

Printed from

THE TIMES OF INDIA

State govt plans to make AP beggar-free state

TNN | Nov 5, 2020, 08.50 AM IST



VISAKHAPATNAM: The state government is planning to make Andhra Pradesh a beggar-free state. If the plan proves to be successful, it could address the issue of begging rackets in which many gangs kidnap children and force them into begging.

AP ranks third in the country in having the most number of beggars, after West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh. This was revealed in the Lok Sabha by the social justice minister two years ago. As of now, the number of beggars in the state is estimated to be around 1.5 lakh.

As per police records, nearly 30,000 children disappear in India every year. Most of them are kidnapped and forced to work as

beggars for organised criminal gangs or groups. A proposal was recently sent to the government to address the issue by providing shelter and proper employment to beggars by providing them skill development training. As per the proposal, the authorities would identify the beggars and divide them into categories by age and gender. Children would be shifted to government-run hostels while the physically disabled and aged people would be sent to shelter homes.

“The proposal is at discussion stage. There are so many corporates and companies in AP who spend crores of

rupees through their corporate social responsibility programmes. This programme can be taken up with their help. Contributions from the public would also be sought," a senior official said.