

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.524
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.07.2018

CHILD MARRIAGES

524. SHRI OM BIRLA:

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

- (a) whether there has been a steep drop in child marriages in the country as per both UNICEF and National Family Health Survey Report and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the details of percentage prevalence of child marriage during each of the last three years and the current year State/UT-wise;
- (c) whether it is true that a high percentage (above national level) of child marriage prevalence exists in Bihar, Rajasthan and West Bengal and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has initiated any special policy/guidelines or plans on providing special assistance to worst affected States for tackling problems of Child marriages and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) whether the Government has initiated any awareness campaign targeting women and youth in general through local professionals like doctors etc. in this regard and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(DR. VIRENDRA KUMAR)

- (a): Yes Madam. As per National Family Health Survey, the percentage of women (in the age group 20-24 years), who were married before legal age, has reduced from 47.4% in 2005-06 to 26.8% in 2014-15. Further, as per analysis of Census 2011 data by NCPCR, 'nil' marriages were reported in the age group of 0-9 years for both boys and girls. There is an overall decline in the incidence of child marriage in the country. As per Census, the percentage of ever married girls below legal age has reduced from 2.51% in 2001 to 2.44% in 2011. For boys, this figure has reduced from 9.64% in 2001 to 2.54% in 2011.
- (b): Prevalence data of Child Marriage is not available on annual basis. This is collected in Census and NFHS, which are conducted periodically every few years. Data on the reporting of child marriage is available on annual basis from National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB). Due to improved awareness, these reports have increased from 2014, 2015 to 2016. As per the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data, the State-wise Cases Registered (CR) under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 during 2014, 2015 and 2016 are at **Annexure-I**.
- (c): As per census 2011, Rajasthan, Bihar and West Bengal are among the top states reporting the highest percentage of child marriage among both boys and girls. The practice of Child

Marriages is largely due to the prevailing social customs, tradition, illiteracy, poverty, low status of women in society and lack of awareness.

- (d) & (e) : The Government of India has enacted the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 in order to prohibit child marriages rather than only restraining them. The States/UTs from time to time are being regularly pursued for effective implementation of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006. MWCD regularly sends out letters to District Collectors to increase alertness to prevent underage marriages during festivals such as Akshaya Tritiya/Akha Teej. The prevention of child marriage and protection of the girl child is a prominent part of the National Plan of Action for Children, 2016.

These issues cannot be tackled by legislative interventions alone. The BetiBachaoBetiPadhao (BBBP) programme is working to ensure the education of girls and reduce dropouts, thus delaying their marriage. A significant part of the BBBP advocacy campaign is focused on creating awareness on and discouraging the practice of child marriage. Further, the newly formulated Mahila Shakti Kendra (MSK) scheme will focus on creating awareness and equipping women at the village level with information on issues of gender equality and empowerment, a critical part of which will be the prevention of child marriage. This is a continuous process and Government undertakes media campaigns and outreach programmes to address this.

Annexure -I

Annexure referred to in reply to Part (b) of the Lok Sabha Un-starred Question No.524 for 20.07.2018 regarding 'Child Marriage'

No. of Cases Registered (CR) under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 during 2014,2015 and 2016

Sl. No.	State/UT	2014	2015	2016
1	Andhra Pradesh	16	15	19
2	Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	0
3	Assam	4	14	23
4	Bihar	10	0	0
5	Chhattisgarh	2	6	8
6	Goa	0	0	0
7	Gujarat	16	9	12
8	Haryana	15	14	14
9	Himachal Pradesh	4	1	0
10	Jammu & Kashmir	0	0	0
11	Jharkhand	1	1	4
12	Karnataka	44	35	51
13	Kerala	19	13	8
14	Madhya Pradesh	15	9	9
15	Maharashtra	14	24	16
16	Manipur	0	0	0
17	Meghalaya	0	0	0
18	Mizoram	0	0	0
19	Nagaland	0	0	0
20	Odisha	0	1	15
21	Punjab	2	5	8
22	Rajasthan	5	6	12
23	Sikkim	0	0	0
24	Tamil Nadu	47	77	55
25	Telangana	13	15	19
26	Tripura	1	2	1
27	Uttar Pradesh	10	4	3
28	Uttarakhand	0	1	1
29	West Bengal	37	40	41
30	A & N Islands	0	1	1
31	Chandigarh	0	0	0
32	D & N Haveli	0	0	0
33	Daman & Diu	0	0	0
34	Delhi	2	0	1
35	Lakshadweep	0	0	0
36	Puducherry	3	0	5
	Total	280	293	326
