

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 772
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29.11.2024

CHILD MARRIAGE

772. Shri B K Parthasarathi:

Dr. Shivaji Bandappa Kalge:

Smt. Kanimozhi Karunanidhi:

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

- (a) Whether the Government has taken note of recent report by UN pointing out that nearly one third of all child marriages globally are held in India;
- (b) if so, the response of the Government thereto indicating the number of females in the country affected by child marriage during the last three years, State –wise including Andhra Pradesh, district –wise;
- (c) whether any initiatives have been taken by the Government to prevent child marriages in the country, if so, the details of such initiatives and their current implementation status especially in rural areas, State/UT-wise;
- (d) the number of child marriages, prevented in the country, State-wise and district - wise in Andhra Pradesh; and
- (e) Whether the Government proposes to amend the prevention of child Marriage Act to include child betrothals as illegal in line with international laws such as Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) which stipulate against betrothals of minors, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d): The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) compiles and publishes the data on the number of cases of child marriage registered under 'the Prohibition of Child

Marriage Act (PCMA), 2006' in its publication 'Crime in India'. The said report is available upto the year 2022 – Crime Head-Wise and State/ UT-wise. As per information available with NCRB, the number of cases registered under 'the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, (PCMA), 2006' during the years 2020, 2021 and 2022 are 785, 1050 and 1002 respectively. However, higher reporting of cases does not necessarily reflect increase in the number of cases of child marriages, but it may be because of increased awareness among citizens to report such incidents due to initiatives by the Government and better enforcement of law by States/ UTs. The State-wise details of child marriage registered under PCMA, 2006 during the years 2020, 2021 and 2022 is at **Annexure**.

'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, investigation and prosecution of crime against women and children including prohibition of child marriages, rest with the respective State Governments/ UT Administrations. They are competent to deal with such offenses under the extant provisions of law.

Government has enacted 'The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006' (PCMA) in order to curb child marriages and to take punitive action against those associated with child marriages. Section 16 of Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA) authorises the State Government to appoint for the whole State, or such part there of as may be specified, an officer or officers to be known as the 'Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPO)' having jurisdiction over the area or areas specified in the notification. This section also specifies the functions to be discharged by CMPOs, which include preventing solemnisation of child marriages by taking such action as they may deem fit; to collect evidence for the effective prosecution of persons contravening the provisions of the Act; to advise the individuals or counsel the residents of the locality not to indulge in promoting, helping, aiding or allowing the solemnisation of child marriages; to create awareness about the ill effects of child marriages; and to sensitize the community on the issue of child marriages. These authorities function under the respective State Governments/ UT Administrations. As such, implementation of the provisions of the Act lies with them.

Nevertheless, the Central Government 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. The Ministry has also written to all States/ UTs to increase the number of CMPOs, as presence of Statutory Officer at local levels results in even more effective public engagement on the subject and prevention of solemnisation of child marriage. Further, the Ministry of Women and Child Development implements the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) component under the umbrella scheme 'Mission Shakti', wherein creation of awareness on matters pertaining to gender equality and discouraging 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 'Child Helpline' with short code 1098, a toll-free 24X7X365 telephone emergency outreach service for children in crisis which responds with suitable interventions to call for any form of assistance which a child requires, including for prevention of child marriages in coordination with police, Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPOs), District Child Protection Units etc. The ChildLine has also been integrated with Emergency Response Support System(ERSS-112) to provide for 24x7 emergency and non-emergency response and services. Further, the Ministry of Women and Child Development launched 'Bal Vivah Mukh Bharat' campaign on 27.11. 2024 at New Delhi. Under the campaign, a portal '<https://stopchildmarriage.wcd.gov.in>' has also gone live. This online platform has been created to support the States/UTs in raising awareness against child marriage and for effective reporting and prevention of incidences of child marriage. The portal to also provide information to citizens about Child Marriage Prohibition Officers(CMPOs) of all States/ UTs.

(e): There is no such proposal under consideration at present.

Annexure

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a) to (d) OF THE LOK SABHA UN-STARRED QUESTION NO.772 FOR ANSWER ON 29.11.2024 ASKED BY SHRI BK PARTHASARATHI , DR. SHIVAJI BANDAPPA KALGE AND SMT. KANIMOZHI KARUNANIDHI REGARDING 'CHILD MARRIAGE'

The State-wise details of child marriage registered under PCMA, 2006 during the years 2020, 2021 and 2022.

SL	State/UT	2020	2021	2022
		No. of Incidences/Cases	No. of Incidences/Cases	No. of Incidences/Cases
1	Andhra Pradesh	32	19	26
2	Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	0
3	Assam	138	155	163
4	Bihar	5	11	13
5	Chhattisgarh	1	0	0
6	Goa	0	0	0
7	Gujarat	15	12	9
8	Haryana	33	33	37
9	Himachal Pradesh	5	5	4
10	Jharkhand	3	4	5
11	Karnataka	184	273	215
12	Kerala	8	12	6
13	Madhya Pradesh	5	4	7
14	Maharashtra	50	82	99
15	Manipur	0	2	1
16	Meghalaya	0	0	0
17	Mizoram	0	0	0
18	Nagaland	0	0	0
19	Odisha	24	64	46

20	Punjab	13	8	4
21	Rajasthan	3	11	10
22	Sikkim	0	0	0
23	Tamil Nadu	77	169	155
24	Telangana	60	57	53
25	Tripura	4	1	2
26	Uttar Pradesh	12	6	17
27	Uttarakhand	9	12	6
28	West Bengal	98	105	121
	TOTAL STATE(S)	779	1045	999
29	A&N Islands	0	0	0
30	Chandigarh	1	0	0
31	D&N Haveli and Daman & Diu+	0	0	0
32	Delhi	4	2	1
33	Jammu & Kashmir*	1	2	2
34	Ladakh	0	0	0
35	Lakshadweep	0	0	0
36	Puducherry	0	1	0
	TOTAL UT(S)	6	5	3
	TOTAL (ALL INDIA)	785	1050	1002

Source: Crime in India
