

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1239
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.02.2026

STRENGTHENING OF ADOPTION & CHILD WELFARE ECOSYSTEM

1239. SHRI CAPTAIN BRIJESH CHOWTA
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Will the Minister of Women and Child Development be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the key functions of the Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA), alongwith the major rules governing adoption/foster care under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act and the related regulations;
- (b) the number of children legally available for adoption/number of registered prospective adoptive parents (Resident Indians, NRIs, OCIs and foreign nationals) on the CARINGS portal indicating the average waiting period and measures undertaken to reduce delays through digital monitoring and procedural reforms, State-wise, category-wise including district-wise details for Dakshina Kannada in Karnataka;
- (c) the details of the process for declaring orphaned, abandoned/surrendered children legally free for adoption, the role of Child Welfare Committees alongwith the action taken against unregistered Child Care Institutions, including such cases identified, if any, in Karnataka;
- (d) the details of the eligibility norms/monitoring mechanisms for foster care, including transgender/homosexual persons eligible to foster/adopt; and
- (e) the details of the safeguards for inter-country adoptions, annual adoption statistics, budget utilisation/reforms proposed to be enhance transparency and efficiency?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI ANNAPURNA DEVI)

- (a): The Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA), a statutory body under the Ministry of Women and Child Development, is mandated with the following functions under Section 68 of the Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, namely, (i) to promote in-country adoptions and to facilitate inter-State adoptions in co-ordination with State Agency; (ii) to regulate inter-country adoptions; (iii) to frame regulations on adoption and related matters from time to time as may be necessary; (iv) to carry out the functions of the Central Authority under the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Inter-country Adoption; and (v) any other function as may be prescribed.

Adoption in the country is undertaken through the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act (JJ Act), 2015 and Adoption Regulations 2022. For Foster Care, the Ministry has framed Model Foster Care Guidelines, 2024, which are implemented through States and UTs.

(b): As per designated portal CARINGS now unified with the Mission Vatsalya portal, a total number of 2170 children are legally available for adoption (as on 22/01/2026).

The total number of Prospective Adoptive Parents (Resident Indians, NRIs, OCIs and Foreign Nationals) registered on the CARINGS portal (as on 22/01/2026) is as under: -

Resident Indians	NRIs	OCIs	Foreign Nationals
29610	268	154	201

The waiting period for adoption depends on factors such as the availability of children in the State, and the child's age, category, gender and health condition. There is no waiting period for the adoption of children with special needs and a child from immediate placement category (mostly older children).

To reduce delays and ensure transparency, CARA has digitised the entire adoption process through an online portal, with regular monitoring and follow-ups with States/UTs. An Identification Cell has also been set up since July 2024 to identify adoptable children in Child Care Institutions and expedite their declaration as legally free for adoption. The timelines for processes relating to children, for authorized and agencies concerned as well as adoption by resident Indians/NRIs/OCIs/Foreign PAPs (living/not living in India) have been prescribed in the Adoption Regulations, 2022.

State-wise, category-wise details of LFA (Legally Free for Adoption) pendency and the district-wise details in the State of Karnataka are at **Annexure-I** and **Annexure-II** respectively.

(c): The procedure for declaring a child as orphaned, abandoned or surrendered is prescribed under the JJ Act, 2015. JJ Act lay down the process for production of the child before the Child Welfare Committee and for declaring the child legally free for adoption.

Section 41 of the JJ Act, 2015 provides for the registration of Child Care Institutions (CCIs) by the State Government, while Section 42 empowers the State Government to take appropriate action against CCIs functioning without registration. The Child Welfare Committee (CWC) is constituted under Section 27 of the Act in every district to exercise the powers and discharge the duties relating to children in need of care and protection.

(d)& (e): Model Foster Care Guidelines, 2024 lays down the eligibility criteria for Prospective Foster Parents and is available on the CARA website. Inter-country adoption follows a fully online and transparent process with mandatory registration of Prospective Adoptive Parents. Home studies and registration of NRI, OCI and foreign PAPs are conducted only through the designated portal by authorized agencies, Central Authorities or Indian Missions, and all cases are scrutinized and approved by CARA in accordance with the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015. Post-adoption follow-up is mandatory for two years and is carried out through authorized agencies or Indian Missions in the receiving country. Counselling of prospective parents and children is required at all stages of adoption, including prior to any disruption or dissolution. Data related

to adoption during the last 3 years as per the CARINGS portal under Mission Vatsalya is as follows: -

Year	In-country	Inter-country	Total
2022-23	3010	431	3441
2023-24	3580	449	4029
2024-25	4155	360	4515

CARA undertakes all adoption-related activities within the budget allocated by the Ministry, with no separate allocation for inter-country adoptions. To improve transparency and efficiency, the adoption process has been streamlined through mandatory counselling, medical assessment of children with special needs, issuance of adoption orders by the District Magistrate, and fixed timelines. The entire process is digitized through the CARINGS portal under Mission Vatsalya, with real-time tracking and monitoring of prospective adoptive parents and children through an integrated dashboard, ensuring a transparent and efficient adoption system.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (b) OF THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUSTION NO. 1239 FOR ANSWER ON 06.02.2026 BY SHRI CAPTAIN BRIJESH CHOWTA, SHRI JAGDAMBILKA PAL AND SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR REGARDING STRENGTHENING OF ADOPTION & CHILD WELFARE ECOSYSTEM

STATE-WISE AND CATEGORY-WISE DETAILS OF LEGALLY FREE FOR ADOPTION (LFA) CHILDREN

S.N.	States/UTs	Orphan	Abandoned	Surrendered	Total
1	ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS	3	0	0	3
2	ANDHRA PRADESH	5	12	11	28
3	ARUNACHAL PRADESH	18	29	35	82
4	ASSAM	59	66	39	164
5	BIHAR	17	45	4	66
6	CHANDIGARH	0	0	0	0
7	CHHATTISGARH	146	94	25	265
8	DELHI	33	229	18	280
9	GOA	2	4	11	17
10	GUJARAT	5	38	10	53
11	HARYANA	36	82	38	156
12	HIMACHAL PRADESH	0	4	1	5
13	JAMMU AND KASHMIR	36	29	26	91
14	JHARKHAND	11	54	8	73
15	KARNATAKA	46	95	124	265
16	KERALA	22	23	25	70
17	LADAKH	0	0	0	0
18	LAKSHADWEEP	0	0	0	0
19	MADHYA PRADESH	51	85	27	163
20	MAHARASHTRA	106	343	210	659
21	MANIPUR	30	6	5	41
22	MEGHALAYA	0	0	1	1
23	MIZORAM	0	0	1	1
24	NAGALAND	0	0	3	3
25	ODISHA	110	44	32	186
26	PUDUCHERRY	0	1	7	8
27	PUNJAB	1	8	4	13
28	RAJASTHAN	27	29	7	63
29	SIKKIM	4	0	0	4
30	TAMIL NADU	118	91	194	403
31	TELANGANA	6	31	40	77

32	THE DADRA AND NAGAR HAVELI AND DAMAN AND DIU	0	0	0	0
33	TRIPURA	15	12	6	33
34	UTTARAKHAND	20	6	4	30
35	UTTAR PRADESH	128	252	28	408
36	WEST BENGAL	37	153	32	222

Annexure – II

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (b) OF THE LOK SABHA UN-STARRED QUSTION NO. 1239 FOR ANSWER ON 06.02.2026 BY SHRI CAPTAIN BRIJESH CHOWTA, SHRI JAGDAMBILKA PAL AND SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR REGARDINGSTRENGTHENING OF ADOPTION & CHILD WELFARE ECOSYSTEM

DISTRICT-WISE AND CATEGORY-WISE DETAILS OF LEGALLY FREE FOR ADOPTION (LFA) CHILDREN IN THE STATE OF KARNATAKA INCLUDING DAKSHINA KANNADA DISTRICT

S.N.	Districts	Orphan	Abandoned	Surrendered	Total
1	BAGALKOTE	0	0	0	0
2	BALLARI	4	0	2	6
3	BELAGAVI	23	0	0	23
4	BENGALURU RURAL	0	3	3	6
5	BENGALURU SOUTH	0	1	3	4
6	BENGALURU URBAN	5	44	44	93
7	BIDAR	3	4	1	8
8	CHAMARAJANAGAR	0	0	2	2
9	CHIKKABALLAPURA	0	1	1	2
10	CHIKKAMAGALURU	0	1	1	2
11	CHITRADURGA	1	1	3	5
12	DAKSHINA KANNADA	0	3	8	11
13	DAVANAGERE	0	3	7	10
14	DHARWAD	5	3	1	9
15	GADAG	0	0	0	0
16	HASSAN	1	2	4	7
17	HAVERI	0	1	2	3
18	KALABURAGI	0	0	5	5
19	KODAGU	0	11	1	12
20	KOLAR	0	2	1	3
21	KOPPAL	0	0	0	0
22	MANDYA	3	4	3	10
23	MYSURU	0	2	6	8
24	RAICHUR	0	2	0	2
25	SHIVAMOGGA	0	1	5	6
26	TUMAKURU	0	3	12	15
27	UDUPI	1	0	3	4
28	UTTARA KANNADA	0	2	4	6

29	VIJAYANAGARA	0	0	0	0
30	VIJAYAPURA	0	0	2	2
31	YADGIR	0	1	0	1