

PARLIAMENT WATCH!

Children's Issues in Parliament 2017-18



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India's 39 per cent of the population are children in the age group of 0-18 years. However, these 472 million children received a mere 3.24 per cent of the total Union budgetary allocation in the year 2018-19 a further decrease from 3.32 per cent set aside for them in the last fiscal year 2017-18. (Union Budget 2018-19, HAQ: Centre for Child Rights).

"The budget is not just a collection of numbers, but an expression of our values and aspirations."
Jacob Lew

While, the country's budget reflects the political commitments and priorities of the government and the questions raised by Parliamentarians is a further expression of the same. HAQ: Centre for Child Rights has been analysing the questions raised by Parliamentarians in both the Houses on issues affecting children to understand what interests them. The following three sessions were analysed during 2017-18.

Monsoon session: 17 July 2017 to 11 August 2017

Winter session : 15 December 2017 to 5 January 2018

Budget session : 29 January 2018 to 9 February 2018
5 March 2018 to 6 April 2018

Starred and Unstarred questions were selected and broadly categorised under four themes:

Development – early childhood development, welfare schemes and programmes

Education – literacy, Right to Education (RTE) Act, primary and secondary education and budgetary allocation

Health – malnutrition, diseases affecting children and health interventions

Protection - crimes against and exploitation of children, including child abuse, child marriage, child labour, and trafficking

Key Highlights:

- Of the total 26,340 Starred and Unstarred questions asked in Parliament, 877 or a mere 3.3 per cent focussed on children's issues. The falling interest among MPs on issues related to children is a matter of concern.
- 61 per cent questions concerning children were asked in the Rajya Sabha and the remaining 39 per cent in the Lok Sabha.
- In Lok Sabha, the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party MPs raised the maximum questions while in Rajya Sabha, Congress had the most queries.
- Education drew the maximum attention from our MPs during the Monsoon, Winter and Budget sessions in 2017-18. This trend has been continuing over the years. Protection issues including violence against children, child marriage, child labour, child sex ratio was second in priority. Health was accorded the least priority in terms of the questions raised.



Who were the MPs most interested in children related issues?

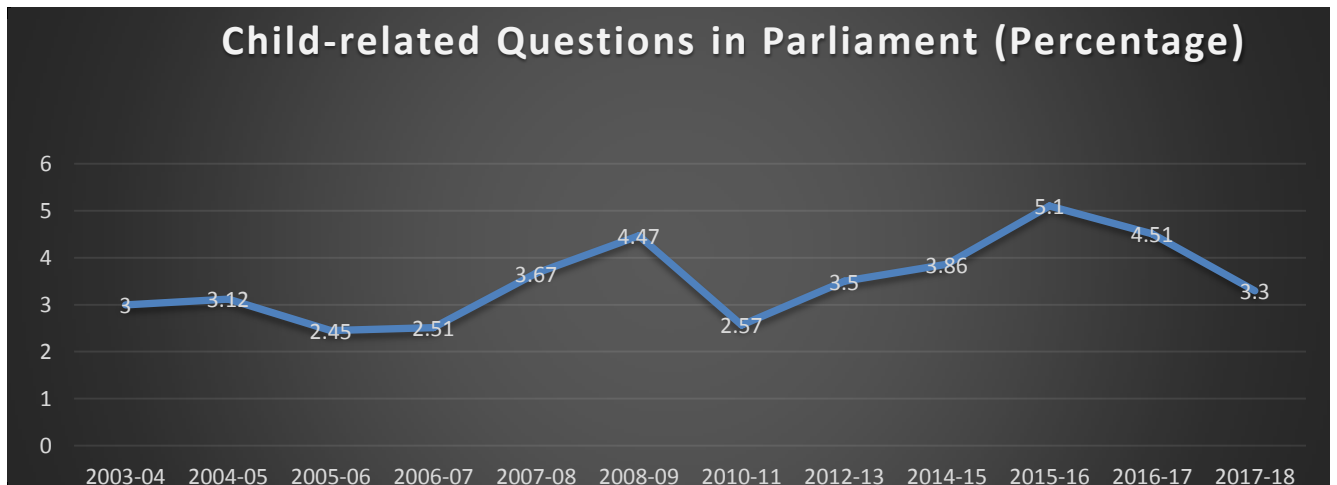
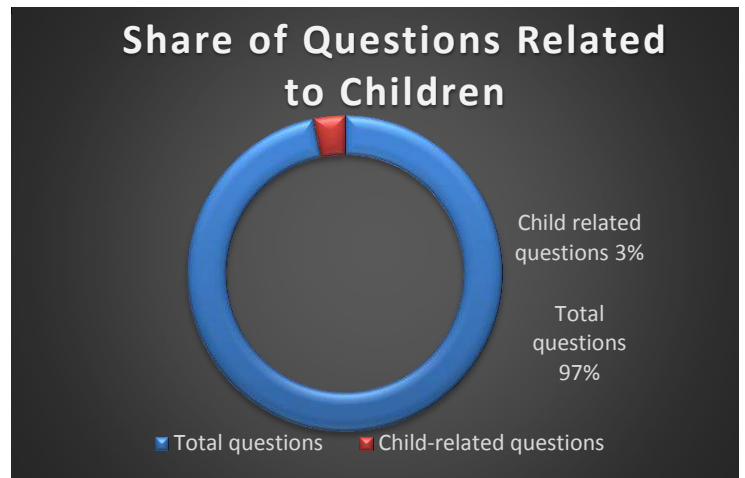
Rajya Sabha: Smt. Rajani Patil of the Indian National Congress asked 20 questions.

Lok Sabha: Shri Jyotiraditya Madhavrao Scindia of the Indian National Congress asked 13 questions

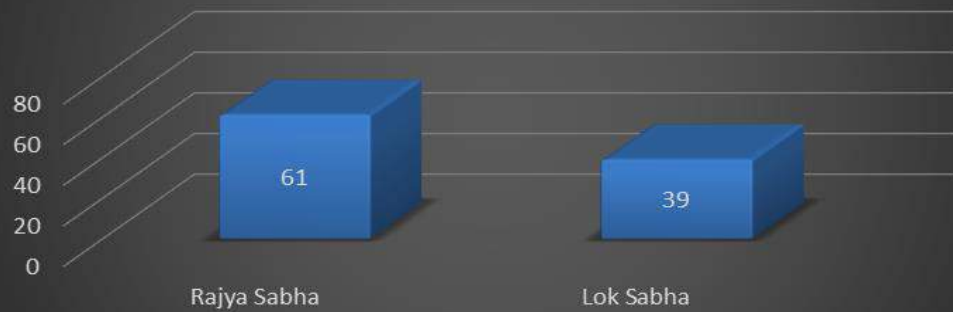
Share of Child-related Questions in Parliament, 2017-18

This dwindling interest in children's issues is a matter of concern.

Compared to 1,334 child-related questions in Parliament in 2016-17, there were only 877 queries in 2017-18. There has been a constant decline from 5.1 per cent in 2015-16 to 4.5 per cent in 2016-17 to 3.3 per cent during the last three sessions.



Share of Questions Raised in the Two Houses



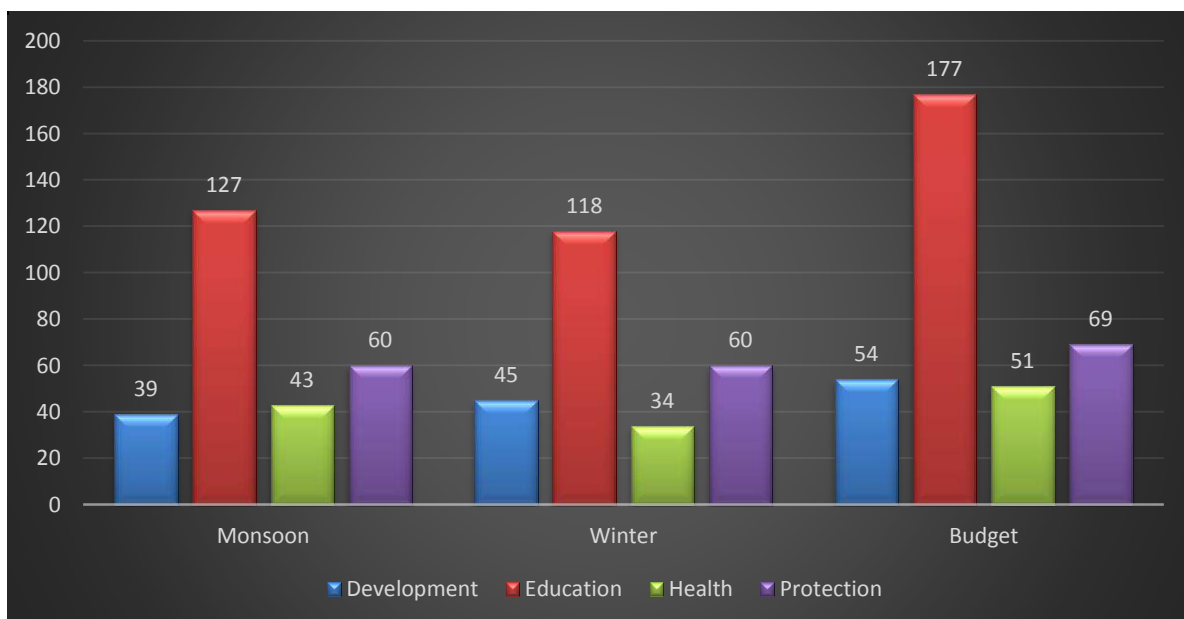
Issues that interest MPs

Monsoon session: Questions related to ICDS and anganwadis – their functioning, budgetary allocation, training of workers; Right to Education, basic infrastructure and quality education in schools, enrolment, mid day meals; malnutrition, diseases, immunisation and mortality rates; abuse and exploitation of children, POCSO were raised.

Winter session: Queries on anganwadis; welfare measures for children; RTE Act, educational facilities for the underprivileged sections (EWS, minorities, tribals, children with disabilities); menace of online games

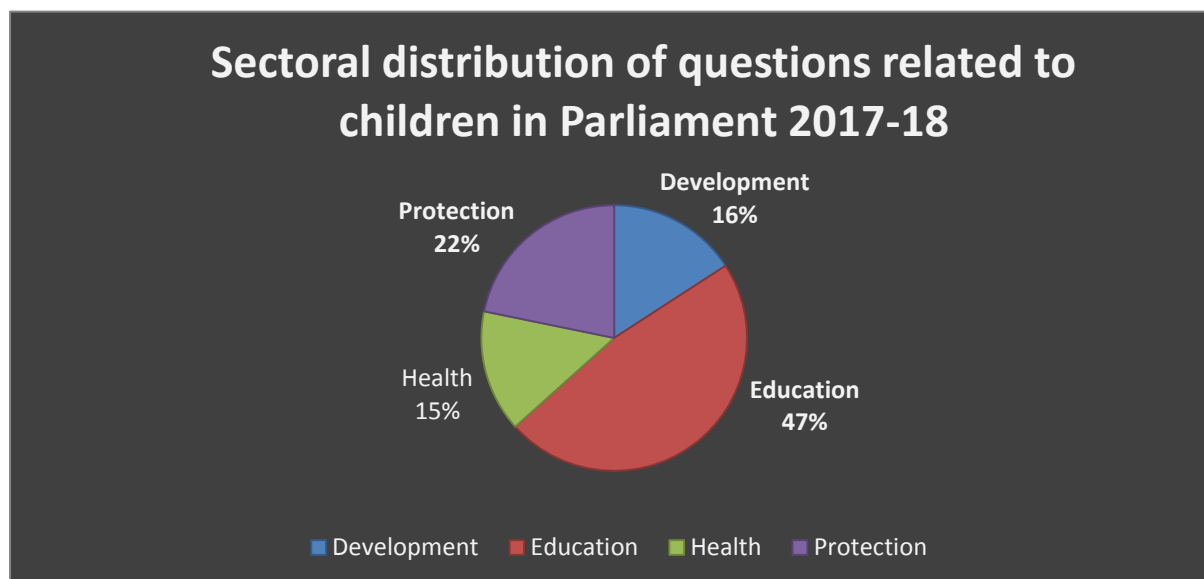
Budget session: Issues related to crimes against children, malnutrition and infant mortality, expenditure on education, welfare measures were raised by Parliamentarians.

During the three sessions of Parliament from July 2017 to April 2018, 877 questions related to children's development, education, health and protection were raised.



Sectoral Distribution of Questions in Parliament, 2017-18

Education drew the maximum attention from our MPs during the Monsoon, Winter and Budget sessions in 2017-18. This trend has been continuing over the years. Protection issues including violence against children, child marriage, child labour, child sex ratio was second in priority. Health was accorded the least priority in terms of the questions raised.



Development

In both the Houses of Parliament, 16 per cent of the questions raised pertained to the key schemes of the government like Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), Mid Day Meal scheme, besides the National Plan for Children. MPs had questions on schemes for women and children and financial resources allocated for them.

The flagship scheme of the government, ICDS, now known as Anganwadi Services under Umbrella ICDS Scheme, has been under scrutiny in the Parliament with questions pertaining to the anganwadi – its functioning; physical verification of the beneficiaries; evaluation study and monitoring mechanism; construction of new centres; nutrition, packaged food and uniform for the children; need for reforms; and upgradation under CSR.

On the ICDS, the members wanted to know about the status of the restructured scheme, budgetary allocation and utilisation of funds, and Central assistance to states.

Anganwadi Services Scheme

Anganwadi Services Scheme is a unique early childhood development programme aimed at addressing health, nutrition and developmental needs of children under the age of six years. Under the Scheme, 14 lakh Anganwadi Centres were approved out of which 13.62 lakh AWCs were operational. (March 2018). The scheme covers more than 8 crore beneficiaries.

- **Honorarium to Anganwadi Workers**

Several MPs raised questions regarding the remuneration, training and skill development of the workers and helpers, regularisation of their services, insurance and welfare schemes.

The Scheme envisages the Anganwadi Worker (AWWs) & Anganwadi Helpers (AWHs) as “honorary workers” from the local community who come forward to render their services, on part time basis, in the area of child care and development. They are paid monthly honoraria of Rs. 3000/- & Rs. 1,500/- per month respectively w.e.f. 1.04.2011. The honorarium of AWWs at Mini-AWCs was enhanced to Rs. 2,250/- per month w.e.f. 4.7.2013. Unfortunately, as honorary workers they are not covered under the Minimum Wages Act.

Key Findings from National Family Health Survey-4

9.6% children in the age group of 6-23 months receive adequate diet.
35.7% children under 5 years of age are underweight
38.4% children are stunted
21% children are wasted across the country

Source: National Family Health Survey (NFHS) – 4, 2015-16

Education

Education is an area that has always interested the Parliamentarian. In 2017-18 too, 47 per cent of the child-related questions in Parliament were on this issue.

Questions raised related to overall situation of education in the country, right to free and compulsory education, reforms in the system, new education policy, quality of education and CSR, funds and expenditure in this sector.

Allocation & Expenditure on Education

The allocation for education for the year 2018-19 is 3.48% of the total Budget, as compared to 3.69% for 2017-18. In absolute terms there was an increase of Rs. 3,141.58 crores in allocation for education during the same period (Allocation in 2017-18 was Rs. 81,868.71 crores and Rs. 85,010.29 crores in 2018-19).

Interestingly, as per UNESCO Institute of Statistics data, the expenditure on education as percentage of Government expenditure in Brazil was 15.71% in 2014 and for Russia it was 11.15% in 2012.

The Public Expenditure on education as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has been increasing in recent years from 3.70% in 2012-13, 3.86% in 2013-14 to 4.04% in 2014-15. Out of this the expenditure on elementary education, including primary education, has also been increasing from 1.60% in 2012-13, 1.63% in 2013-14 to 1.82% in 2014-15.

The literacy rate in the country was a concern. MPs asked about the improvement, evaluation and ways to increase the literacy rate; literacy in the rural areas and among *divyang* students (children with disability) and tribal children.

The Right to Education (RTE) Act has been under scrutiny in the Parliament. Questions related to standard of schooling; reimbursement to schools under the RTE; pupil teacher ratio; its implementation in minority institutions were asked.

Questions related to dropout rates, especially among girls, tribals, minorities, children with disability, especially physical disability, out of school girls and adolescents were asked. Regarding the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), the questions were on the goals, shortcomings and irregularities, funding, share of the Central government, evaluation, vacancies, and honorarium for the teaching staff.

Budget Allocation for SSA

Budget allocations for SSA programme were Rs. 22,500.00 crores in 2016-17 and Rs. 23,500 crore in 2017-18. With the acceptance of the recommendations of the 14th Finance Commission by the Government of India, the devolution of funds to the States has been increased from 32% to 42% of the net Union Tax Receipts.

Mid day meals (MDMs) are provided to students enrolled in schools and the questions pertained to the enrolment, quality of food, review and social audit of the scheme, linking it with Aadhaar number, outsourcing to NGOs, complaints, pilferage of food grains, children excluded under it, and the provision of MDMs during holidays.

Cost Per Child in Mid-Day Meal Scheme

Under the Mid-Day Meal Scheme, the present approved cooking cost per child per day for Primary and Upper Primary stages is Rs. 4.13 and Rs. 6.18, respectively. In addition, the Central Government provides 100% funding for food grains, transport assistance, kitchen devices and management/monitoring expenses.

MPs also asked about sports, physical education, yoga and sex as well as moral education in schools. Availability of basic amenities of drinking water; toilets, specially for girl students; electricity and playground in schools were also raised, along with security for the students.

Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs)

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has introduced EMRSs for Scheduled Tribe (ST) students to provide quality middle and high level education in remote areas.

The EMRSs, with the capacity of 480 students in each school, are set up in the States/ UTs under the Special Area Programme of Grants. The Guidelines stipulate that districts having 25% or more STs and Left-Wing Extremism Districts shall be focused, for implementation of tribal development programmes. *[Unstarred Q. No. 333, 5th Feb 2018, LS, Budget session, Eklavya Model Schools]*

Till now a total of 271 EMRSs had been sanctioned across the country since 1997-98, of which 190 were functional. *[Unstarred Q. No. 4409, 5th April 2018, RS, Budget session, Special schools for minorities and tribals]*

Infrastructure in Schools

Toilets for Girls

Responding to a question on the **toilets for girls in schools**, the Minister informed the House that lack of toilet facilities in schools has been one of the reasons for girls to dropout from schools. The Government has since prioritised the education of girls and launched the Swachh Vidyalaya initiative in collaboration with State Governments, UT Administrations, Public Sector Undertaking and private corporates for provision of separate toilets for girls and boys in all government schools.

Under this initiative, 4,17,796 toilets including 1.91 lakh girls toilets were constructed/ re-constructed in 2,61,400 government schools in one year alone by 15th August, 2015. With this, students in government schools have access to gender segregated toilets. This has had a positive impact on retention of girls in schools. Further, all States and UTs have been advised to comply with the provision of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, which inter alia states that every elementary school building should have separate toilets for boys and girls.

The Central Government supports States and UTs for creation and augmentation of infrastructure facilities including construction of toilets in government elementary and secondary schools under SSA and RMSA schemes, respectively. Since the inception of SSA in 2000-01 till 31.3.2017, 10.36 lakh toilets including 5.09 lakh separate girl's toilets in elementary schools have been sanctioned to States and UTs. Under RMSA, a total of 35,124 girl's toilets have been sanctioned in government secondary schools.

Electricity in Schools

The National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA) collects annually the information on various educational indicators including infrastructural facilities in schools through the Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE). As per UDISE 2015-16, 62.81% of schools have electricity connection in the country.

Under SSA, 1,87,248 elementary schools have been provided internal electrification upto 2016-17 and under RMSA, electricity have been provided in 12,930 secondary schools.

Burden of School Bags

MPs showed concern about the burden of school bag and about pick up facility for school bags.

While several initiatives were taken up by NCERT, CBSE, and State governments for reduction of load of heavy bags and information, the Government Mappila Upper Primary School, Kattampally, Kannur district, Kerala introduced a programme named as *Bag Vandi* from March 2017.

This unique and replicable initiative was taken to minimise the burden of students carrying school bag having more than 8 kgs. An arrangement has been made to pick the school bag of pupil from their home to school. The pupil can walk to school without any burden of carrying school bags.



A total of 200 students out of 547 in the school are availing this facility. No fees/charges were collected from the students. [Unstarred Q. No. 541, 20th July 2017, RS, Monsoon session, Pick up facility for school bags]

Education of Divyangs (Children with Special Needs (CWSN)/ Children with Disability (CWD))

The RTE mandates Free and Compulsory Education to all children from 6-14 years of age. It states that “a child suffering from disability shall have the right to pursue free and compulsory elementary education.” Children with disability have been included in the 25% admission quota given to disadvantaged children in private schools.

SSA promotes inclusion of children with special needs (CWSN) in neighbourhood schools through their early identification, educational placement, provision of resource support, teacher training, parental training, community mobilisation, and removal of architectural barriers. The Government is implementing the component of Inclusive Education for Disabled at Secondary Stage (IEDSS) under Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan with an objective to enable all CWSN completing elementary schooling an opportunity to complete secondary schooling in an inclusive and enabled environment in government schools. [Unstarred Q. No. 200, 17th July 2017, LS, Monsoon session, Literacy amongst Divyang Students]

The Scheme of IEDSS replaced the earlier scheme of ‘Integrated Education for Disabled Children’ (IEDC) in 2009-10. Under the IEDC Scheme, it was not possible to cover all the disabled children primarily because the implementation was based on the receipt of viable proposals from the implementing agencies.

The IEDSS Scheme enables all disabled children to have access to secondary education and to improve their enrolment, retention and achievement in the general education system. It covers all children studying at secondary stage in Government, local body and Government-aided schools, with one or more disabilities as defined under the Persons with Disabilities Act (1995) and the National Trust Act (1999) , namely, i) Blindness, ii) Low vision, iii) Leprosy cured, iv) Hearing impairment, v) Locomotor disabilities, vi) Mental retardation, vii) Mental Illness, viii) Autism, and ix) Cerebral Palsy and eventually will cover Speech impairment, Learning Disabilities, etc.

Inclusion of Children with Special Needs in Schooling

22.86 lakh CWSN enrolled at elementary level of schooling

2,18,455 CWSN enrolled in secondary classes

60,869 CWSN enrolled in higher secondary classes

Source: Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE) data, 2015-16

74,435 persons with disabilities enrolled in higher education

Source: All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) data, 2015-16

[Unstarred Q. No. 200, 17th July 2017, LS, Monsoon session, Literacy amongst Divyang Students]

Education Cess

In response to a question on Education Cess in Lok Sabha during the Budget session, the Minister responded that:

“The Education Cess comprises of 2% Primary Education Cess and 1% Secondary & Higher Education Cess. The Primary Education Cess is credited to Prarambhik Shiksha Kosh (PSK) and is used to meet part of expenditure on Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) & part on Mid Day Meal (MDM) Scheme. The proceeds of Secondary and Higher Education Cess (SHEC) is credited to a single non-lapsable pool known as “Madhyamik and Uchchta Shiksha Kosh” (MUSK) that has been created in the year 2017. Primary Education Cess collected from the period 2004-05 to 2016-17 is Rs.1,93,828 crores. The utilisation from PSK towards SSA during the above mentioned period is Rs.1,20,239 crores and towards MDM is Rs.58,503 crores. Collection of Secondary & Higher Education Cess from the period 2004-05 to 2016-17 is Rs.83,489 crores. The proceeds of the Secondary & Higher Education Cess are considered to have financed part of the expenditure of higher education through the demands for grants of the M/o Human Resource Development (HRD). ... Education Cess has contributed in a positive manner to its objectives. While the implementation of SSA programme has resulted in near universal access at primary level, the Mid Day Meal programme has benefitted in providing hot-cooked meals to 9.78 crore children studying in 11.40 lakh institutions during 2016-17.”

On Plans for Merger of SSA and RMSA?

On being asked about Govt’s plans to merge the two schemes, SSA and RMSA, meant to guarantee universal education, the House was informed that:

“In pursuance of the announcement in the Union Budget, 2018-19, to treat school education holistically without segmentation from pre-nursery to Class 12, this Department has prepared a proposal on an Integrated Scheme on School Education by subsuming the three Centrally Sponsored Schemes of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE). States have already been advised to integrate the administrative structures at various levels created for SSA and RMSA in the States and UTs to achieve productive synergies, better co-ordination and enhanced focus on improvement in quality of education.”

Child Protection

Protection of children from social evils of child and bonded labour, trafficking, child marriage, sexual abuse and exploitation, begging contributed to 22 per cent questions raised by MPs during 2017-18. POCSO, Juvenile Justice Act, Integrated Child Protection Scheme related questions were also asked.

Trafficking of girls and children as well as missing children was a major concern with questions on Delhi emerging as a hub for trafficking and standard operating procedure as well as online portal for missing children.

Questions on the rising incidence of crimes against children, including cyber crimes, were raised. On the POCSO Act, the members asked about its implementation, monitoring and effectiveness; amendments; cases registered and pending in the court; compensation to male victims; and the scope of the POCSO e-box. Increase in crimes by juveniles was another concern of the MPs. They asked about the review of facilities in juvenile homes.

As for the continuing trend of child marriages in the country, the MPs were concerned about the existing rules and its prevention. The declining sex ratio was raised in several questions, including on the *Beti Bachao Beti Padhao* campaign.

Welfare and rehabilitation measures for the children in difficult circumstances, bonded labourers, street children, mentally retarded; adoption; vacancies in child-related institutions; condition of child care institutions; drug abuse by children and the menace of harmful online games were raised under this category.

Crime against children accounting 0.2% in 2015 over 2014 and 4.4% in 2016 over 2015.

Cases registered under Sexual Abuse/Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012

2014	34,449 cases
2015	34,505 cases
2016	36,022 cases

Source: National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)

[Unstarred Q. No. 2389, 15th March 2018, RS, Budget session, Rise in offences against children]

POCSO e-box

POCSO e-box was launched by the Ministry on 26th August 2016 for online and direct reporting of child sexual abuse. Considering the growing menace of cyber crimes targeting children, the functioning of POCSO e-box was reviewed and the scope was enhanced to lodge complaints of cyber crimes such as cyber bullying, cyber stalking, morphing of images and child pornography w.e.f. June 23, 2017. *[Unstarred Q. No. 4674, 23rd March 2018, LS, Budget session, Scope of POCSO E-box]*

Since its inception a total 1289 hits were made on this facility till 18.01.2018. Out of these, only 67 cases were found to be complaints related to the offences covered under POCSO Act and 48 complaints have been disposed off. *[Unstarred Q. No. 142, 2nd February 2018, LS, Budget session, Sexual Exploitation/Abuse against Children]*

Status of POCSO Cases

90,205 POCSO cases pending trial at the end of 2016

Source: Crime in India, 2016, NCRB

[Unstarred Q. No. 909, 9th February 2018, RS, Budget session, Cases pending in POCSO Courts]

For dealing with such sensitive cases/cases of crimes against children

459 Special Public Prosecutors appointed

727 Special Juvenile Police Units set up

591 Special Courts/Children Courts set up in 694 districts

692 District Child Protection Units set up

707 Child Welfare Committees

Source: Information received from NCPCR

[Unstarred Q. No. 1732, 26th July 2017, LS, Monsoon session, POCSO Courts]

Crimes reported against children during last three years

Year	No. of cases
2014	89,423
2015	94,172
2016	1,06,958

Source: Crime in India, 2016, NCRB

[Unstarred Q. No. 1262, 28th December 2017, RS, Winter session, Violence against girls and women]

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)

BBBP was launched as one of the flagship programmes of the Government, to address the declining Child Sex Ratio and related issues of empowerment of women on a life-cycle continuum.

It is a tri-ministerial, convergent effort of Ministries of Women and Child Development, Health & Family Welfare and Human Resource Development.

The focus is on awareness and advocacy campaign for changing mindsets, multi-sectoral action in selected 161 districts (low on CSR), enabling girls' education and effective enforcement of Pre-Conception & Pre Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act. [Unstarred Q. No.1584, 8th March 2018, RS, Budget session, Decline in sex ratio,]

Child marriages

There is an overall decline in the incidence of child marriage in the country. As per Census, the percentage of ever married girls below legal age has reduced from 2.51% in 2001 to 2.44% in 2011. For boys, this figure has reduced from 9.64% in 2001 to 2.54% in 2011. Further, 'nil' marriages were reported in the age group of 0-9 years for both boys and girls in Census 2011. In rural areas, there is a decline of 0.32 percentage points for girls and a decline of 7.67 percentage points for boys.

As per NFHS-4 (2015-16), the percentage of women age 15-19 years who were already mothers or pregnant was 7.9%. This was a reduction from 16% as measured in NFHS-3 (2005-06).

The Government has enacted the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 in order to prohibit child marriages rather than only restraining them. The States/UTs from time to time are being regularly pursued for effective implementation of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006. MWCD regularly sends out letters to District Collectors to increase alertness to prevent underage marriages during festivals such as Akshaya Tritiya/Akha Teej. The prevention of child marriage and protection of the girl child is a prominent part of the National Plan of Action for Children, 2016. The practice of child marriages is largely due to the prevailing social customs, tradition, illiteracy, poverty, low status of women in society and lack of awareness. These issues cannot be tackled by legislative interventions alone.

The Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) programme is working to ensure the education of girls and reduce dropouts, thus delaying their marriage. A significant part of the BBBP advocacy campaign is focused on creating awareness on and discouraging the practice of child marriage. Further, the newly formulated Mahila Shakti Kendra (MSK) scheme will focus on creating awareness and equipping women at the village level with information on issues of gender equality and empowerment, a critical part of which will be the prevention of child marriage. This is a continuous process and Government undertakes media campaigns and outreach programmes to address this.

Child Labour

Child Labour is an outcome of various socio-economic problems such as poverty, economic backwardness, illiteracy etc. As per 2011 Census, the number of main workers in the age group of 5-14 years in the country was 43.53 lakhs, which shows a decline from 57.79 lakh as per 2001 Census.

Government is implementing the National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme for rehabilitation of child labour working in both organised and unorganised sectors. Under the Scheme, children in the age group of 9-14 years, rescued/withdrawn from work in any occupation or process, are enrolled in the NCLP Special Training Centres, where they are provided with bridge education, vocational training, mid day meal, stipend, health care, etc. before being mainstreamed into formal education system. Children in the age group of 5-8 years are directly linked to the formal education system through a close coordination with the SSA.

At present NCLP Scheme is sanctioned in 280 districts of 21 states. As per the information received from the District Project Societies, at present about 2850 Special Training Centres are in operation with an enrolment of approximately 1.11 lakh children under the scheme.

Health

Fifteen per cent of child-related questions were on health issues. Most of them pertained to malnutrition, infant mortality, immunisation, protecting children from diseases and maternity benefit programmes (Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana). Death of infants in hospitals across the country drew attention of the MPs.

Global Nutrition Report 2016 ranks India

114 out of 132 countries in stunting

120 out of 130 countries in wasting

[Unstarred Q. No. 800, 21st December 2017, RS, Winter session, Malnutrition among children]

Report on Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2017 ranks India

100 out of 119 countries compared to 97 amongst 118 countries in 2016

[Unstarred Q. No. 746, 21st December 2017, RS, Winter session, India's ranking in Global Hunger Index]

Tackling Malnutrition

The Govt of India accords high priority to the issue of hunger and malnutrition and is implementing several schemes/ programmes to improve food security situation. Foodgrains are allocated at highly subsidised prices to States /UT under National Food Security Act 2013 covering upto 75% population in rural areas and 50% population in urban areas. *[Unstarred Q. No. 746, 21st December 2017, RS, Winter session, India's ranking in Global Hunger Index]*

Welfare schemes like Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, National Health Mission, MDM Scheme, ICDS, Annapurna Scheme for the senior citizens, Nutritional Programme for Adolescent Girls, Emergency Feeding Programme, etc are being implemented.

The Govt has recently approved the setting up of National Nutrition Mission (NNM) to ensure holistic development and adequate nutrition for pregnant women, mothers and children.

The objective of NNM is to ensure “Suposhit Bharat” - free of stunting, wasting and anaemia by targeting reduction in the level of under-nutrition, etc. [Unstarred Q. No. 2069, 4th January 2018, RS, Winter session, Implementation of National Nutrition Mission]

POSHAN Abhiyaan is an overarching scheme for holistic nourishment by bringing synergy and convergence especially among nutrition, health and sanitation centric schemes/ programme. [Unstarred Q. No. 4745, 23rd March 2018, LS, Budget session, Urban Hunger and Malnutrition Study]

Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres (NRCs)

As per the National Family Health Survey-4 (2015-16), 7.5% children under 5 years of age have severe acute malnutrition in the country. [Unstarred Q. No. 2066, 4th January 2018, RS, Winter session, Therapeutic food for Severe Acute Malnutrition]

Treatment of sick children with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) at special units called the Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres, set up at public health facilities.

Presently 1150 such NRCs are functional in States and UTs admitting around 1.8 lakh SAM children annually. [Unstarred Q. No. 124, 15th December 2017, LS, Winter, Malnutrition death]

Anaemia among children <5 years was 58.5% in NFHS-4 compared to 69.4% in NFHS-3

[Unstarred Q. No. 800, 21st December 2017, RS, Winter session, Malnutrition among children]

Immunisation

The government has launched Mission Indradhanush in 528 districts across 35 States/UTs and Intensified Mission Indradhanush in 190 districts, including 17 urban areas across 24 State/UTs with an aim to achieve 90% full immunisation coverage by December 2018. [Unstarred Q. No. 1339, 9th February 2018, LS, Budget session, Universal Immunisation Programme]

Under Mission Indradhanush Immunisation drive, children under two years of age and pregnant women are targeted for immunisation. However, vaccination on demand is provided to children up to five years of age.

Adverse Events Following Immunisation

As per the direct reporting of serious/severe individual Adverse Events Following Immunisation (AEFI) cases including deaths by States/UTs to AEFI secretariat /Govt. of India about 1713 children died following immunisation from 2010-11 to 2017-18 (as on 31-12-17). Every year, 39 crore (approx.) doses of various vaccines are administered to the children under Universal Immunisation Programme.