

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:392

ANSWERED ON:20.11.2009

CHILD MARRIAGES

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

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(a) whether a recent Report by the United Nations International Children Education Fund (UNICEF) has stated that more than a third of the world's child marriages are from India, exposing children to an increased risk of exploitation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of the remedial measures suggested in the said Report to prevent the same; and

(d) the response of the Government thereto with the action taken or proposed to be taken to prevent child marriages?

**Answer**

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

(a) & (b) The United Nations International Children Education Fund (UNICEF) have released a Report in September 2009 based on study of 96 countries representing 61% of the world population. The report mentions that more than half of all the world's women in the age group of 20-24 years old, who were married by age 18, live in South Asia. The report also mentions that more than one in three women in the world, who were married as children, are from India. This report is based on data available for 2000-2007 from various sources.

(c) The Report has not made any specific recommendations to prevent child marriages in India. However, it calls for action to build protective environment for children for which some suggestions are made.

(d) In order to prohibit child marriages and to make the provisions of the Act more effective and punishment for offenders, a new legislation 'The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006' was notified in the Gazette of India on 11th January, 2007 and the said Act has been enforced w.e.f. 1.11.2007. In addition the Ministry of Women & Child Development has launched the Integrated Child Protection Scheme aimed for care and protection of children. Also, awareness generation and advocacy measures are continuously being undertaken by the Ministry of Women and Child Development in this connection.