

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UN-STARRED QUESTION NO.2218
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10.12.2021

CHILD MARRIAGES

2218. SHRI DINESH CHANDRA YADAV:

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

- (a) whether the Government is in agreement with the report of National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) indicating that the cases of child marriage have increased by 50 percent in the year 2020 as compared to the previous years;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has identified the reasons behind increase in cases of child marriage; and
- (d) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to check the same?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b): The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) compiles and publishes information on crimes in its publication "Crime in India". The published reports are available till the year 2020. As per the data published in the said report, total 785 cases of child marriage have been reported in the year 2020 in comparison to total 523 cases reported in the year 2019.

(c) & (d): 'Police' and 'Public Order' are State subjects under the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. The responsibilities to maintain law and order, protection of life and property of the citizens, investigation and prosecution of crime against women including prohibition of child marriages, rest with the respective State Governments. The State Governments are competent to deal with such offenses under the extant provisions of laws. The major reasons attributable for child marriages are poverty, low level of education, socio-cultural and religious phenomenon etc.

The Government has enacted the 'Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA), 2006'. The Government also undertakes awareness drives, media campaigns and outreach programs and issues advisories to the States/ UTs from time to time to highlight evil effects of this practice. Further, the Ministry of Women and Child Development implements the scheme of 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)' in which creation of awareness on matters pertaining to gender equality and discouraging of child marriage is an important focus area.

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) also undertakes awareness programs and consultations with stakeholders from time to time in this regard. In addition, Government of India has introduced CHILDLINE with short code 1098, a 24X7 telephone emergency outreach service for children in crisis which responds with suitable interventions to calls for any form of assistance which a child requires, including for prevention of child marriages in coordination with police, Child Marriage Prohibition Officers, District Child Protection Units etc.
