

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3352
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29.03.2023

SCHEMES FOR THE WELFARE OF WIDOWS AND DESTITUTE WOMEN

3352. SHRI DHANANJAY BHIMRAO MAHADIK:

- (a) the number of women particularly, widows, divorce and destitute women in the country especially in Maharashtra;
- (b) the details of the schemes for welfare, rehabilitation, empowerment, education and providing employment to such women;
- (c) the funds sanctioned, released and utilized by the State of Maharashtra for the purpose during the last three years;
- (d) whether Government has made any assessment of the success achieved through implementation of these schemes and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) whether Government proposes to launch a special welfare and rehabilitation scheme for the widows living in different parts of the country and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b) As informed by the State Government of Maharashtra, there is no such provision of maintaining record particularly on widows, divorcee and destitute in the State. Also, there is no single scheme on individual benefit of widows, divorcee and destitute in Maharashtra. However, State Department of Women and Child Development has the following schemes for all the needy women namely Shakti Sadan, One Stop Centres, Women Helpline, Mahila Shakti Kendra, Manodhairya Scheme, Mahila Protection Homes, Support Homes, Women Counseling Centre etc.

As per Census 2011, the number of widowed and divorced women in the country State/UT-wise, including Maharashtra, is at **Annexure-I**. The Government is implementing various schemes and programmes for empowerment of women including destitute women, which are as follows:

Shakti Sadan: Under the newly approved Mission Shakti, Swadhar Greh for women in difficult circumstances and Ujjawala Homes for Prevention of Trafficking have been merged and renamed as Shakti Sadan which is an Integrated Relief and Rehabilitation Home. This is aimed at creating a safe and enabling environment for the women in distress situations and difficult circumstances. So far 10,955 number of women benefitted under the Scheme.

Home for Widows has been set up in Vrindavan, Uttar Pradesh with a capacity of 1,000 residents to provide a safe and secure place of stay, health services, nutritious food, legal and counselling services.

One Stop Centres (OSCs), popularly known as *Sakhi* Centres, aim to facilitate women affected by violence (including domestic violence) with a range of integrated services under one roof such as Police facilitation, medical aid, legal aid and legal counselling, psycho-social counselling, temporary shelter, etc.

Women Helpline (WHL) Scheme provides 24 hours emergency and non-emergency response to women affected by violence, both in public and private spaces by linking them with appropriate authority such as Police, One Stop Centre, Hospital, Legal Services, etc. WHL also supports women in distress with rescue van and counselling services in addition to providing information about women welfare schemes and programs across the country. Women can dial 181 short code to avail services from Women Helpline.

Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme: Under this scheme, widow pension is provided to the widows belonging to Below Poverty Line (BPL) households. This is a sub-scheme under National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) of Ministry of Rural Development. Under the scheme, central assistance @ Rs. 300/- per month is provided to widows in the age group of 40-79 years and the pension amount is enhanced to Rs 500/- per month on attaining 80 years.

The **National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)** is a fully funded Centrally Sponsored Scheme targeting the destitute to be identified by the States and UTs with the objective of providing a basic level of financial support. Under NSAP, central assistance of Rs. 200 – 300/- is provided in pension to senior citizens (60 years and above), widows (40-79 years) and for disabled persons.

Ayushman Bharat Programme with its twin pillars of Health and Wellness Centres and the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY), provides coverage to poor and vulnerable families and this would also help improve women's access to health care services.

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (MGNREGA) seeks to ensure employment in rural households, mandating that at least one third of the jobs generated should be given to women. The MGNREGA Guidelines have also made special provisions to encourage the participation of women, including giving preference to women (especially single women) and older persons for work on worksites nearer to their residences, child care facilities at the worksite in case more than five children under 6 years of age are present, adequate representation of women in the MGNREGS staff, ensuring that widows, deserted women and destitute women are provided 100 days of work, awareness and outreach activities to ensure that all wage seekers (including women) are able to handle bank procedures, treating pregnant and lactating mothers as a special category and provision of suitable work for them etc.

Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan (PM-SYM) has been launched to ensure old age protection for Unorganised Workers who are not covered by any other pension scheme. The unorganised workers including women, mostly engaged as home based workers, street vendors, mid-day meal workers, head loaders, brick kiln workers, cobblers, rag pickers, domestic workers, washer men, rickshaw pullers, landless labourers, agricultural workers, construction workers, beedi workers, handloom workers, leather workers, audio-visual workers and similar other occupation whose monthly income is Rs 15,000/ per month or less and belong to the entry age group of 18-40 years.

Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) has been initiated by Government, inter alia, for facilitation self-employment. Under PMMY, collateral free loans upto Rs. 10 lakh are extended to micro/small business enterprises and to individuals to enable them to setup or expand their business activities which include women.

Prime Minister Awaas Yojana (PMAY-G): This scheme aims to provide 'Housing for All' through provision of pucca house with basic amenities to all house less households and households living in kutcha and dilapidated house in rural areas. This will also benefit the neglected, abandoned and destitute widows.

Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana (PMAY-U): Under this scheme, central assistance is provided to States/UTs for addressing the housing requirement of economically Weaker Sections (EWS) including slum dwellers in the urban areas.

Atal Pension Yojana (APY): This scheme is implemented with an objective to create a universal social security system for all, especially the poor, under privileged and workers in the unorganized sector. The scheme is open to all citizens of India between 18-40 years of age having a saving bank account in a bank or post office.

Integrated Programme for Older Persons: The objective of the Scheme is to improve the quality of life of the Senior Citizens, including women, by providing basic amenities like shelter, food, medical care and entertainment opportunities and by encouraging productive and active ageing through providing support for capacity building of State/ UT Governments/Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)/Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)/ local bodies and the community at large.

(c) As informed by the State Government of Maharashtra, there is no special provision / individual benefit Scheme for widow, divorcee and destitute in Maharashtra State.

(d) & (e) The Schemes of the Ministry of Women and Child Development are implemented through State Governments/UT Administrations. Under the three Missions implemented by the Ministry namely, 'Mission Poshan' 2.0, 'Mission Shakti' and 'Mission Vatsalya', appropriate monitoring mechanism is available at all levels of implementation i.e., at National, State and District levels. The Ministry continuously monitors the progress of the implementation of all schemes through physical and virtual meetings with States/UTs, field visit by the officials of the Ministry and through digital mode and takes appropriate measures and issues advisories to States/UTs from time to time.

Annexure-I

Annexure referred to in reply to parts (a) & (b) of Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No.3352 for 29.03.2023 regarding Schemes for the welfare of widows and destitute women asked by Shri Dhananjay Bhimrao Mahadik, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (RS).

Number of Widowed and Divorced Women in the Country

Female of all ages		
	Widowed	Divorced
ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS	12525	279
ANDHRA PRADESH	4297481	66691
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	31787	1189
ASSAM	1156042	45722
BIHAR	2238793	14760
CHANDIGARH	24496	863
CHHATTISGARH	973787	30871
DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI	7378	348
DAMAN & DIU	6816	249
GOA	77935	858
GUJARAT	2015742	88753
HARYANA	773297	7720
HIMACHAL PRADESH	293475	4549
JAMMU & KASHMIR	283650	11081
JHARKHAND	1027878	12672
KARNATAKA	2989429	27959
KERALA	2010984	46856
LAKSHADWEEP	2448	296
MADHYA PRADESH	2160609	44272
MAHARASHTRA	4520764	154274
MANIPUR	77990	4483
MEGHALAYA	84825	7017
MIZORAM	28569	11068
NAGALAND	39496	4150
NCT OF DELHI	456613	10805
ODISHA	1612627	29845
PUDUCHERRY	73579	1060
PUNJAB	928158	18471
RAJASTHAN	1983634	23758
SIKKIM	13717	676
TAMIL NADU	3856398	45185
TRIPURA	164969	6308
UTTAR PRADESH	4856188	56819
UTTARAKHAND	387215	3922
WEST BENGAL	3792184	125744
TOTAL	43261478	909573
