

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1226
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.02.2026

CHILD MARRIAGE CASES

1226. ADV GOWAAL KAGADA PADAVI:
SHRI VISHALDADA PRAKASHBAPU PATIL:
MS. PRANITI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE:
DR. BACHHAV SHOBHA DINESH:

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

- (a) whether the Ministry has taken cognizance of the sharp rise in child marriage cases reported in Maharashtra from 2018-19 to 2024-25 and the low conviction rate under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 as per National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data;
- (b) if so, the details thereof indicating the number of cases reported and the conviction rate during the said period, year-wise along with reasons identified by the Ministry for this mismatch in child marriage cases;
- (c) the details of the steps taken by the Government to control instances of child marriage and increase awareness in said State;
- (d) the details of the 259 districts which have higher rates of child marriage than the national average; and
- (e) the details of the concrete steps taken in these districts by the Ministry to reduce child marriages?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI ANNPURNA DEVI)

(a) to (e): 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 2023. The number of cases of child marriages reported during the last five years in the State of Maharashtra, as per aforesaid report is at **Annexure**.

“Police” and “Public Order” are State subjects under the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. Accordingly, the primary responsibility for maintaining law and order, investigation, prosecution, conviction and prosecution of crime against women and children including prohibition of child marriages, rests with the respective State Governments and UT Administrations; they are competent to deal with such offenses/ criminal acts. However, the increase in number of child marriage cases may also be due to improvement in reporting mechanisms and increased public awareness.

The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 (PCMA) has been enacted to prevent and curb child marriages and to take punitive action against those associated with the solemnisation of child marriages. Section 16 of the PCMA authorises the State Government to appoint for the whole State, or such part thereof 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. All these authorities function under the direct administrative control and supervision of respective State Governments and UT Administrations.

Since, the enactment of PCMA, the prevalence of child marriage in the country has reduced to almost half from 47 % in National Family Health Survey -III (NFHS-III) conducted in 2005- 06 to 23.3% in NFHS-V conducted in 2019-21. This shows that the law has a strong effect in prevention of child marriages in the country. However, a few States have higher prevalence of child marriage compared to the national average. According to the NFHS-5 data, there are around 259 districts in the country where the rate of child marriage (as reported to NFHS-5 by women aged 20-24 years, who married before the age of 18 years) is higher than the national average is available at <https://www.data.gov.in/catalog/national-family-health-survey-5-nfhs-5-india-districts-factsheet-data-provisional>

The Central Government undertakes awareness drives, media campaigns and outreach programs and issues advisories to the States and UTs from time to time to highlight evil effects of this practice. Further, the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) implements the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) component under the umbrella scheme of '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. The National Legal Services Authority with its States and District arms also creates awareness about the ill- effects of child marriage. NALSA has issued a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to its functionaries for effective prevention of child marriages in coordination

with the statutory officers and other authorities. It also has a dedicated helpline 15100 which provides free legal aid to the specified sections of citizens including women and children.

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, CMPOs, District Child Protection Units etc. The Child Helpline has also been integrated with Emergency Response Support System (ERSS-112) to provide for 24x7x365 emergency response, resources and services. In addition, the services of Women Helpline (181), which is integrated with the ERSS are also available round the clock to provide emergency and non-emergency assistance.

The Government of India launched the national campaign ‘Bal Vivah Mukta Bharat’ on 27th November 2024, with the objective of making India child-marriage-free. It is one of the most important imperatives to promote education, skilling, enterprise and entrepreneurship among girls and women to realise the vision of a ‘Viksit Bharat’ through ‘whole of government’ and ‘whole of society’ approach. The campaign aims to create awareness for prevention of child marriage, enhance involvement of parents, families, and communities, strengthen the role and capacity of Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPOs), encourage timely reporting of child marriage cases, and identify adolescent girls who are school dropouts or at risk of child marriage to ensure their education, skilling, and empowerment.

To commemorate the success of the campaign and further intensify efforts, a 100 Days Special Campaign under Bal Vivah Mukta Bharat was launched on 4th December 2025 to mobilise all stakeholders in a structured and time-bound manner. The 100 Days Special Campaign focuses on targeted outreach to institutions, community leaders and service provider, along with mandatory uploading of details of Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPOs) on the BVMB Portal.

The campaign follows a spell-wise thematic implementation plan. Spell-I (27th November, 2025 to 31st December, 2025) focuses on sensitisation activities in schools, colleges and universities through debates, essay competitions and pledge ceremonies. Spell-II (1st January, 2026 to 31st January, 2026) focuses on engagement with religious institutions and marriage-related service providers, including temples, mosques, caterers, tent houses and DJs, to discourage child marriage and display IEC materials. Spell-III (1st February, 2026 to 8th March, 2026) focuses on mobilisation of Gram Panchayats and Municipal Wards for passing resolutions declaring their jurisdictions as child-marriage-free.

A dedicated digital platform, the Bal Vivah Mukta Bharat portal (<https://stopchildmarriage.wcd.gov.in>), facilitates reporting of child marriage incidents, dissemination of information, and registration of pledges. Citizens, institutions, and public representatives can take the Bal Vivah Mukta Bharat pledge on the dedicated portal as well as through the MyGov portal, promoting wide participation. As on date, awareness programmes have reached over 6 crore citizens, and more than 28 lakh pledges against child marriage have been

registered on the portal, reflecting strong community engagement and active participation across the country. The BVMB portal serves as a centralised repository of more than 60,700 CMPOs across States and Union Territories, providing citizens with an efficient reporting mechanism, where early reporting enables timely intervention to prevent child marriages.

Annexure

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (A) TO (E) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1226 TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.02.2026 REGARDING ‘CHILD MARRIAGE CASES’.

DETAILS OF CHILD MARRIAGE CASES REPORTED IN THE STATE OF MAHARASHTRA DURING THE YEARS 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 2022 AND 2023.

SL	Years	Prohibition of Child Marriage Act				
		CR	CCS	CTC	CON	CVR
1	2018	13	12	5	0	0.0
2	2019	20	12	5	0	0.0
3	2020	50	32	2	0	0.0
4	2021	82	72	7	0	0.0
5	2022	99	89	5	0	0.0
6	2023	93	86	9	0	0.0

Cases Registered (CR), Cases Chargesheeted (CCS), Cases in which Trials Completed (CTC), Cases Convicted (CON) and Conviction Rate (CVR) under Prohibition of Child Marriage Act under Crime against Children in Maharashtra during 2018-2023
