

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UN-STARRED QUESTION NO. 3549
TO BE ANSWERED ON 13.03.2026

CHILD MARRIAGE CASES

3549. DR. PRABHA MALLIKARJUN:

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

- (a) whether incidents of child marriage and child labour remain widespread despite statutory prohibitions, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether enforcement of the said prohibition at district and panchayat levels is effective, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether recent inspections have resulted in prosecutions and rehabilitation, if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether vulnerable communities are being adequately protected, if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the details of the roadmap exists for complete eradication?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI ANNPURNA DEVI)

(a) to (e) The Government of India has enacted The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 (PCMA) and the Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 to prohibit child marriage and child labour and to take punitive action against violations.

As per Section 17A of the Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, powers and duties are conferred on the District Magistrate for effective implementation of the provisions of the Act. District Magistrates designate their subordinates as District Nodal Officers (DNOs) for exercising such powers within their local limits. Further, Section 17B provides for periodic inspection and monitoring of the implementation of the Act. The Ministry of Labour and Employment has also issued a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to serve as a ready reckoner for enforcement agencies and other stakeholders.

Further, 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 (CMPOs)' 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.

To strengthen implementation and accelerate progress towards elimination of child marriage, the Government launched the national campaign “Bal Vivah Mukta Bharat” on 27th November 2024 with the objective of making India child-marriage-free through a whole of government and whole of society approach. The campaign focuses on awareness generation, community mobilisation, strengthening the role and capacity of CMPOs, encouraging timely reporting of cases, and identifying girls at risk of child marriage to ensure their education, skilling and empowerment.

Further, to commemorate the success and intensify efforts, a 100 Days Special Campaign under the Bal Vivah Mukta Bharat initiative was launched on 4th December 2025. The campaign includes targeted outreach to institutions, community leaders and service providers and mandates uploading details of CMPOs on the Bal Vivah Mukta Bharat Portal. The campaign is implemented in thematic spells focusing on educational institutions, engagement with religious and marriage-related service providers, and mobilisation of Gram Panchayats and Municipal Wards to declare their jurisdictions 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. As on 09.03.2026, awareness programmes have reached over 11.81 crore citizens, and more than 40 lakh pledges against child marriage have been registered on the portal. The portal also serves as a repository of over 66,000 CMPOs across States and Union Territories up to Gram Panchayat level, enabling early reporting and timely intervention.

The Government is also implementing the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) component under Mission Shakti, launched on 22nd January 2015, which aims to address gender-based discrimination and promote the empowerment of the girl child. Awareness campaigns and outreach activities are also undertaken by institutions such as the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) and the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), which provides free legal aid through helpline 15100.

In addition, the Child Helpline (1098) provides a 24x7 toll-free emergency outreach service for children in distress, including cases relating to child marriage, in coordination with police, CMPOs and District Child Protection Units. The Child Helpline is integrated with the Emergency Response Support System (ERSS-112) for round-the-clock emergency response. The Women Helpline (181) is also available to provide emergency and non-emergency assistance.

Through these legal provisions, enforcement mechanisms, community mobilisation initiatives and awareness campaigns, the Government, in coordination with States and UTs and other stakeholders, is pursuing a comprehensive roadmap towards the progressive elimination of child marriage and child labour in the country.

While the Ministry of Women and Child Development provides policy and schematic support, the responsibility to prohibit and prevent child marriages lies primarily with the respective State Governments and Union Territory Administrations, as ‘Police’ and ‘Public Order’ are State subjects under the Constitution, making them competent to act against such offences under existing law.
