

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA

UN-STARRED QUESTION NO.1265
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.02.2021

INCREASE IN SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

1265. SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN:

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

- (a) Whether the Ministry is aware that the pandemic has led to a spike in cases of women and child abuse;
- (b) if so, whether Government has undertaken any survey or estimated such increase and details thereof;
- (c) the number of complaints of women or child abuse received since March 2020 and how many were received in the same period for the last two years; and
- (d) the steps being taken to ensure the safety and well-being of women and children during COVID induced lockdowns?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) to (d): National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) compiles and publishes information on crimes in its publication "Crime in India" which is available on the website of NCRB <https://ncrb.gov.in>. The published reports are available till the year 2019.

'Police' and 'Public Order' are State subjects under the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. The responsibility to maintain law and order, protection of life and property of the citizens including women are with the respective State Governments. The State governments are competent to deal with such offences under the extant provision of law. However, Government has taken a number of initiatives in this regard during COVID-19 lockdown. The Government has ensured that its institutions such as One Stop Centres (OSCs), Universalisation of Women Help Line (WHL), Ujjawala Homes, Swadhar Greh, Child Care Institutions, Child Line (1098), Emergency Response Support System (112) and various statutory authorities under women centric laws such as 'The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005', 'The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961', 'The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006' etc. remained operational and available for providing assistance to women during the period. Further, during lockdown, National Commission for Women (NCW) also took measures to assist women facing distress.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development implements the "Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)" scheme in which the creation of awareness on matters pertaining to gender equality and discouraging child marriage is an important focus area. Through advisory dated 28.03.2020 and 29.03.2020 issued by National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), all States/UTs were requested that Child Welfare Police Officers (CWPO) should regularly monitor any abandoned children that were found on the streets within the police station's jurisdiction and make arrangements for conducting medical check-up of such children. The NCPCR undertakes awareness programmes and consultations with stakeholders from time to time for ensuring safety and well being of children.
