

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
UN-STARRED QUESTION NO. 3835
TO BE ANSWERED ON 05.04.2023

SCHEMES TO PREVENT CHILD MARRIAGE

3835. SHRI BIKASH RANJAN BHATTACHARYYA:

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

- (a) what are the schemes of Government to prevent child marriage;
- (b) how many child marriages have been nullified in the last three years, the year-wise data thereof; and
- (c) how many child marriages complaints has been reported in the last three years, the state-wise and year-wise data thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b): In order to curb child marriages and to take punitive actions against those associated with Child marriages, the Government has enacted 'the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 (PCMA)'. Section 16 of PCMA 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 includes 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.

Further, the Government has introduced a Bill namely 'the Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 2021 in the Parliament on 21.12.2021 for raising the age of marriage of women to 21 years to make it at par with the men. The proposed Bill also has provisions to make consequential amendments in the enactments, inter alia, relating to age of marriage of parties, such as 'The Indian Christian Marriage Act, 1872', 'The Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act, 1936', 'The Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, 1937', 'The Special Marriage Act, 1954', 'The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955', and 'The Foreign Marriage Act, 1969'. The Bill has since been referred to Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports for examination.

'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.

Nevertheless, the Central Government 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 the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme, wherein creation of awareness 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 has introduced 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, Child Marriage Protection Officers (CMPOs), District Child Protection Units etc.

(c): 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 information available with NCRB, the number of cases registered under 'the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006' during, the last three years i.e. 2019, 2020 and 2021 are 523, 785 and 1050 respectively. The State-wise details of child marriage registered under PCMA, 2006 during the last three years i.e. 2019, 2020 and 2021 are at **Annexure**.

Annexure

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (c) OF THE RAJYA SABHA UN-STARRED QUESTION NO. 3835 FOR ANSWER ON 05.04.2023 ASKED BY SHRI BIKASH RANJAN BHATTACHARYYA REGARDING 'SCHEMES TO PREVENT CHILD MARRIAGE'

The State-wise details of child marriage registered under PCMA, 2006 during the last three years i.e. 2019, 2020 and 2021.

SL	State/UT	2019	2020	2021
		CR	CR	CR
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

Source: Crime in India
