

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4584**

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 23RD MARCH, 2021/ CHAITRA 2, 1943 (SAKA)

ADVISORY ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING

4584. DR. T. SUMATHY (a) THAMIZHACHI THANGAPANDIAN:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Anti-Trafficking Cell, set up by the Ministry of Home Affairs has issued an advisory 'Preventing and Combating human trafficking especially during the period of COVID-19' under which Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs) are to be set up in every district;**
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the status of follow-up action taken;**
- (c) whether the States can empower their AHTUs with the powers to investigate a case;**
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;**
- (e) whether there are plans for conducting an e-crime review meeting this year to monitor the implementation of the advisory issued on 6th July 2020; and**
- (f) if so, the details thereof?**

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

(SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)

(a) to (f): 'Police' and 'Public Order' are State subjects under the Seventh Schedule (List-II) to the Constitution of India and, therefore, the State Governments and Union Territory (UT) Administrations are responsible for prevention, detection, registration, investigation and prosecution of all crimes within their jurisdiction including trafficking in persons. State Governments/ UT administrations are competent to deal with such matters under extant provisions of law.

However, taking cognizance of the risks of human trafficking during COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) had issued a comprehensive advisory on 6.7.2020 to all States and UTs for countering and combating human trafficking. The measures, which the States and UTs were advised to undertake, included coordination mechanism to be evolved amongst various Departments of States and UTs to handle issues of human trafficking, which should be monitored at the highest level; identification of vulnerable sections of the society; special awareness generation campaigns amongst them; engagement of law enforcement agencies with Panchayats, local bodies, community leaders, etc.; specific 'intelligence' and 'surveillance' mechanism to identify gangs involved in trafficking; keeping special vigil at transit points; and setting up/ strengthening of Anti Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs) etc.

AHTUs are integrated taskforce units with the mandate to prevent and combat trafficking in persons and to investigate and prosecute the crime of trafficking.

Engagement with States and UTs is a continuous process. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has issued various advisories and guidelines from time to time and reviews the relevant issues, inter-alia, through meetings with State/ UT functionaries. MHA has also set up an online monitoring portal for the States and UTs to update and track the progress of AHTUs as well as for sharing their best practices and success stories.
