

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PLANNING

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1639
TO BE ANSWERED ON 08.12.2021

BEGGAR FREE COUNTRY

†1639.SHRI RAMCHARAN BOHRA:

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has any plan to make this country 'beggar free', in collaboration with the State Governments;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the targets fixed in this regard;
- (c) the action taken against the persons found guilty for child beggary at railway stations and other public places; and
- (d) the steps taken by the Government to educate beggars and to provide employment opportunities to them?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS & PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION; MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS

(RAO INDERJIT SINGH)

- (a) Yes sir. The Government (Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment) has formulated a scheme namely Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise (SMILE) to implement through State Governments and other implementing agencies including NGOs etc. to make this 'country beggar free'.
- (b) The target fixed under the Component of Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of begging is about 20,000 (beggars) for next five years (2021-22 to 2025-26).
- (c) The Railways Act, 1989 (Section-144) prohibits hawking, begging etc. any violators shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year, or with fine which may extend to two thousand rupees, or with both. Section 363-A of Indian Penal Code (IPC) provides that kidnapping or maiming a minor or a lawful guardian using a minor for purposes of begging is a criminal and punishable offense, accordingly violators are being punished.
- (d) The Component of Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of begging under the above scheme provides for Survey/ Identification, Mobilization, Rescue/Shelter Home and comprehensive resettlement of beggars through educating, skilling and counselling to get in to decent jobs and lead normal life in the society.
