

has mechanisms for timely service delivery and a robust monitoring as well as intervention infrastructure. It targets to bring down stunting of the children in the age group of 0-6 years from 38.4% to 25% by the year 2022. The major activities undertaken under this Abhiyaan are ensuring convergence with various other programmes; Information Technology enabled Common Application Software for strengthening service delivery and interventions; Community Mobilization and Awareness Advocacy leading to Jan Andolan- to educate the people on nutritional aspects; Capacity Building of Frontline Functionaries, incentivizing States/ UTs for achieving goals etc.

Dowry practices in the society

†1270. SHRI R.K. SINHA: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state the issues on which Government is working to prevent increasing dowry practice in the society?

THE MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): As per the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 giving, taking or demanding dowry is an offence. As per Indian Penal Code, 1860, dowry death is an offence under section 304B and harassment for dowry is covered under section 498A. In addition, the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 also include unlawful demand for dowry within domestic violence.

All these Acts are being implemented through State Governments. Government of India conducts awareness generation programmes and publicity campaigns to prevent dowry practice in India.

Spending on child education

1271. SHRI KUMAR KETKAR: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is spending on child education as per the directives suggested by Kothari Commission; and

(b) if so, what is the Total percentage, if not, the reasons therefor and what are the steps proposed to be taken by Government?

THE MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Women and Child Development is implementing

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Anganwadi Services Scheme under the Umbrella Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and Pre-School non-formal education is one of the six free services provided to the children in the age group of 3-6 years through Anganwadi Centres (AWCs). The Ministry has notified the National Early Childhood Care and Education Policy (ECCE) on 12th October 2013. The Policy clearly lays down basic non-negotiable quality standards to be followed by all ECCE service providers. It strives to achieve holistic development and active learning capacity of all children below 6 years of age by promoting free, universal, inclusive, equitable, joyful and contextualized opportunities for laying foundation and attaining full potential.

Pre-School Education kits are being provided to all the Anganwadi Centres(AWCs) for effective implementation of ECCE in all Anganwadis. During 2017-18, the per AWC allocation for PSE has been increased from ₹ 3,000/- to ₹ 5,000/- p.a. The Ministry has also developed age appropriate Activity books for 3-6 years children which are being used by States/UTs after local customization. At present, there are 3.02 crore children in the age group 3-6 years who are beneficiaries of pre-school education in Anganwadi Centres under Anganwadi Services.

Expenditure on elementary education and as percentage of GDP as per analysis of Budgeted Expenditure on Education published by Ministry of Human Resource Development for the year 2017-18 is as follows:-

Sector	Expenditure (₹ in crore)	Expenditure (as % of GDP)
Elementary Education	324227.59	1.90
2017-18 (BE)		

Cases of child marriage

1272. SHRI ANIL DESAI: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether child marriages are legally banned in the country;
- (b) how many cases of child marriage have solemnised in the country during the last five years; and
- (c) the names of the States where child marriages have solemnised and what action has been taken in this matter?