

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:689

ANSWERED ON:26.11.2012

ERADICATION OF UNTOUCHABILITY

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Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the mal-practice of untouchability is still prevailing in some parts of the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to abolish this social evil?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI P. BALRAM NAIK)

(a) to (c): Article 17 of the Constitution of India has abolished the practice of untouchability; its practice in any form is forbidden and is an offence punishable in accordance with law. An Act of Parliament, namely, the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955, prescribes punishment for the enforcement of any disability arising from preaching and practice of untouchability. As per the data provided by the National Crime Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, during 2011, 74 cases were registered by the police under the PCR Act.

The said Act is implemented by the concerned State Governments and Union Territory Administrations. With a view to ensure effective implementation of provisions of the Act, Central assistance is provided to States/Union Territories, which includes strengthening of the enforcement machinery, incentive for inter caste marriages and awareness generation. They are requested to implement provisions of the Act in letter and spirit.

The Central Government has been addressing the States/UTs to implement provisions of the PCR Act in letter and spirit.

A Committee under the Chairpersonship of Union Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment which was constituted in the year 2006, also inter-alia reviews implementation of the PCR Act in State/UTs. The Committee has so far held twenty meetings wherein implementation of the said Act in 24 States and 4 Union Territories has been reviewed.