

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
LOK SABHA**

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3403
TO BE ANSWERED ON 01.01.2019**

PREVENTION OF ATROCITIES ACT

3403. SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Prevention of Atrocities Act was amended recently and several offences of atrocities were added and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether States/UTs are provided central assistance for strengthening of the enforcement of judicial machinery, relief and rehabilitation of affected persons etc. and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether a committee under the Ministries of Home Affairs and Social Justice and Empowerment, reviews the implementation of Prevention of Atrocities Act at regular intervals; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
(SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE)**

(a): With an objective to deliver greater justice to members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) {PoA} Act, 1989 has been amended vide by the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) {PoA} Amendment Act, 2015(No. 1 of 2016) and enforced on 26.01.2016. The amendments broadly relate to addition of several new offences of atrocities like tonsuring of head, moustache, or similar acts which are derogatory to the dignity of members of Scheduled Castes(SCs) and Scheduled Tribes(STs), garlanding with footwear, denying access to irrigation facilities or forest rights, dispose or carry human or animal carcasses, or to dig graves, using or permitting manual scavenging, dedicating a SC or a ST woman as devadasi, abusing in caste name, perpetrating witchcraft atrocities, imposing social or economic boycott, preventing SC and ST candidates from filing of nomination to contest elections, hurting a SC/ST woman by removing her garments, forcing a member of SC/ST to leave house, village or residence, defiling objects sacred to members of SCs and STs, touching or using words, acts or gestures of a sexual nature against members of SC and ST, besides rephrasing and expansion of some of earlier offences, establishment of Exclusive Special Courts and provision for Exclusive Special Public Prosecutors for conducting cases in such Courts, empowerment of Special Courts and Exclusive Special Courts to take direct cognizance of offences and addition of a chapter on the 'Rights of Victims and Witnesses'.

(b): As provisions of the PoA Act and the Rules thereunder are implemented by the respective State Governments and Union Territory Administrations, towards effective implementation of the Act and the Rules, under a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for implementation of the Protection of Civil Rights (PCR) Act, 1955 and the PoA Act, 1989, admissible Central assistance is provided to them mainly for strengthening of the enforcement and judicial machinery, incentive for inter-caste marriages where one of the spouses is a member of a SC, awareness generation, and relief and rehabilitation of the affected persons. During the year 2018-19, so far Central assistance of Rs 388.91 crore has been released to the concerned State Governments and Union Territory Administrations.

(c) and (d): A Committee for effective coordination to devise ways and means to curb offences of untouchability and atrocities against members of SCs and STs and effective implementation of the PCR Act and the PoA Act, under the Chairpersonship of Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment, constituted in March, 2006, with members drawn from the Ministries of Home Affairs, Tribal Affairs, Law and Justice, National Commission for Scheduled Castes, National Commission for Scheduled Tribes and three non-official Members (two amongst Scheduled Castes and one amongst Scheduled Tribes), reviews implementation status of the PCR Act and the PoA Act in States/Union Territories. The said Committee has so far held twenty four meetings wherein implementation of the two Acts in 24 States and 4 Union Territories has been reviewed.
