

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5016**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 31.03.2023

**DEVADASI MALPRACTICE IN INDIA**

5016: SHRI ANUMULA REVANTH REDDY:

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the prevalence of devadasi system in India, if so, the number of such cases reported since 2014, year-wise and State-wise;
- (b) whether it is a fact that there are around 70,000 devadasis in Karnataka as per the National Human Rights Commission and if so, the action taken by the Government to check this social evil;
- (c) whether the Government is aware of the similar kind of practices prevalent in different States, if so, the details thereof, State-wise;
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor and the time by which the Government will conduct the necessary survey or analysis in this regard; and
- (e) the steps being taken by the Government to eradicate the devadasi malpractice in India?

**ANSWER**

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

(a) to (e): National Human Right Commission has informed that no specific data regarding Devadasi issue is maintained in the Complaint Management System Information System (CMIS) of the Commission.

Devadasi System has been prevailing in Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka. These States have Acts on provision and dedication of Devadasis. Under these Acts whoever performs, promotes, abets, takes part in dedication ceremony is liable for punishment. Further 'Police' and 'Public Order' are State subjects under the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. The responsibility to maintain law and order protection of life and property of the citizens rests primarily with the respective State Governments. The State Governments are competent to deal with such offences under the extent provisions of laws. Ministry of Home Affairs has issued an advisory dated 22.12.2015 regarding "Abolition of Devdasi System". The advisory is available at [www.mha.nic.in](http://www.mha.nic.in). As per advisory, States/UTs should initiate special drive to identify the victims and suitably rehabilitate them by providing proper counselling, medical treatment, guidance, support and motivation to lead a dignified life.

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