

## Health ministry, Gates Foundation discuss enhanced cooperation in health sector

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In her meeting with the Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare Mr JP Nadda, Mrs Melinda Gates, co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), discussed various potential areas of enhanced collaboration in the health sector. The meeting took place in New Delhi on April 20, 2014.

Issues pertaining to enhanced cooperation and active collaboration with the BMGF in terms of extending technical and logistic support in enhanced coverage through routine immunization and introduction of new vaccines such as Pentavalent vaccine, IPV, Measles Rubella (MR) vaccine and Rotavirus vaccine; IEC activities to enhance demand generation for health services; eliminating Kala Azar in the endemic states such as Bihar and Uttar Pradesh; support in controlling TB; and in the field of family planning in terms of planning, monitoring and evaluation were discussed during the meeting.

The Health Minister expressed appreciation for the efforts and meaningful contribution of the BMGF in the health sector in some states. He stated that the deep involvement of the Foundation with various health issues is truly commendable. He pointed out that the Government is committed to a "Healthy India" and is making efforts towards improving health systems in the country particularly at the level of the primary health care centers. The BMGF is viewed as an 'active partner' in the efforts of the Ministry to meet its envisaged goals, the Health Minister said.

Ms Gates expressed appreciation towards the efforts made for enhancing the immunisation coverage through the recently launched Mission Indradhanush. She stressed on improving healthcare systems in the country through evidence-based data support. Ms Gates stated that for the family planning programs to be effective in the country, women should be given a basket of choices to choose from. Similarly, it was important to ensure compliance with quality assurance guidelines. The progress made in the country in this regard was discussed.

Present during the high level meeting were secretary (H&FW) Mr BP Sharma, senior officers of the Health Ministry and representatives of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation