

# Maneka to push for info on law against trafficking in school books

---

## EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, JULY 26

---

WHILE FAVOURING the incorporation of information on prevention of human trafficking in school textbooks, Women and Child Development Minister Maneka Gandhi Thursday said she would make a request to this effect to the HRD Minister. She was responding to a discussion on Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill in Lok Sabha.

The House later passed the Bill through a voice vote and members across partylines backed it. She assured members that she would incorporate in the rules whatever “lacunae” they had flagged during the discussion.

Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge, his party colleague Shashi Tharoor and many others demanded that the Bill be sent to a standing committee. However, the minister maintained that it was “long overdue”.

Maneka said school textbooks now had information about the POCSO Act and “good touch” and “bad touch”. “I would request the HRD Ministry to put some information on the anti-trafficking law in the textbooks as well.”

The Bill provides for confidentiality of victims, witnesses and complainants, time-bound trials and rehabilitation of victims. Earlier, while introducing the Bill, Maneka said, “When 11-year-old Tara is trafficked from her village and sold into bonded labour, beaten and burnt by her owner, how do we save her? When she is sold to marriage to a 45-year-old man and raped everyday for months, how do we save her? We have no institutions, no processes to do so. And today if we are not passing this Bill, we are choosing to deny Tara and all the millions like her fundamental right to life and liberty.”

The Bill covers forced labour, begging and marriage. She said, “Often we get to see at traffic lights that women are begging holding a baby which is drugged and sleeping and is being fed milk. They are hired on an hourly or daily basis.” The Bill also provides for attachment of property and the proceeds of crime.