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New cell to resolve child custody disputes

The government told Parliament on Friday that a mediation cell would be set up under the apex child rights body, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), to resolve child custody disputes arising from cases of transnational marital discord.

Minister of State for Women and Child Development Virendra Kumar also told the Lok Sabha that the Centre had not yet taken a decision on either acceding to the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction or framing a domestic law on the issue.

"The Ministry has in-principle decided to establish a Mediation Cell under the NCPCR chairperson to resolve the cases of children who were taken away by one of the spouses without the permission of the other due to marital discord from other countries to India or vice versa and preparing a parental plan taking into account the best interest of the child," Dr. Kumar told the Lower House. The U.S. has been exerting pressure on India to sign the multilateral treaty. According to its Child Abduction Report 2018, with 104 cases of inter-country parental abduction, India was second only to Mexico which had 241 cases.

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