways. These hospitals should preferably be within a range of 15-20 kms or longer if the access road to the highway is not in good condition. All new vehicles to mandatorily have GPS based crash communication device linked to designated control centres. Two-wheeler ambulances with miniaturised medical equipment to be introduced in accident prone zones along the highways. Effective highway patrolling to be introduced for enforcement of traffic laws, including lane driving and adherence to speed limit through CCTV cameras.

Turkish Delight - Not for India?

— *Vaishali Basu Sharma*

"India right now has become a country where massacres are widespread. What massacres? Massacres of Muslims. By who? Hindus." This

statement was made by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan during a speech in Ankara after violence broke out in Delhi over the citizenship law. India responded by making a 'strong demarche' to Ankara's ambassador in New Delhi over the remarks made by Erdoğan. Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Spokesperson, Raveesh Kumar in a briefing said that Erdoğan's statement was "factually inaccurate" and "driven by his own political agenda." Turkish Foreign Ministry Spokesman Hami Aksoy then went on to slam MEA's comments as "irresponsible."

Just preceding this latest tiff, President Erdoğan during his visit to Pakistan in February professed love for Pakistan and his support for the cause of self-determination of the people of Jammu & Kashmir. The Turkish pudding appears to have been dished out only to Pakistan. Unpalatable as it may be, the fact remains that this isn't a surprise.

Such spats between Turkey and India have become rather routine. There are several reasons why India and Turkey's current leadership do not converge. Least of all is Erdoğan's design to recurrently invoke Turkey's Ottoman imperial legacy to rationalize his aggressive strategic posture in Mideast politics and to legitimate his increasingly authoritarian rule. On many an occasion he has explicitly declared that the Republic of Turkey was "a continuation of the Ottoman Empire," subtly inferring that as its leader, he was equivalent to a modern-day 'Caliph'. The support base for his party the Justice and Development Party (AKP) is with Turkish Islamists, who support the regime's engagement of a foreign policy centered on



Islamism. In this schema as a self-professed leader of the Muslim world, Turkey has taken to professing very strong views on Muslim ummah oriented subjects like Kashmir, Rohingya, Palestine, etc.

India's position on Islamic scholar, political activist and U.S.-based imam Fethullah Gülen and his initiative the Hizmet or Gülen movement is another major reason for Erdoğan's ire. The movement runs charitable services and schools all over the world, with millions of followers in Turkey. The ruling AKP had joined forces with the Gülenists after coming to power in 2003 to subdue the Turkish military secularist officers and several prominent journalists in prison. But after the 2016 coup, allegedly by the Gülenists they are allies no more.

The Gülen movement has been labeled the Fethullah Gülen Terrorist Organisation (FETO) by Erdoğan's government. India figures in this largely internal Turkish strife because, subsequent to the falling out between Fetullah Gülen and Erdoğan, the latter's government has been demanding action by all nations against institutions associated with the Hizmet/Gülen movement. In July 2018, visiting Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu explicitly demanded that India shun all Gülen run institutions on the charge that these terrorist linkages. The visiting minister said, "In all countries where FETO has a presence, we ask them to take immediate actions to remove them from their territories."

In India schools which are associated with the Gülen movement function under a group of institutions called 'Learnium' and are based

across the country. Indian agencies examined the accusations against the Gülenists and not finding any terrorist association refused to shut these educational institutions. Pakistan on the other hand shut down all schools and colleges affiliated with Fethullah Gülen's movement, ordering over 100 Turkish teachers and their family members to leave the country. It was a move that was much appreciated by the Erdoğan's government and Pakistan been exclusively rewarded in terms of Turkey's explicit support over Kashmir.

An indirect factor that has negatively affected Turkey's view towards India is the latter's emerging proximity to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) on a range of issues, from economic, strategic to anti-terror cooperation. Saudi-Turkish relations, on the other hand started to deteriorate since the assassination of the Saudi writer, Jamal Khashoggi, in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, Turkey, in 2018. Turkey's current forays into Syria, have also put in direct opposition to Kingdom. Further Saudi Arabia has announced its full support for the Republic of Cyprus on sovereignty over Northern Cyprus, an issue that is a bone of contention between Ankara and the island nation. In addition to these differences Saudi Arabia's contextual support India's position on Kashmir weakens Erdoğan's homilies about its 'struggles'. These factors place the current Turkish establishment, in variance with the leader of the Sunni Muslim world. Saudi Arabia's stance vis-a-vis India is more acerbic to Turkey as it wishes to play the role of a leading Muslim nation. In his address to joint session of Pakistan's Parliament, the Turkish President, likened the "struggle" of the Kashmiris with that of his country in the World War I against foreign domination.



Ideological differences between the Kingdom and Turkey have manifested themselves in their stance towards the Muslim Brotherhood (MB). Turkey openly supported the MB's political movement during the Arab Spring is divergent to the KSA's position. Turkey's express interest in Middle Eastern affairs since Erdoğan came to power in 2003, has been a major shift in its previous pro-Western foreign policy, two decades ago. At the helm of an economically unstable Turkey, President Erdoğan is on a mission to maximize Turkey's soft power with the Muslim world.

Turkey's regional position on strategic issues is baffling at times. Along with Iran and Russia it started the Astana process in 2017 to help efforts to resolve the conflict in Syria. This itself was at odds because Tehran and Moscow support Bashar Assad's government while Ankara backs Syrian rebels looking to oust Assad. The fact that India has not joined the call for an end to the Assad-led Baath Party rule over Syria, again places it at odds with Turkey.

Erdoğan is under tremendous domestic pressures over the continued presence of 3.5 million Syrian refugees and the "useless Syria adventure." In Iraq too Turkey and Iran have been supporting opposing camps. It is to mitigate the effect of his Syrian misadventure that Erdoğan is trying to woo Muslim nations by denouncing Israeli policy in the Gaza Strip as "state-sponsored terrorism", Indian policy in Kashmir and by championing solidarity among the global ummah at every forum.

At the 74th session of the United Nations General Assembly, during the Kuala Lumpur Summit and recently while addressing the joint session of Pakistan's Parliament he has

asserted that Turkey "endeavours to eliminate the differences between the Ummah, to find a solution to the disputes and to claim our righteous causes, especially Palestine, Cyprus and Kashmir." Invoking religion, he stated that the brotherhood law in Islam requires sharing agitations and being involved in them besides supporting the fellow believers.

Another thorn in the flesh of Indo-Turkish relations, is India's position on the Kurdish question. India has denounced Turkish military offensives on the Kurdish-inhabited localities of neighbouring Syria.

Erdoğan's repeated proclamation of Turkey's position on Kashmir which obliquely support Pakistan has earned New Delhi's displeasure. India responded by placing tariff and non-tariff measures on some imports from Turkey and Malaysia, in response to their leaders' comments on the autonomy of Kashmir. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has reportedly canceled a planned visit to Ankara to express displeasure over Erdoğan's comments over Kashmir. In a direct challenge supported Pakistan at the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) meeting.

Given the range of opposing viewpoints on various geopolitical issues it is not surprising that the Turkish delight isn't served to India. But beyond the verbal spats what is troublesome is Turkey's outreach to Indian Muslims. Extremist Islamic clerics such as Sheik Salman Al-Husaini Al-Nadwi, a prominent figure who issued statements supporting Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and the so called "Salafi evangelist" Zakir Naik who inspired the perpetrators of the Dhaka café attack (2016) are being groomed as conduits for



establishing a Turkish support base among Indian Muslims. In their efforts for the glory of the Ottoman caliphate, which commands a certain reverence among sections of Indian Muslims is invoked.

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The Hidden Workers: Toiling women in Indian social matrix

- Manika Malhotra

The International Women's Day 2020 presents a good occasion to reflect on the condition of women in India. Despite the noisy claims and their boisterous and yet lively presence in urbanising India there is a little that has changed for most of Indian women.

This year's theme for IWD - "Each for Equal"- To be a gender equal world is in that context a refreshing idea. To me it conveys that Equality is no longer perceived as a women's issue alone. Gender Equality is an essential prerequisite for communities and economies to thrive. In 2017, out of 195 countries, India ranked 127 in Gender Inequality Index and 149 in Gender Development Index (UNDP Report 2019). A major constituent of assessing the same is gender equality and neutrality in choice, capability, freedom, participation, and power. With better educational opportunities and improved female literacy, there is an aspect yet not fully recognized- invisible labour of Indian Women.

Amid the coronavirus scare, the companies have recommended their employees to 'work from home' to reduce the potential spread of

the COVID-19. The centre on 16th March 2020 declared a countrywide lockdown of schools, colleges and other crowded areas (to avoid congregations) that could lead to exponential spread of the virus. While many people at present, riddled with apprehensions, are trying to ease their fear by focusing on the positive aspects like attaining better productivity while working from home, spending more time with children and family etc., it is interesting to juxtapose the change in lifestyle of 'paid' working population with the 'unpaid' working population. Many women on a daily basis undertake majority of unpaid care work like looking after children and older family members, cooking and cleaning and actually 'work from/at home' seven days a week regardless the circumstances. Moreover, at present with many people stuck inside due to coronavirus, it would also include putting in a great deal of emotional labour that goes into holding family and loved ones together with equanimity during such hard-hitting times. The emotional labour that I refer to is often taken for granted and routinely unrecognized and needless to emphasize invariably disproportionately higher than other family members.

The anomaly of women's work is a convoluted aspect with regard to their participation and power. Currently, Indian women's contribution to the GDP is 17%; less than that of China (41%) and sub-Saharan Africa (39%). Indian women's contribution to GDP is less than half the global average. Is it not a matter to pause and ponder? Globally, women spend 3 times more time on unpaid care work than men. However, in India the time gap is 9.8



times more. (NITI Aayog 2017). Women's care and domestic work is being discussed for many years now. The definition of 'work' is no doubt undergoing a change, but painfully slowly to make a meaningful difference socially.

In 2017, India's position was 20th from the bottom, out of 187 countries, in terms of Women Labour Force Participation Rate (WLFP) and has witnessed a sharp decline in WLFP in the past decade. It has fallen from 29 per cent in 2004-05 to 17 per cent in 2017-18. There has been a substantial decrease in both Urban Women Participation Ratio and Rural Women Participation Ratio. So, are women being pushed out of labour force and/or is the economic value of stocking Indian women's labour measured correctly? There are many reasons which may substantiate this decrease like infrastructure constraints, wage discrimination, occupational segregation etc. However, a recent report (2018) by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) points out that increasing level of unpaid care work is the main reason why women are dropping out of the labour force. Women in India spend 312 minutes/day in urban areas and 291 minutes/ day in rural areas on unpaid care work. Men correspondingly spend only 29 minutes (urban) and 32 minutes (rural) on unpaid care work. An average of 16.4 billion hours is spent in unpaid care work every day. This is equivalent to 2 billion people working 8 hours per day with no remuneration. Care and domestic work such as looking after people family, seeing to their wants and needs, monitoring and maintaining machines, plants, animals can be defined as work that enables other work that is valued to be productive,

socially, economically and politically. However, the former is not yet recognized. Women's invisible labour, one of the major contributors towards building the economy, remains unaccounted. Official Statistics perhaps focuses more on the 'count' of the female workers participating in the labour market than the 'type' of work actually done.

On the other hand, while we touch upon the aspects of choice, capability and freedom- 'patriarchy' and the attached norms in the society is considered to be one of the reasons why women undertake majority of unpaid care work. While it is usually assumed that a major reason why women and girls face this burden is illiteracy which undermines their capabilities, but this may not be the case in urban households' yet skilled women labour force participation in urban areas is also declining. It is believed that this is deeply rooted in 'gender inequality', the constant ground for 'discrimination'. Unequal burden of unpaid care work between women and men is extremely high in India (a gap of 40.5%)². But it could also be a women's personal 'choice' to take up the mantle of this work. Some women who play a huge role in the paid workforce yet do not give up on their household chores and actually work 'double shift'. But because of the long standing mindset and old cliché 'a women's place is in the home', such work and efforts are often devalued which debilitate women's status, leading to their vulnerability.

International Labour Organisation (ILO) in 2013 introduced new international standards of measuring work in official statistics. They



have identified various forms of work including unpaid care work and activities such as volunteer work. It also recognizes multiple forms of work being done in a single period of time, for example caring for children, working in a paid job and/or doing voluntary work as it provides a holistic view of labour market interaction and various activities. Hence, there is a need of revisiting such definitions to socially, economically and politically value unpaid work. Along with 'recognizing', there is also a need to 'redistribute' the unpaid work burden by introducing positive social norms focusing on flexibility in work and leaves schedules for both the parents. In order to decrease the burden on communities, families and any particular gender, State must recognize the types of 'unpaid care work', make available and also fund some of such services as far as possible. There is an immediate requirement to assess the societal and economic value of 'unpaid care work' and raise adequate awareness about the same.

It is now time to promote "collective individualism" as proposed under this year's

IWD theme (Each for Equal). Suggested solutions will only have an adequate impact if supplemented by behavioral changes at micro level. Individual actions, dialogues and mindsets together can have an extremely positive impact in the society. It is very important to realize that any unpaid care work involves time, energy and labour and hence, is not easy and not solely any particular gender's responsibility or job. This does not mean that a person especially a woman should be 'paid' for the 'unpaid' care they offer but it is essential to cause a fundamental shift or recognition that the work they do is extremely valuable for societal cohesion. There is a need to address the ingrained social norms and gender stereotypes to 'de-feminise' care-based labour which prevents society from considering it equal and an 'individual's' choice to willfully opt for it, which if cannot be reduced or quantified should at least be adequately recognized, regarded and appreciated.

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