

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2765
ANSWERED ON:30.03.2012
HOMELESS CHILDREN
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Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken note of the thousands of children of which one-fifth are reported to be girls in the capital and other major metros in the country spending their nights in the streets;
- (b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether most of these children are from the deprived sections of the society such as dalits, tribals and other backward classes have become drug addicts and got involved in various anti-social activities;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (e) the steps taken/being taken by the Government for their rehabilitation?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH)

(a) & (b): Authentic data regarding number of street children is not available with the Ministry of Women and Child Development as their numbers are fluctuating in nature. However, as per a census of street children in Delhi conducted by the Institute for Human Development and Save the Children (on their own), in 2010, there are 50,923 street children in Delhi of which one-fifth are reported to be girls. No such census has been carried out in any other metro city of the country. There are many socio-economic reasons for children living on streets such as poverty, migration of families, families living on the streets, demolition of slum clusters etc.

(c) to (e): The analysis of the social class of street children in the above mentioned study shows that 38.8%, 36% and 16.7% of the street children belonged to other backward castes (OBCs), dalit and tribal, categories respectively. The study shows that few children were found to be using drugs and other addictive substances such as tobacco and pan masala. However, the study does not reflect involvement of these children in anti-social activities.

To help rehabilitate and mainstream children on the street, financial assistance is provided to State Governments/UT Administrations under the centrally sponsored Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS), inter-alia for setting up of Open Shelters in urban and semi-urban areas for such children.

The programmes and activities of these Open Shelters inter-alia include age- appropriate education, access to vocational training, recreation, bridge education, linkages to the National Open School Programme (NOSP), health care, counseling, referral service for children for specialized services, e.g., for prevention of drug and substance abuse etc.