



Specialised Adoption Agencies (SAAs)

[Source: TH](#)

Recently, the [Supreme Court \(SC\)](#) has warned states and Union Territories of contempt proceedings if they don't establish **Specialised Adoption Agencies (SAAs)** in every district.

- **370** out of 760 districts in India lack operational SAAs, despite court orders mandating their establishment nationwide.
- This gap has led to a significant disparity between adoption registrations (**13,467** in 2023-2024) and actual adoptions (**approximately 4,000**), mainly due to inadequate infrastructure.
- Only **Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Rajasthan, and Chandigarh** have fully complied with the SCs' directive.
- Larger states like **Uttar Pradesh** face serious challenges, **with 61 out of 75 districts lacking SAAs.**
- Adoption in India is governed by the [Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act \(HAMA\)](#), 1956 (for Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, and Buddhists), and the [Juvenile Justice \(Care and Protection of Children\) Act, 2015.](#)
- [Central Adoption Resource Authority \(CARA\)](#) is the **nodal body** regulating the adoption of **orphaned, surrendered and abandoned children** in India.
 - It was set up in **1990** under the **Ministry of Women and Child Development.**
 - It is signatory to the **Hague Convention On Protection of Children and Co-operation of 1993.**
 - It regulates **State Adoption Resource Agency (SARA), SAA, Authorised Foreign Adoption Agency (AFAA), Child Welfare Committees (CWCs), and District Child Protective Units (DPUs).**

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TIMELINE OF ADOPTION LAWS IN INDIA

HINDU ADOPTION AND MAINTAINANCE ACT

1956

- **Objective-** to find children for "childless couples".
- Allowed **only hindus, sikhs, buddhists and jains** to adopt.

THE JUVENILE JUSTICE ACT

2000

- Facilitated rehabilitation of abandoned, orphaned and abused children in **formal institutions**
- extended adoption to all **religious communities**

THE JUVENILE JUSTICE ACT AMENDMENT

2006

- More concentration on **child rights**
- Terminology- "**legitimate**" parent
- Extended adoption to **single parents**
- Adoption process becomes clearer

THE JUVENILE JUSTICE ACT

2015

- terminology changes to "**lawful**" parent
- **Single male** is barred from adopting a **girl child**
- Central Adoption Resource Authority (**CARA**) becomes a statutory body
- All mechanism, processes and authorities become clear

ADOPTION REGULATIONS

2017

Laws for adoption- both within the country and overseas.

Aided clarity on :

- procedures
- requirements
- involved bodies
- rules/framework
- eligibility criteria for children and parents



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