

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2231
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.03.2026

WELFARE OF CHILDREN LIVING WITH WOMEN PRISONERS

2231 DR. AJEET MADHAVRAO GOPCHADE:

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware that children residing with women prisoners in jails face serious challenges relating to nutrition, healthcare, emotional well-being and access to childhood education and if so, the steps taken by Ministry, in coordination with the Ministry of Home Affairs and State Governments, to address these concerns;
- (b) whether any nationwide study or assessment has been conducted to evaluate the living conditions, welfare standards and developmental needs of such children; and
- (c) whether updated jail-wise data on number of children living with women prisoners is available and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI ANNPURNA DEVI)

(a) to (c): Prison is a State subject under Entry 4 of List II of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. The administration and management of prison is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments. The Ministry of Home Affairs has also issued a comprehensive advisory dated 15th May, 2006 on 'Facilities to the children of women prisoners-Guidelines issued by the Supreme Court – regarding', which provides inter-alia, for steps to be taken by the States/UTs for providing education and recreation for children of female prisoners and also providing for crèches and nursery attached to the prison for women to look after children of women prisoners – children below three years of age shall be allowed in the crèches while those between three and six years of age shall be looked after in the nursery.

Ministry of Home Affairs issued 'Model Prison Manual, 2016' to States/ UTs which, inter-alia, provides for taking appropriate steps for welfare of children of women prisoners including their education, health etc.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development is the nodal Ministry for implementing the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 (JJ Act, 2015), which is the

primary legislation for ensuring safety, security, dignity and well-being of children. It defines standards of care and protection to secure the best interest of child.

As per Section 2 (14) (i), (v), (ix) and (x) of the JJ Act, a child who is found without any home or settled place of abode and without any ostensible means of subsistence; or who has a parent or guardian and such parent or guardian is found to be unfit or incapacitated, by the Committee or the Board, to care and protect the safety and well-being of the child; or who is found vulnerable and is likely to be inducted into drug abuse or trafficking; or who is being or is likely to be abused for unconscionable gains, respectively, is included as a “child in need of care and protection”.

Sections 27-30 of the JJ Act, 2015 empower the Child Welfare Committees to take decisions with regard to the children in need of care and protection, keeping their best interest in mind. The Committees are also mandated to monitor the functions of the CCIs. Similarly, sections 04-09 of the JJ Act, 2015 empower the Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs) to take decisions regarding the welfare of children in conflict with law. The primary responsibility of execution of the JJ Act lies with the State Governments.

This Ministry is implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme namely ‘Mission Vatsalya’, through the State and UT Governments to deliver various services for overall development of children in difficult circumstances, including children whose parents are incarcerated. These services include Institutional Care and Non-Institutional Care. The Child Care Institutions (CCIs) established under the Mission Vatsalya scheme support, inter-alia, age-appropriate education, access to vocational training, recreation, health care, counselling etc. Under non-institutional care, support is provided to the children through Sponsorship, Foster Care, Adoption and After Care.

As per the information received from National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), the State and UT wise data on number of children living with women prisoners is enclosed at **Annexure**.

ANNEXURE

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (C) OF THE RAJYA SABHA UN-STARRED QUESTION NO. 2231 FOR ANSWER ON 11.03.2026 BY DR. AJEET MADHAVRAO GOPCHADE REGARDING WELFARE OF CHILDREN LIVING WITH WOMEN PRISONERS

As per the information received from National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), State and UT wise data on number of children living with women prisoners is as follows:-

Sl. No.	State/UT	Total No. of Women Prisoners with Children	Total No. of Children
1	ANDHRA PRADESH	16	19
2	ARUNACHAL PRADESH	0	0
3	ASSAM	30	40
4	BIHAR	167	186
5	CHHATTISGARH	60	64
6	GOA	1	1
7	GUJARAT	20	25
8	HARYANA	28	30
9	HIMACHAL PRADESH	3	3
10	JHARKHAND	84	93
11	KARNATAKA	21	24
12	KERALA	4	4
13	MADHYA PRADESH	126	137
14	MAHARASHTRA	47	53
15	MANIPUR	5	5
16	MEGHALAYA	0	0
17	MIZORAM	18	19
18	NAGALAND	0	0
19	ODISHA	37	41
20	PUNJAB	49	52
21	RAJASTHAN	31	33
22	SIKKIM	0	0
23	TAMIL NADU	18	22
24	TELANGANA	4	4

25	TRIPURA	7	11
26	UTTAR PRADESH	311	345
27	UTTARAKHAND	20	22
28	WEST BENGAL	170	214
29	A & N ISLANDS	0	0
30	CHANDIGARH	3	3
31	DNH & DAMAN DIU	0	0
32	DELHI	31	34
33	JAMMU & KASHMIR	7	8
34	LADAKH	0	0
35	LAKSHADWEEP	0	0
36	PUDUCHERRY	0	0
