

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4188**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.12.2024

**CHILD BEGGARS**

4188. SHRI RAJEEV RAI:

Will the Minister of Women and Child Development be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has conducted any survey on the number of children begging at road crossings and traffic lights in big cities and Tier-II towns;
- (b) if so, the approximate number and average age group of these children;
- (c) whether the Government has prepared any rehabilitation plan for these children; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the expenditure incurred during the last five years to ameliorate their conditions?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT  
(SHRIMATI SAVITRI THAKUR)

(a) to (d) : Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment implements a Central Sector Scheme "SMILE - Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise", which includes sub-scheme for the 'Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of Begging' including children engaged in the act of begging. The first stage of the implementation of the sub-scheme involves survey/identification work in 31 identified cities/ towns. So far 352 children of average age group of 6-14 years old have been identified as engaged in the act of begging. All 352 children have been rehabilitated (169 united with parents, 79 sent to Anganwadi, 33 sent to Child Welfare Committee and 71 enrolled with the schools). 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 administers 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 (CNCP) and

Children in Conflict with Law (CCL) 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 the child.

Section 2(14)(ii) of the JJ 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". Sections 27-30 of the JJ Act, 2015 empowers the Child Welfare Committees to take decisions with regard to the CNCP category of children, keeping their best interest in mind. The primary responsibility and execution of the JJ Act, 2015 lies with the States/UTs.

The Mission Vatsalya Scheme of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, services are provided to the CNCP and CCL category of children which include both institutional care and non-institutional care services. The scheme provides services to children including child beggars for their rehabilitation and social re-integration into the mainstream of the society. The Child Care Institutions (CCIs) established under the Mission Vatsalya scheme support, *inter-alia*, age-appropriate education, access to vocational training, recreation, health care, counselling etc. Support under non-institutional care is provided by way of sponsorship, foster care and after care to children in need of care and protection. An expenditure of Rs.4317.14 crore has been incurred under Mission Vatsalya Scheme during the last five years (2019-20 to 2023-24).

Besides this, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights at national level and State Commissions for Protection of Child Rights at State level are authorised to monitor the implementation of the JJ Act.

National Commission for Protection of Child Rights has developed and shared with the States/ UTs, Standard Operating Procedure on "Children in Street Situations (CiSS) 2.0" in the identified districts to ensure zero tolerance on Child begging/ Child labour/ Child abuse.

The number and age group of children as reported on the portal of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights is given below :

<b>Age group (in years)</b>	<b>Number of Children</b>
0-6	1536
7-12	2537
13-18	1113

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