

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4628
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28.03.2025

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

4628. SMT. RACHNA BANERJEE:

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

- (a) the details of the measures being taken to prevent gender-based violence and domestic abuse for ensuring women's safety in both urban and rural areas;
- (b) the details of the cases of child trafficking and exploitation along with legal and institutional mechanisms for the protection of children; and
- (c) the details of steps being taken to create safer environments for women and children in public places including transportation, educational institutions home and workplaces?

ANSWER

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

(a): "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 including investigation and prosecution in crimes against women and children rests with the respective State Governments and they are competent to deal with it.

The Central Government gives highest priority to ensuring safety and security of women and has undertaken various legislative and schematic interventions in this regard. These include legislations such as "Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (BNS)", "Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (BNSS)", Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam, 2023" (BSA), "The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005" (PWDVA), "The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961", The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (POCSO), The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013 (SH Act) etc. Besides

these legal provisions there are multiple schemes and projects implemented by the Government which include One Stop Centres (OSCs); Universalisation of Women Helplines (WHL), Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) which is a pan-India single number (112)/ mobile app based system for emergencies; capacity building in community through awareness programmes, setting up/ strengthening of Women Help Desks (WHDs) at Police Stations, Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) including exclusive POCSO Courts etc.

Section 8 of the PWDVA mandates the States/ UTs to appoint such number of Protection Officers in each district as it may consider necessary and also to notify the area or areas within which a Protection Officer shall exercise the powers and perform the duties conferred. It is the duty of the Protection Officer to report the cases of domestic violence to the Magistrate upon receipt of complaints and to assist the Magistrate in the discharge of his functions. However, Conviction of an accused person is done by the competent court after careful consideration of factual positions, evidence and all related legal aspects as per the provisions of law. The PWDVA provides to women remedies such as protection order, residence order etc. under it.

One Stop Centre (OSC) is fully funded by the central government and is implemented across the country since 1st April, 2015. It provides integrated support and assistance under one roof to women affected by violence and those in distress, both in private and public spaces. It also provides an integrated range of services including medical aid, legal aid and advice, temporary shelter, police assistance, psycho-social counselling to needy women. 802 OSCs are operational across the country and over 10.80 lakh women have been assisted upto 31st January, 2025.

Under Nirbhaya Fund, Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) has also undertaken several initiatives, which, inter-alia include training and skill development programs for Investigation Officers, Prosecution Officers and Medical Officers. BPR&D has also prepared Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) for "Women Help Desk at Police Stations" to ensure their smooth functioning by focusing on four critical components, viz. infrastructure, training, human resource development and response mechanism. A book titled "Women's Safety and Security- a Handbook for First Responders and Investigators in the Police" has also been prepared for the purpose of prevention and investigation of crime against women with specific reference to the crime of sexual assault, which includes investigation, victim compensation and rehabilitation. Emphasis has been laid upon inculcating appropriate behavioural and attitudinal skills in the police force for prevention and detection of crimes against women and children and for proper interaction with the victims of crime. Webinars on women safety with sensitivity, gender sensitization of police personnel etc. have also been organized by BPR&D.

Recognizing the need for psycho-social counseling to women affected by violence and those in distress, the Ministry of Women and Child Development has engaged the services of National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS) for

providing basic and advanced training under the project named “Stree Manoraksha” to the staff of One Stop Centres (OSCs) across the country on handling psycho-social and mental health care needs to support to such women.

The Ministry has launched the 'Mission Shakti Portal' with all functional features on January 22, 2025. This portal aims to enhance accessibility of various government services for women, establish quality mechanisms for rescue, protection, and rehabilitation, and build the capacity of functionaries and duty holders under various schemes and legislations.

The Ministry also undertakes awareness exercise for safety and security of women and children from time to time. Further, the Government, through institutions like the National Commission for Women (NCW) and National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has been spreading awareness through seminars, workshops, audio- visual, print and electronic media etc. to sensitize the people about the safety and security of women and children and also about various provisions of law. In addition, Ministry of Women and Child Development and Ministry of Home Affairs have issued advisories to States/ UTs from time to time on various issues pertaining to safety and security of women and children.

(b): The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) compiles and publishes data on crimes, including crime against women and children, in its publication “Crime in India”, which is available on the website of NCRB <https://ncrb.gov.in>. The said report is available upto the year 2022. The specific information on cases of child trafficking is not maintained by the Bureau separately. However, State/ UT –wise victims trafficked (below 18 years) and victims rescued (below 18 years) under Human Trafficking during 2022 is at **Annexure**.

The Government of India attaches highest importance to the matter of preventing and countering the crimes against women and children including crimes of trafficking of women and children and is fully committed to check the menace of trafficking. The Central Government has undertaken a number of legislative and schematic interventions to combat trafficking, protect victims, and rehabilitate trafficked women and children.

Sections 143 and 144 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, are crucial components of India's legal framework against human trafficking. These sections replace and expand offenses previously covered under sections 370 and 370A of the Indian Penal Code, 1860. Section 143 of BNS defines trafficking as recruiting, transporting, harbouring, transferring, or receiving a person for exploitation using various coercive means. The section outlines severe punishments for trafficking, with higher penalties for trafficking multiple persons or children. Further, Section 144 of BNS, 2023, deals with the exploitation of trafficked persons, including sexual exploitation. The section outlines different punishments for exploiting trafficked children and adults, with distinct terms of imprisonment and fines. A new offence of Organized Crime has been added to BNS under Section 111 that covers the crime of

trafficking of persons and human trafficking for prostitution as well. Section 69 of BNS related to sexual intercourse on false promise of marriage, employment, promotion or by suppressing the identity, Section 95 of BNS related to hiring, employing or engaging a child etc. to commit an offence, Section 99 of BNS related to buying a child for the purposes of prostitution are also relevant in the context of human trafficking. Further, in respect of certain severe crimes against women like buying child for the purposes of prostitution (section 99), organised crime (Section 111), kidnapping or maiming a child for purpose of begging (Section 139), mandatory minimum punishments have been prescribed. Additionally, the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023 also recognizes trafficking as a cognizable and non-bailable offence. Section 396 of the BNSS, establishes a framework for victim compensation scheme that mandates every State Government to prepare a scheme for providing funds for the purpose of compensation to the victim or his dependents who have suffered loss or injury as a result of the crime and who require rehabilitation. The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 has been enacted to prevent prostitution and trafficking of persons for commercial sexual exploitation and related offences.

For addressing cross-border/ transnational issues of human trafficking, the Government of India has signed bilateral Memorandums of Understanding with several countries namely Bangladesh, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Cambodia and Myanmar and some multilateral instruments on countering human trafficking.

The responsibility for preventing and countering the crime of human trafficking vests with respective States/ Union Territories, however, the Government of India supplements the efforts of the States/ Union Territories by providing them guidelines on preventing and countering the crime of human trafficking, in the form of various advisories issued from time to time. Some of the initiatives of the Central Government are as under:

- (i) The Government has provided financial assistance to all States/ Union Territories, for upgrading/ setting up Anti Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs) covering all Districts of the States/ UTs. Currently, 827 AHTUs are functional including 807 in States/ UTs, 15 in Border Security Forces (BSF) and 5 in Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB). SSB has also established dedicated helpline number 1903.
- (ii) The Ministry of Home Affairs also provides financial assistance to the States/ UTs in holding 'State level conferences' and Judicial Colloquiums', which are aimed at sensitizing the Police/ Law officers of the State/ UT about the latest initiatives/ developments relevant in addressing the issue of human trafficking in a focused and efficient manner.
- (iii) A national level communication platform - Crime Multi Agency Centre (Cri MAC) was launched by Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on March 12, 2020 for online sharing of information on crime & criminals on 24x7 basis among various Law Enforcement Agencies and ensure seamless flow of information between

them. It facilitates dissemination of information about significant crimes including human trafficking cases across the country on a real time basis and enables inter-State coordination.

(iv) The Government has mandated the National Investigation Agency (NIA) to investigate cases of human trafficking having inter-state, national and international ramifications.

(v) Women Help Desks (WHDs) established with financial assistance under Nirbhaya Fund focus on making the Police Stations more women friendly and approachable.

(vi) Investigation Tracking System for Sexual Offences (ITSSO), an online analytical tool, has been launched to monitor and track police investigations in sexual offences as per Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2018 (now included in BNSS). It enables a regular review by the States/ UTs concerned to monitor the progress of case investigation and shows increase in compliance rate from 44.4% in 2018 to 61.5% in 2023.

(vii) National Database on Sexual Offenders (NDSO) is a database available exclusively to police. Launched on 20.9.2018 to facilitate investigation & tracking of sexual offenders, which allow Investigating Officers to track habitual sex offenders along with initiating preventive measures against sexual offences.

(viii) National Database of Human Trafficking Offenders (NDHTO), facilitates the LEAs to search the trafficker's portfolio which provides crime history, personal details, movement, court actions, appeals, visitors, etc. Trafficker's data search provides details for prevention/detection and investigation of such crimes.

(ix) Further, with regard to Protection and Rehabilitation of Victims of Trafficking, the Ministry of Women and Child Development, under Mission Shakti Scheme has a component 'Shakti Sadan', an Integrated Relief and Rehabilitation Home. Shakti Sadan is a home for destitute, distressed, marginalized women and those who are victims of trafficking etc. and also provides help, care and support and all the daily needs and services to such women. Similarly, the Child Care Institutions (CCIs) under Mission Vatsalya take care of the relief and rehabilitation needs of trafficked children.

(c): To promote women's empowerment and their safety, in domestic and public spaces including workplaces, the government has taken several steps. Some of the initiatives are listed below:

- i. The Government of India with an aim to modernize and improve the criminal justice system has enacted Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bhartiya Nagarik

Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and Bhartiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) which came into effect from 1st July, 2024. In BNS 2023, the offences against women and children earlier scattered in Indian Penal Code, 1860 have been brought together and consolidated under Chapter-V of BNS. The Act has introduced new provisions specifically, Section 111 related to “organized crime”, Section 69 related to sexual intercourse on false promise of marriage, employment, promotion or by suppressing the identity, Section 95 related to hiring, employing or engaging a child to commit an offence etc. In respect of the crimes related to buying a child for the purposes of prostitution (Section 99), gang rape (Section 70) and exploitation of a trafficked person (Section 144) the punishment has been increased. Further, in respect of certain severe crimes against women like buying child for the purposes of prostitution (section 99 of BNS), organised crime (Section 111), kidnapping or maiming a child for purpose of begging (Section 139) mandatory minimum punishment have been prescribed. Also, Sections 75 and 79 of BNS 2023 provide additional legal protections against harassment, covering actions like unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, sexually coloured remarks and also word, gesture or act intended to insult modesty of a woman. A woman facing sexual harassment at workplace has an option to file a complaint under these provisions.

- ii. The introduction of Zero FIR and electronic First Information Reports (e-FIR) is a noteworthy advancement in modernizing the legal system and improving the effectiveness of law enforcement. These measures have removed Geographical restrictions and administrative bottlenecks in the system.
- iii. Section 193(3)(ii) of BNSS mandates that the police officer shall, within a period of ninety days, inform the progress of the investigation to the informant or the victim. Provisions under section 398 of BNSS introduces Witness Protection Schemes, acknowledging the critical need to shield witnesses from threats and intimidation. Further, Section 2(1)(d) of BSA now enables electronic or digital record on emails, documents on computers, laptop or smartphone, messages and voice mail messages stored on digital devices under definition of documents.
- iv. The Ministry of Women and Child Development launched the SHe-Box portal duly encompassing various provisions of ‘the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013’ (SH Act). This portal is an initiative of the Ministry to provide a publicly available centralised repository of information related to Internal Committees (ICs) and Local Committees (LCs) formed across the country, whether in government or private sector. It also provides a common platform to file complaints and track the status of such complaints. The portal includes a feature where complaints registered on it will be automatically forwarded to the IC/ LC of the workplaces concerned within the Central Ministries/ Departments, States/ UTs and in

Private sector. The portal provides for designating a nodal officer for every workplace who is required to ensure updation of data/ information on a regular basis for real time monitoring of complaints.

- v. Under Nirbhaya Fund, Government has taken several measures to improve safety and security of women. Apart from those indicated in reply to part (a) and (b) of the question above, these include Safe City Projects in 8 Cities (namely Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow and Mumbai) to ensure safety of public places where women work and live. To ensure safe transportation for women, rail and road transport projects like Integrated Emergency Response Management System (IERMS), Video Surveillance System at Konkan Railway, Artificial Intelligence (AI) based Facial Recognition System (FRS) integrated with Video surveillance Systems, including Command-and-Control Centre at 7 major railway stations and tabs for safety of women passengers on board the train by Ministry of Railways, and projects like Vehicle Tracking Platform with command and control centre across States/ UTs, and some State specific projects like Uttar Pradesh Road transport Corporation (UPSRTC), Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC), Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TSRTC), etc. by Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, have been implemented. To ensure that justice is delivered to unfortunate women and young girls who are victims of heinous sexual offences, Government has been providing financial assistance to States/ UTs for setting up Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) since 2019. As of January 2025, a total of 745 FTSCs, including 404 exclusive POCSO (e-POCSO) Courts, are operational in 30 States/UTs, having disposed of more than 3,06,000 cases of rape, and offences under POCSO Act across the country.
- vi. The government actively promotes legal literacy under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, which mandates the dissemination of legal knowledge to marginalized and vulnerable sections of society. Through this Act, Legal Services Authorities organize legal literacy camps, workshops, media campaigns, and distribution of educational materials in regional languages. The initiative emphasizes empowering citizens with knowledge of their rights and remedies, fostering equitable access to justice, and reducing exploitation. Additionally, Lok Adalats, established under this Act, not only resolve disputes amicably but also serve as a platform for spreading legal awareness.
- vii. Further, the Ministry of Women and Child Development also administers sub-scheme "Samarthya" under Mission Shakti in which the component of Shakti Sadan is for relief and rehabilitation of women in difficult circumstances and the victims of trafficking.
- viii. Another component Sakhi Niwas (Working Women's Hostels) of Mission Shakti provides safe and conveniently located accommodation for working women, with day care facility for their children, wherever possible, in urban, semi urban,

or even rural areas where employment opportunity for women exist. The government has also earmarked Rs. 5000 Crore during the current financial year for providing financial assistance to States for establishing working women hostel under the Scheme of Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI).

- ix. Further the POCSO Rules, 2020 were also notified by the Ministry to protect the children from exploitation/violence and sexual exploitation. Rule 3 of the POCSO Rules, 2020 provides that any institution housing children or coming in regular contact with children including schools, creches, sports academies or any other facility for children must ensure police verification and background check on periodic basis, of every staff, teaching or non-teaching, regular or contractual, or any other person being an employee of such Institution coming in contact with the child. Such Institution shall also ensure that periodic training is organized for sensitizing them on child safety and protection. Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) from the financial year 2023-2024, has also introduced a centrally funded scheme namely "Scheme for Care and Support to Victims under Sections 4 & 6 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offenses (POCSO) Act, 2012" from Nirbhaya Fund to address the challenges faced by the minor pregnant girl child victims for implementation by the State/UT Governments.

Governments' comprehensive initiatives reflect a strong commitment to ensuring the safety and empowerment of women. By integrating legislative reforms, technological advancements, victim-centric approaches, and awareness programs, the government has laid a robust foundation for addressing crimes against women and children, ensuring justice, and promoting gender equality. These efforts signify a progressive step towards fostering a secure and inclusive society where women can thrive without fear or discrimination.

Annexure

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (B) OF THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4628 FOR ANSWER ON 28.03.2025 ASKED BY SMT. RACHNA BANERJEE ON 'GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE'

State/UT-wise Victims Trafficked (Below 18 Yrs) & Victims Rescued (Below 18 Yrs) under Human Trafficking during 2022

SL No.	State/UT	Victims Trafficked (Below 18 Yrs)	Victims Rescued (Below 18 Yrs)
1	Andhra Pradesh	14	14
2	Arunachal Pradesh	1	1
3	Assam	123	156
4	Bihar	613	613
5	Chhattisgarh	26	26
6	Goa	0	0
7	Gujarat	6	6
8	Haryana	13	11
9	Himachal Pradesh	0	0
10	Jharkhand	129	113
11	Karnataka	7	7
12	Kerala	140	128
13	Madhya Pradesh	91	89
14	Maharashtra	56	56
15	Manipur	0	0
16	Meghalaya	0	0
17	Mizoram	0	0
18	Nagaland	0	0
19	Odisha	353	564
20	Punjab	12	9
21	Rajasthan	453	453
22	Sikkim	0	0
23	Tamil Nadu	3	3
24	Telangana	63	63
25	Tripura	0	0
26	Uttar Pradesh	73	73
27	Uttarakhand	7	7
28	West Bengal	78	91
	TOTAL STATE(S)	2261	2483
29	A & N Islands	0	0
30	Chandigarh	0	0
31	D&N Haveli and Daman & Diu	0	0

32	Delhi UT	605	605
33	Jammu & Kashmir	10	10
34	Ladakh	0	0
35	Lakshadweep	0	0
36	Puducherry	2	0
	TOTAL UT(S)	617	615
	TOTAL (ALL INDIA)	2878	*3098

Note: Human Trafficking data published is based on annual data as provided to NCRB by States/ UTs from their Anti Human Trafficking Units.

***Some of the victims trafficked during previous years have been rescued in 2022.**
