

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UN-STARRED QUESTION NO.2133
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29.07.2022

CHILD BEGGARS

2133. DR. ALOK KUMAR SUMAN:

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

- (a) the measures being adopted by the Government to provide institutional framework to stop child beggars in the country treating them under the category of Children in Need of Care and Protection;
- (b) impact of poverty on the condition of child beggars in the country;
- (c) the financial grants and money spent to stop the begging in the country; and
- (d) the other steps being taken by the Government to stop begging and protect child rights in the country?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d) : Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, has formulated a scheme "SMILE - Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise", which includes sub-scheme titled 'Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of Begging'. The scheme provides for necessities like food, shelter homes, medical facilities, counselling, rehabilitation, basic documentation, skill development, economic linkages including education to the children/ children of persons found to be engaged in begging.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development is implementing a centrally sponsored scheme namely Mission Vatsalya Scheme under which financial assistance is provided to States and UT Governments for delivering services for children in need and difficult circumstances. The Child Care Institutions (CCIs) established under the scheme provide/support the children staying in CCIs, boarding & lodging; age-appropriate education; access to vocational training; recreation; health care; counselling; etc.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development is administering the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 (JJ Act, 2015) which is the primary legislation for ensuring safety, security, dignity and well-being of children. The Act provides for protection of children in need of care and protection and those in conflict with law by catering to their basic needs through care, protection, development, treatment and social re-integration. It defines standards of care and protection to secure the best interest of child.

Further, section 2 (14) (ii) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 provides that a child who is found working in contravention of labour laws for the time being in force or is found begging, or living on the street is included as a "Child in Need of Care and Protection". The JJ Act, 2015 also provides for punishment with imprisonment for a term which may extend to five years and fine with one lakh rupees in the case of employment of child for begging.

Under the JJ Act, 2015 (Sections 27-30), the Child Welfare Committees have been empowered to take decisions with regard to the children in need of care and protection, keeping their best interest in mind. They are also mandated to monitor the functioning of the Child Care Institutions (CCIs). At the national and state level, the JJ Act authorizes the National/State Commissions for Protection of Child Rights to monitor the implementation of the Act (Section 109).