

## State authorities directed to thwart mass child marriages on Akshaya Tritiya



**New Delhi:** After reports of mass child marriages being solemnized in Rajasthan on Akshaya Tritiya were highlighted, three people including the pandit (priest) who were involved were arrested by the state police. Reportedly, minors from Jaisinghpura Gram Panchayat of Chittorgarh district were forcibly married off during this mass ceremony. The arrests were made after National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) took up the issue with Chittorgarh's District Magistrate, Ved Prakash and asked him to take appropriate action under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006.

This is not a one-off case, as every year on Akshaya Tritiya, also known as Akha Teej - which is traditionally considered as an auspicious day - many such child marriages are solemnized. This year, Akshaya Tritiya is on May 9, but the central government has already issued strict directives to states and union territories to ensure that appropriate action is taken to prevent this archaic practice. Reacting to the Chittorgarh incident, Union Woman and Child Development Minister Maneka Sanjay Gandhi said, "Child marriage is an intolerable practice which affects the growth and mental development of a child. Such brides are not physically and mentally fit to carry the burden of child birth and consequential responsibilities."

Flagging the issue, NCPCR Chairperson, Stuti Kacker on April 29, 2016, wrote to chief secretaries and DGPs of all States and Union Territories and Chairpersons of all State Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCRs) asking them to send within a week a detailed Action Taken Report on efforts made by them in preventing child marriages in their respective States and Union Territories. Speaking to Millennium Post, Stuti Kacker said, "We have written to chief secretaries and Director General of Police (DGP)s of all states and UTs and Chairpersons of all State Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCRs) to take preventative steps to curtail this malpractice, especially before Akshaya Tritiya."

Recently Gandhi in the ongoing session of Parliament had stressed, "The states and UTs from time to time are being regularly pursued for effective implementation of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006. Further, state governments are requested to take special initiatives to thwart child marriages by coordinated efforts on Akha Teej - the traditional day for such marriages."

There has been a sharp rise in number of cases of child marriages in India. Latest official data compiled by the government indicates that more than 670 cases of child marriage had been recorded between 2012 and 2014. As per data of the NCRB, a total number of 169, 222 and 280 cases have been registered under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA), 2006 in the years 2012, 2013 and 2014 respectively.

**State authorities directed to thwart mass child marriages on Akshaya Tritiya**

---

**! Policies From Religare**

---

**Create An App For Your Business Without Coding**

Appy Pie

**Is It Hot In Here?! - See The Worlds SEXIEST Cities**

4 All Travelers

---

NEXT

**Mallya resigns from Rajya Sabha**

PREVIOUS

**Ggn scribe commits suicide alleging police harassment**