

**Marriage of girls before attaining legal age**

3026. SHRI PRABHAKAR REDDY VEMIREDDY: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the country is still unable to contain teenage girl marriages (marriage between 15 and 19 years of age);

(b) whether it is also a fact that 20 per cent of total girl population are married in the above age group and Bihar, West Bengal, Jharkhand and Rajasthan are some of the worst affected States; and

(c) if so, what special emphasis is made on such and similar other States to stop marriage of girls before they attain legal age for marriage?

THE MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) and (b) According to the Office of Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India, as per the latest Sample Registration System (SRS) data for the year 2017, 0.5% female population between 15 and 19 years of age was married with respect to total female population. The percentage of married females (out of total female population) between the age group of 15-19 years is 0.4% each in the State of Bihar and Jharkhand, 1.0% in West Bengal and 0.7% in Rajasthan.

(c) The Government of India has enacted the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 in order to prohibit child marriages. The Ministry of Women and Child Development regularly sends letters and pursues with States/UTs and District Collectors (including in the States of Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Rajasthan) from time to time for effective implementation of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 and to increase alertness to prevent underage marriages, especially during festivals such as Akshaya Tritiya/Akha Teej etc.

The practice of Child Marriages is largely due to the prevailing social customs, traditions, illiteracy, poverty, low status of women in society and lack of awareness. In addition to legislative interventions, the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme of the Ministry of Women and Child Development envisages to save and educate girls and reduce school dropouts, thus delaying their marriage. A significant part of

the BBBP advocacy campaign is focused on creating awareness on and discouraging the practice of child marriage. This is a continuous process and Government undertakes media campaigns and outreach programmes to address this.

### **Features/objectives of Sakhi Centres**

3027. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has proposed to implement any scheme for setting up of One Stop Centres (OSCs), popularly known as Sakhi Centres to support women affected by violence, if so, the details thereof along with the salient features/objectives of the scheme;

(b) whether the scheme is being financed through Nirbhaya Fund and if so, the details thereof along with the expenditure incurred by Government for setting up such centres, State/UT-wise; and

(c) the details of OSC approved, established and functional along with the number of women registered/enrolled thereunder till date, State/UT-wise including Jharkhand and Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) to (c) The One Stop Centre (OSC) Scheme is being implemented under the Nirbhaya Fund since 1st April 2015. As on date 728 OSCs have been approved by Government of India in 724 districts across the country and 680 OSCs out of them have become operational so far. The expenditure incurred by Government for setting up such centres, State/UT-wise is given in the Statement-I (*See* below).

These OSCs provide an integrated range of services under one roof including medical help, police facilitation, psychological counselling, legal counselling and temporary shelter to women affected by violence. OSCs are to be set up either in newly constructed buildings or in pre-existing buildings within the premises of or within 2 kms. radius of hospitals or medical facilities. The State/UT-wise details of the OSCs approved and functional along with number of cases of women registered there till date, including Jharkhand and Gujarat is given in the Statement-II.