

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4846
ANSWERED ON:23.05.2006
NHRC REPORT ON DEVDASI SYSTEM
Barman Shri Hiten

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

(a) whether the Government has examined the recent report of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) highlighting the fact that the "Devdasi" system, wherein socially and economically backward families are made to offer their young daughters to the temples, still continued to be in practice in various States, particularly in Karnataka;

(b) if so, reaction of the Government thereto; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the government on the observations made by the National Human Rights commission in this report?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b)&(c) A copy of the report has been sent to the States for necessary action. The Government of Karnataka has already an Act for prevention of dedication of devdasis and providing for their rehabilitation. Under this Act, whoever performs, promotes, abets, takes part in dedication ceremony is liable for punishment.

The Central Advisory Committee headed by Secretary (Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India) reviews the States' activities in combating trafficking and prostitution. The Ministry of WCD implements a pilot project on combating trafficking of women and children for sexual exploitation in source, destination and traditional areas of prostitution. The Ministry also runs Swadhar Shelter Homes wherein sex workers are provided shelter, food, clothing, emotional support, counseling, rehabilitation and other facilities.