

Women ask right to safe motherhood

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Bhopal, Dec 18: Women from various districts of the state who are participating in the women convention being organized by Madhya Pradesh Voluntary Health Association (MPVHA) on the theme of maternal mortality in Bhopal have called for 'right to safe motherhood'. More than 150 women from districts like Chhatarpur, Sidhi, Satna, Panna, Khargone, Indore, Jabalapur, Dhar, Bhopal, Mansaur and Jhabua are participating in the same. Mukesh Sinha Executive Director of MPVHA opening up the convention said how mobilized communities could make the system work and it is time we come together as one and channel our energies for decreasing maternal death in the state.

Speaking as the Guest at the convention, Hamid El Bashir, State Representative of UNICEF office for Madhya Pradesh said that **it is imperative that state now has to move resolutely from realm of words to real of concrete action**, which can help bring positive change in the lives of women at village level. **Talking about safe motherhood, he said that it was a human right issue. Though MMR of the state has come down but still it is very high and state still features among six states, which contribute maximum number of maternal deaths in the country. We are behind the target. State needs to invest in infrastructure, upgrades its health centre's, upgrade and increase number of blood banks, help build capacity of the human resource, immediately fill in all the vacant positions in the state**. Dr Ramani Atkuri, UNICEF's Project Officer Health spoke on the technical aspects of maternal mortality and interacted with the women on the problem they face at the village level.

Earlier, during opening session Anil Gulati, UNICEF's Communication Officer spoke on their role at community and village level and how they can make a difference and Dr Ajay Khare of People's Health Movement spoke on the need to address the issue and how painful it is to see the divide between rich and poor in terms of health care in the state and country. During the convention Women raised many queries like unavailability of health services, unawareness about various schemes, lack of proper information on many problems they face, untrained dais, bad roads, anemia, malaria etc, which indirectly impacts maternal mortality in their areas.

Women also presented the signatures banners to Hamid El Bashir, State Representative as token of their concern on the number of maternal deaths and condition of women health in the state. Prof B K Nilosey President MPVHA encouraged the women volunteers present at the convention.
