

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1749
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21.12.2022

OCCURRENCE OF CHILD MARRIAGES

1749. SHRI JOSE K. MANI:

Will the Minister of Women and Child Development be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has the details of the number of child marriages that occurred in the country over the last three years;
- (b) if so, the State-wise details thereof;
- (c) whether Government noticed an increase in the incidence of child marriages during the last three years;
- (d) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (e) what are the initiatives taken by Government to prevent the occurrence of child marriages in the country; and
- (f) the details of the actions taken in this regard?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) to (f): The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) compiles and publishes the data on the number of cases of child marriage registered under 'the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA), 2006' in its publication 'Crime in India'. The said report is available upto the year 2021. As per the report, the number of cases of child marriages registered during the years 2019, 2020 and 2021 are 523, 785 and 1050 respectively. Higher reporting of cases does not necessarily reflect increase in the number of cases of child marriages, but it may be because of increased awareness among citizens to report such incidents due to initiatives such as Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP), Women Helpline (181) and Childline (1098) implemented by the Ministry and better enforcement of law by States/ UTs. The State/UT-wise details of the number of child marriages registered in the country during the years 2019, 2020 and 2021 are at **Annexure**.

'Police' and 'Public Order' are State subjects under the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. The responsibilities to maintain law and order, protection of life and property of the citizens, investigation and prosecution of crime against women and children including prohibition of child marriages, rest with the respective State Governments. The State Governments are competent to deal with such offenses under the extant provisions of laws.

'The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA), 2006' authorises the State Government to appoint for the whole State, or such part thereof as may be specified, an officer or officers to be known as the 'Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPO)' having jurisdiction over the area or areas specified in the notification. This section also specifies the functions to be discharged by CMPOs, which also include preventing solemnisation of child marriages by taking such action as they may deem fit; to collect evidence for the effective prosecution of persons contravening the provisions of the Act; to advise the individuals or counsel the residents of the locality not to indulge in promoting, helping, aiding or allowing the solemnisation of child marriages; to create awareness about the ill effects of child marriages; and to sensitize the community on the issue of child marriages. These authorities function under the respective State Governments/ UT Administrations. As such, implementation of the provisions of the Act lies with them.

The Central Government also undertakes awareness drives, media campaigns and outreach programs and issues advisories to the States/ UTs from time to time to highlight evil effects of this practice. Further, the Ministry of Women and Child Development implements 'Mission Shakti', an umbrella scheme for safety, security and empowerment of women. Under the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)' component of 'Sambal' sub-scheme of 'Mission Shakti', awareness generation on matters pertaining to gender equality and discouraging child marriage is an important focus area. The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) also undertakes awareness programs and consultations with stakeholders from time to time in this regard.

In addition, Government of India is running Childline with short code 1098, a 24X7 telephone emergency outreach service for children in crisis which responds with suitable interventions to call for any form of assistance which a child requires, including for prevention of child marriages in coordination with police, CMPOs, District Child Protection Units etc.

ANNEXURE

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a) to (f) OF THE RAJYA SABHA UN-STARRED QUESTION NO. 1749 FOR ANSWER ON 21.12.2022 ASKED BY SHRI JOSE K. MANI REGARDING ' OCCURRENCE OF CHILD MARRAIGES'

The State/UT-wise details of the number of child marriages occurred in the country under Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 during years of 2019, 2020 and 2021.

SL.No.	State/UT	2019	2020	2021
1	Andhra Pradesh	4	32	19
2	Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	0
3	Assam	115	138	155
4	Bihar	8	5	11
5	Chhattisgarh	0	1	0
6	Goa	0	0	0
7	Gujarat	20	15	12
8	Haryana	20	33	33
9	Himachal Pradesh	4	5	5
10	Jharkhand	3	3	4
11	Karnataka	111	184	273
12	Kerala	7	8	12
13	Madhya Pradesh	4	5	4
14	Maharashtra	20	50	82
15	Manipur	0	0	2
16	Meghalaya	0	0	0
17	Mizoram	0	0	0
18	Nagaland	0	0	0
19	Odisha	22	24	64
20	Punjab	6	13	8
21	Rajasthan	19	3	11
22	Sikkim	0	0	0
23	Tamil Nadu	46	77	169
24	Telangana	35	60	57
25	Tripura	0	4	1
26	Uttar Pradesh	4	12	6
27	Uttarakhand	2	9	12
28	West Bengal	68	98	105
	TOTAL STATE(S)	518	779	1045
29	A&N Islands	0	0	0
30	Chandigarh	1	1	0
31	D&N Haveli and Daman & Diu+	1	0	0
32	Delhi	2	4	2
33	Jammu & Kashmir*	1	1	2
34	Ladakh		0	0
35	Lakshadweep	0	0	0
36	Puducherry	0	0	1
	TOTAL UT(S)	5	6	5
	TOTAL (ALL INDIA)	523	785	1050
