

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2077
TO BE ANSWERED ON 05.08.2026

STRENGTHENING THE ADOPTION ECOSYSTEM

2077. SHRI RAJINDER GUPTA:

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that there exists a significant gap between the number of children legally free for adoption and registered prospective adoptive parents awaiting adoption and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the status of implementation of the Supreme Court's directions regarding District Specialised Adoption Agencies and identification of orphaned, abandoned and surrendered children eligible for adoption; and
- (c) whether Government proposes to prescribe time-bound timelines for declaring eligible children legally free for adoption and strengthen the functioning of Child Care Institutions and Child Welfare Committees to reduce delays in the adoption process?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SAVITRI THAKUR)

(a) to (c): The Ministry of Women and Child Development is the nodal Ministry for the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015. This Act is the primary legislation for ensuring safety, security, dignity and wellbeing of children in need of care and protection and those in conflict with law by catering to their basic needs through care, protection, development, treatment, rehabilitation and social re-integration. Adoption in the country is undertaken through the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act (JJ Act), 2015 and the Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act (HAMA), 1956. The HAMA, 1956 is administered by the Ministry of Law and Justice. Under the JJ Act 2015, the Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) have been empowered to take decisions with regard to the children in need of care and protection including orphaned, abandoned and surrendered. They are also mandated to monitor the function of the Child Care Institutions (CCIs). The Act defines standards of care and protection to secure the best interest of children living in CCIs and aims to provide family environment through non-institutional care services which includes sponsorship, foster care and aftercare.

The waiting period of the Prospective Adoptive Parents (PAPs) depends on the availability of children who are declared legally free for adoption by CWC. It also depends on the choice of the PAPs to adopt from a particular State and also the age group preferred.

The waiting period of the Prospective Adoptive Parents (PAPs) is there since there are more waiting parents in comparison to a lesser number of children available for adoption. However,

the children do not have to wait in the institutions, as there is an online referral system enabling adoption of Legally Free for Adoption (LFA) children expeditiously. States and UTs have been advised to establish at least one Specialised Adoption Agency (SAA) in each district in accordance with Sections 65 and 66 of the JJ Act, 2015, read with Adoption Regulations, 2022 (Regulations 3 & 5).

Financial support for establishment and strengthening of SAAs is provided under Mission Vatsalya Scheme. All SAAs are mandatorily onboarded onto the integrated CARINGS–Mission Vatsalya system, enabling end-to-end digital processing of adoption cases including referral, matching, and documentation. Compliance is monitored through real-time dashboards at Central and State levels, and through periodic review meetings.

795 SAAs have been approved under Mission Vatsalya Scheme for all State Governments and Union Territory Administrations as on 29.07.2026.

As per Schedule XIV of the Adoption Regulations 2022, timelines have been defined for each stakeholder. In order to reduce delays and to maintain transparency, CARA has digitized end-to-end process through the digital platform of Adoption Module under Mission Vatsalya portal and regular monitoring and follow-ups is being done with the State and UTs including all stakeholders to expedite the process, as per the Schedule XIV of the Adoption Regulation, 2022 which has stipulated timeline for authorities and agencies working in adoption.
