

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3687
ANSWERED ON:16.12.2014
PREVENTING CASTE BASED SEGREGATION
Kher Smt. Kirron

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

- (a) whether the Government is running any scheme/programme to counter the caste-based segregation of houses in villages across India, including Chandigarh;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) if not, whether the Government proposes to take up this issue to encourage unity within village communities; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI VIJAY SAMPLA)

(a) to (d): Article 17 of the Constitution of India has abolished 'Untouchability', its practice in any form is forbidden and enforcement of any disability arising out of 'Untouchability' is an offence punishable in accordance with law. In pursuance of this Constitutional provision, the Untouchability (Offences) Act, 1955 was enacted and notified on 08.05.1955. Subsequently, it was amended and renamed in the year 1976 as the Protection of Civil Rights {PCR} Act, 1955. The PCR Act prescribes punishment for the enforcement of any disability arising from the practice of untouchability. The Act is implemented by respective State Governments/Union Territory Administrations.

Section 7 of the PCR Act prescribes punishment for preventing any person from exercising any right accruing to him by reasons of the abolition of 'untouchability'. Explanation I of the said section, inter-alia, states that a person shall be deemed to boycott another person who refuses to let such a person use or occupy any house, which would be commonly done in the ordinary course. A Centrally Sponsored Scheme, Central assistance is also provided to State Governments/Union Territory Administrations for effective implementation of the PCR Act, which, inter-alia, includes incentive for inter-caste marriages where one of the spouses is a member of a Scheduled Caste and awareness generation.