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Source

<i>Amar Ujala</i>	<i>Free Press Journal</i>	<i>Pioneer</i>
<i>Asian Age</i>	<i>Hindu</i>	<i>Punjab Kesari</i>
<i>Assam Tribune</i>	<i>Hindustan (H)</i>	<i>Rajasthan Patrika</i>
<i>D.N.A</i>	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	<i>Rashtriya Sahara (H)</i>
<i>Dainik Jagran (H)</i>	<i>Indian Express</i>	<i>Statesman</i>
<i>Deccan Chronicle</i>	<i>Jansatta (H)</i>	<i>Times of India</i>
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<i>Economic Times</i>	<i>New Indian Express</i>	

CHILD WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT

ADOPTED CHILDREN

जलंधर के यूनिक होम का हुआ पंजीयन, गोद दिए जाएंगे बच्चे

जलंधर, 21 जून (भाषा)। पंजाब सरकार ने बेसहारा बच्चों और महिलाओं को आश्रय देने वाली किसी भी संस्था का पंजीयन अनिवार्य करते हुए चेतावनी दी है कि अगर ऐसी कोई भी संस्था बिना पंजीयन के पाई जाती है तो उसके खिलाफ कड़ी कानूनी कार्रवाई की जाएगी। राज्य सरकार ने सूबे के सभी उपायुक्तों को अपने-अपने जिलों में बच्चों और महिलाओं से जुड़े किसी भी गैर पंजीकृत आश्रय स्थल के संचालन पर कड़ी नजर रखने का निर्देश देते हुए कहा है कि हाल ही में अचानक चर्चा में आए जलंधर के 'यूनिक होम' का पंजीयन कर दिया गया है और नियमों के तहत अब इसे अधिक से अधिक बच्चों को गोद दिलवाने के लिए कदम उठाना पड़ेगा।

पंजाब सरकार के सामाजिक सुरक्षा और महिला व बाल विकास विभाग के सहायक निदेशक रजनीश जसरा ने गुरुवार को बताया

कि हमने सारी बातों से होम के संचालकों को अवगत करा दिया है। अब वहां रहने वाले बच्चों के बारे में पहले प्राथमिकी करानी होगी। इसके बाद शून्य से छह साल तक के बच्चों को गोद दिए जा सकेंगे।

उन्होंने कहा-अभी जितने बच्चे यूनिक होम में रह रहे हैं उन सबकी भी प्राथमिकी दर्ज करानी होगी। इस संबंध में जिला प्रशासन और जिला बाल कल्याण विभाग को सूचित कर दिया गया है। सरकार बच्चों और महिलाओं को लेकर पूरी तरह संजीदा है। इसलिए हमने सूबे के सभी जिलों के उपायुक्तों को पत्र लिख कर उनके संबंधित जिलों में इस बात पर नजर रखने को कहा है कि ऐसा कोई भी आश्रय स्थल या संस्था बिना पंजीयन के नहीं चल रही हो। जसरा ने कहा कि पूरे पंजाब में अगर ऐसी कोई भी संस्था बिना पंजीयन के पाई जाती है तो उसके

खिलाफ कड़ी कानूनी कार्रवाई की जाएगी।

प्रदेश में किसी को भी बच्चों और महिलाओं की जिंदगी के साथ खिलवाड़ करने की इजाजत नहीं दी जाएगी। हमारा मकसद ऐसे होम और संस्थाओं में रहने वाले सभी बच्चों को माता पिता का प्यार और अच्छा पालन पोषण दिलवाना है। इसलिए हम बच्चों को गोद देने पर अधिक जोर दे रहे हैं। जलंधर में पिछले बीस साल से यह यूनिक होम अवैध रूप से चल रहा था क्योंकि इसका पंजीयन नहीं था और न ही इसमें रह रहे बच्चों की प्राथमिकी दर्ज कराई गई है।

हरियाणा के 'अपना घर' का मामला सामने आने के बाद पिछले 12 जून को अचानक जलंधर का यूनिक होम चर्चा में आया था। बारह जून की देर शाम प्रशासनिक अधिकारी बच्चों को नारी निकेतन में स्थानांतरित कराने पहुंच गए थे। इसके बाद वहां जमकर हंगामा हुआ।

Jansatta, June 22, 19



40 प्रतिशत केस में बालक भ्रूण!

रायगढ़

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खुद डॉक्टरों का भी मानना है कि वास्तविक लिंग की जांच शुरूआती दौर में कोई भी डॉक्टर या अनाड़ी रेडियोलॉजी सेंटर के लोग नहीं कर सकते हैं। इस बात को खुद डॉक्टर ही मानते हैं कि कन्या भ्रूण हत्या के चक्कर में किए गए गर्भपात के दौरान 40 प्रतिशत केस में वह भ्रूण बालक का होता है। स्त्री रोग विशेषज्ञ काकोली पटनायक ने बताया कि कई बार उनके पास ऐसे केसेज आए हैं।

इसमें यह देखा गया कि पेसेंट ने गर्भपात के लिए बाजार में उपलब्ध दवा इसलिए खा लिया कि किसी ने यह कह दिया था उसकी गर्भ में बेटा है। इसके बाद जब हालत खराब हो जाती है तो उसे डॉक्टर के पास लेकर आते हैं। जब उसकी डिलीवरी करवाई जाती है तो इसमें यह पाया जाता है कि

वह लड़का था। डा. पटनायक के अनुसार लोग गर्भधारण के बाद ही इस बात की जानने की पूरी कोशिश करते हैं कि गर्भ में बालक है या कन्या, जबकि इसकी पहचान गर्भधारण से केवल 15 से 18 सप्ताह के बाद ही किया जा सकता है, लेकिन इन सप्ताहों में तो लिंग की पहचान हो जाती है, पर गर्भपात काफी मुश्किल होता है। इन हालात में यह खतरनाक भी होता है। उन्होंने बताया कि उनके क्लिनिक में सोनोग्राफी मशीन नहीं है। इसके बाद भी कुछ ऐसे मरीज आते हैं जिनका कहना होता है कि आप किसी भी प्रकार से बता दें कि यह वह लड़की है या लड़का। इन हालात में उनके सवाल का जवाब देना मुश्किल

होता है। उस समय उन्हें यही लगता है कि जिससे यह बात पृथ्वी जा रही है वह डॉक्टर भी तो लड़की ही है।

फायदा किसका

डॉक्टर यह मानते हैं कि गर्भधारण के कम से कम चार माह तक तो लिंग का पता नहीं लगाया जा सकता है। इसमें भी कई बार मशीन की खराबी होती है तो कई बार गर्भ में पानी की मात्रा के ज्यादा होने के कारण भी जांच प्रभावित होती है। इसके बाद भी यदि कोई चार माह से पहले कानून के खिलाफ लिंग की जांच कर यह बताता है कि यह लड़की है। तो वह लोगों के साथ धोखा करता है। हालांकि यह उस

डॉक्टर या रेडियोलॉजिस्ट के लिए सेफ होता है, क्योंकि गर्भपात के बाद परिवार वाले तो चार माह से पहले के भ्रूण को तो पहचान नहीं सकते। साथ ही केवल लिंग जांच के नाम पर उसे पांच से दस हजार रुपये अनैतिक तरीके से मिल जाते हैं।

कैसे-कैसे तरीके

इस लिंग जांच के मामले में कुछ डॉक्टरों से बात की गई। उनका कहना था कि यदि एक क्लिनिक में इसे मना कर दिया जाता है तो वह दूसरे क्लिनिक में चले जाते हैं। यहां तक कि लोग बाहर का भी रुख कर लेते हैं। ग्रामीण क्षेत्र में यह भी देखने को मिला है कि लोग नीम हकीम से भी गर्भधारण के बाद बेटा पैदा करने की दवा मांगते हैं। हकीमत यह भी है कि वह हकीम बेटा पैदा करने की दवा भी देता है और लोगों से पैसा ऐंठता है।



Rajasthan Patrika, June 20, P. 11

Children without borders

SAARC countries unite to protect child rights and co-operate on cross-border issues including trafficking and repatriation



PROTECTION FIRST: Give childhood a chance. PHOTO: G.N. RAO

Bindu Shajan Perappadan

Working towards a vision of a region free from violence against children, representatives from South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) renewed their commitment to end atrocities against the children in their region at the meet of the member countries in Colombo recently.

The countries unanimously adopted the South Asia Call for Action on Ending Violence against Children. Representatives from SAARC countries were meeting as follow-up on regional consultation on the UN study on violence against children,

which was held at Colombo from 26-31 May.

The countries collectively deliberated, along with civil society organisations, experts on child rights, professionals, and academicians, and called for immediate action on "developing and strengthening equitable national and local child protection systems including laws, policies and standards that prevent, mitigate and respond timely and appropriately to all forms of violence and to ensure that mechanisms and services are accessible to all children."

At the meet, the Indian delegation was headed by Union Ministry of Women and Child Development Joint Secretary

Dr. Vivek Joshi who made a presentation on the legislative steps taken by India to eliminate violence against children. He also made a special presentation on the Protection of Children Against Sexual Offences Bill, 2012.

"There SAARC countries participating in the meet unanimously recognised the fact that despite the progress made across South Asia to address violence against children, children continue to experience serious forms of violence and child protection challenges, including child labour, corporal punishment, sexual abuse and exploitation, child trafficking, migration and displacement, imprison-

ment, discrimination related to HIV/AIDS, disability, minorities, orphans, street children and children in need of care and protection, as well as various forms of harmful practices such as child marriage," noted a statement issued by the Ministry. The group has also resolved to work towards developing and implementing laws and policies that focus on safeguarding children from potential harm and ban all forms of violence against children in all settings, including home and family, schools and educational settings, care and justice systems, work settings and the community.

"SAARC countries will also look at addressing social norms and practices that are harmful to children by promoting social change to end violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect of children and look into consolidate and validate a national system for disaggregated data collection, analysis, dissemination, and a systematic research agenda to inform policy development and resource mobilisation to protect children from violence," said Dr. Joshi.

The group has opted to review/adopt and implement a national plan of action to integrate the recommendations of the UN study. The countries will cooperate through structure, processes and resources in the best interest of children to address cross-border issues, such as trafficking, missing children, HIV and AIDS and drug abuse and repatriation.

Hindoo, June 14, P10

-CHILD LABOUR

Capital couldn't care less about child labour

NEW DELHI: One third of Delhi feels it's okay to make children work long and hard like adults. That's not all. Fifty per cent of the city's population thinks they should be paid less than adults.

The disturbing findings are part of a study conducted by Child Rights and You (CRY), an NGO, in central and New Delhi districts last month to assess

the awareness and attitude among people on child labour issues.

The study interviewed 350 respondents comprising owners of small eateries, auto repair workshops and garages.

The findings revealed an alarmingly low level of awareness and knowledge on child rights and child labour issues in these two districts.

About half of Delhi said they know children in their locality who had left school and were now engaged in some kind of work. "The idea behind the study was to assess people's perception and attitude towards child labour. It revealed not only an appalling lack of awareness but also insensitivity on the part of potential employers of child

labour," said Vijaylaxmi Arora, director, CRY.

About 31% of the respondents, Arora said, were ignorant about any law in the country against child labour.

She said the government should step up enforcement if it wants to prevent child labour. "At present, it is clearly not the priority of policy makers," she said.

Hindustan Times, June 11, P1+2+6

INNOCENCE LOST

CRY interviewed 350 owners of small shops and eateries in areas like Paharganj and Janpath. Though 31% were ignorant of laws banning child labour, 86% did advocate a blanket ban on it.

4.98 million

Total number of child labourers in India, highest in the world

2,61,510

Child labourers of the Capital fall in the age bracket of 5-19 years, reveals Census 2001



• A child labourer at one of the city's dhabas. SANJEEV KUMAR/HT

CAPITAL INSENSITIVITY: KEY FINDINGS OF THE SURVEY

41% said it's easy to handle an under-18 worker.

77% have known a child getting injured or losing life during any economic activity

51% feel overall responsibility for working child vests with parents/guardians

56% respondents know kids who work for money

94% identified poverty as the main reason for working children

65% said government not doing enough to stop child labour

TEXT: MOUSHUMI DAS GUPTA

WORLD DAY AGAINST CHILD

LABOUR - 12th June, 2012

We love to learn-We love to play
We love to sing and dance

We can build the nation

GIVE US A CHANCE

STOP CHILD LABOUR



LABOUR DEPARTMENT, HARYANA

30 Bays Bldg., Sec. 17-B, Chandigarh-160017
www.hrlabour.org, www.hrylabour.gov.in



RELEASED IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST ON WORLD DAY AGAINST CHILD LABOUR

Don't treat Bal Police like child labourers, top brass tells force

Somendra Sharma

Noticing that the teenage police, popularly called Bal Police, are being burdened with excessive work due to which their studies suffers, the top brass of the Mumbai police has taken a fatherly approach towards them.

In a circular issued on Thursday, all the units employing Bal Police work have been asked to keep their timings flexible and not treat them like "bal mazdoor" (child labourers).

The circular stated that these police units, branches and offices should ensure that the children are given enough time to concentrate on their studies and reduce their working hours from 10 hours to six.

Children whose parents die in the line of duty are recruited in the Bal Police. At present there are 48 Bal Police, both boys and girls, in the force.

The superior officers

should ensure that the Bal Police are treated with proper care and mentoring. They should not be treated as *bal mazdoor* but be groomed in a way that makes them eye higher posts by doing well in their studies, and not remain working as constables all their lives," the circular said.

Another observation made in the circular was that it would be the duty of senior officers to ensure that the Bal Police do not come in contact with anti-social or criminal elements.

"Within the police department, we have to be in touch with criminals to get information and there are many who woo policemen ensure that they are not caught. It is a positive step taken by the department and will be useful in ensuring that these young policemen do not go on the wrong path," said a senior police officer, on condition of anonymity.

D.N.A., June 15, P3

106 children saved from Nagpada units

Little Yadav

In a joint operation by the Nagpada police, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation, a local NGO and the social service branch, 106 child labourers were freed from the several small-scale units at Dagar Chawl in the Madanpura area of Nagpada on Thursday.

It was while acting on a tip-off that the police raided around 20 units in the area to rescue the child labourers in an operation lasting several hours.

Before the raid, the police cross-checked the information they had received. Once the information was confirmed,

Most of the rescued children are from outside the state... They were not only paid less, but were also made to work for several hours a day

—Vinayak Sawade, senior police inspector

they carried out the raid around 1pm on Thursday.

It went on for at least two hours, following which the counting of the number of children freed began.

In what can be called one of the biggest raids by the Mumbai police in one day, the police found numerous small scale industries functioning in every house and block in the area.

Among the places we raided were zari, bag manufacturing, jewellery and shoe making units. Most of the children who were rescued are between eight to 14 years of age," said senior inspector Vinayak Sawade of the Nagpada police.

"Most of the rescued children are from outside the city, with many belonging to Bihar, Orissa and other states.

Brought to the city under the pretext of supporting their families, these children were not only paid less, but also fed minimal and made to work for several hours a day," added Sawade. Parents of most of the child labourers were aware of where and what their child was doing, but posed no objection as they were content with whatever little cash was coming home, said the police.

Stating that owners of the units raided were arrested under the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, police said the rescued children would be sent to the Dongri home.

26 CHILD LABOURERS RESCUED IN DELHI

New Delhi: Police rounded up 26 children on Tuesday from three textiles factories and one that manufactures chemicals here, and arrested five persons in this connection. According to the officials, the children had come to the capital from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The minors have now been shifted to a state welfare home for children.

*Deccan Chronicle
June 13, P.7*

अब हुड्डा सरकार की 'बचपन बचाओ' मुहिम

सर्कस से कार्यमुक्त कराए गये बच्चों के पुनर्वास की योजना

चंडीगढ़, 16 जून (हप्र)। हरियाणा सरकार ने 'सर्कस में कार्य से मुक्त कराए गए बच्चों का पुनर्वास' नामक एक नयी योजना लागू की है। महिला एवं बाल विकास विभाग हरियाणा की महानिदेशक सुमिता मिश्रा ने आज यहाँ बताया कि बच्चों को सुरक्षा प्रदान करने के लिए 'बचपन बचाओ आंदोलन' के तहत सुप्रीम कोर्ट के आदेशों की अनुपालना में प्रदेश में इस योजना को शुरू किया गया है। उन्होंने कहा कि इस नीति के अनुसार 14 वर्ष से

कम आयु के किसी भी बच्चे को सर्कस में काम करने की अनुमति नहीं होगी। सर्कस में कार्य करने वाले 14 वर्ष से अधिक की आयु वाले बच्चों के लिए न्यूनतम जैविकी की शर्त अनिवार्य है। इन न्यूनतम जैविकी शर्तों के अनुसार बच्चों को गोपनीयता और सुरक्षा की प्राथमिकता दी जानी है, इसलिए लड़की और लड़कों के लिए अलग से रहने के प्रबंध होने चाहिए। सर्कस परिसर में उचित स्वच्छता व सफाई होनी चाहिए। प्रत्येक बच्चे का नियमित स्वास्थ्य जाई बनाया जाएगा। परिवार या माता-पिता के उचित सम्पर्क विवरण के साथ प्रत्येक बच्चे के प्रोफेशनल कार्डसलर के नियमित दौर और उचित पारिवारिक हिस्ट्री भी बनाए रखी जाएगी।

Dainik Tribune, June 17, P.7

Other States to follow Andhra Pradesh's example to tackle child labour, says NCPCR

Pavithra S. Rangan

HYDERABAD: Andhra Pradesh being one of the few States to implement the Minimum Wages (MW) Act to discourage child labour, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has sought its execution plan for replication in other States.

The Labour Department has, over the past 15 years, awarded penalty of Rs. 5 crore to employers of 35,000 children from the State un-

der the MW Act. "The prime reason for employing child labour is that children can be paid dismal wages, as against adults who demand a prescribed minimum wage," says R. Ravi Bhushan Rao, Joint Commissioner of Labour.

"The MW Act empowers authorities to impose penalties up to 10 times the difference between the wage paid and the minimum wage, as compensation to the child. We have enforced the act vig-

orously to discourage child labour," he explained. Heavy compensation is awarded under the Act to dissuade employment of child labour as the Child Labour Prohibition and Regulation (CLPR) Act does not fully prohibit employment of children across all occupations.

Cases under the MW act are tried in 'open courts' to further discourage people from employing child labour. "Such methods of handling child labour cases under the

Act have been very successful and are unique to the State," officials said.

While the 2001 census reveals Andhra Pradesh as the second largest employer of child labourers in the country with over 13.63 lakh employed children, labour officials claimed that this figure has come down a great deal with interventions like implementation of MW Act; and that this will be reflected in the yet to be released 2011 census.

Hindu, June 18, P.9

RELIEF FOR 2 KIDS ON ANTI-CHILD LABOUR DAY

Express News Service

Vellore: On a day that is celebrated globally as Anti-Child Labour Day, the education department rescued two boys aged around 12 years who were spotted working in a meat shop at R N Palayam in the Fort City. The team of teachers and education officials then enrolled the rescued children into a government school in the area.

A member of the team that rescued the boys said that they were tipped off about the two boys working in different meat shops in R N Palayam. "I received infor-



BACK TO SCHOOL: The rescued child labourers - Ismail and Samullah - with the team in Vellore on Tuesday | Express

mation about the two boys from one of the teachers working in a government school in the locality on Fri-

day," said AEEEO of Vellore, M. Rajendran. "I asked the teacher to monitor the boys whether they were working

on school days. The boys were found working in the poultry shop on Monday and we also confirmed that they were child labourers after conducting an enquiry in that area."

On Tuesday, the AEEEO and nine other education department officials went to the shop and posed as customers, he said. "After a conversation with the boys, we once again confirmed that they were child labourers and were working in the shops for some time. We rescued them and admitted them to Class VIII in the Muslim Middle School."

TUs Launch Signature Campaign

Chennai: In a bid to eradicate child labour, Tamil Nadu Trade Unions joint action forum has launched a signature campaign seeking the support of State MPs to push for the ratification of key child labour conventions in Parliament.

Addressing a press conference to mark World Day against Child Labour, union members of BMS, AITUC, ITU, HMS, IFF and INTUC stressed on the need to ratify International Labour Organisation convention 182, Convention 87, Convention 98 and Convention 138. Interestingly, stress was given to ratification of Convention 138, which requires the State to specify, in law, a minimum age for admission to employment not less than the age of finishing compulsory education which is 15 years, and Convention 182, which calls for effective measures to secure the prohibition of worst forms of child labour. **sns**

Timely Rescue Changes Lives of Tiruchy Girls

By S J Michael Collins

Tiruchy: Timely rescue and proper rehabilitation through the Child Labour Elimination and Effective Rehabilitation Society (CHEERS) have transformed the lives of two girls.

After they were rescued from child labour, R Chithra and P Gokila returned to school. Both the girls have now completed Plus Two

and have joined nursing course with the aim of serving the suffering patients. They obtained admission in a para medical college here.

Chithra, daughter of Radhakrishnan and Mallika, and Gokila, daughter of Pottan and Selvi, belong to Podhupatti near Manapparai. When they were in Class VII, both the girls developed an aversion towards education. Their family condition too

was not conducive for them to continue studies. With the blessings of their parents, they went to Karur in 2007 and started to work in a gummy bag production unit for 7,000 a day. It was around that time that Dhanalakshmi, a teacher at the CHEERS school, went round Bothapatti for a census of child labour and found the girls.

"It became very tough for me to convince the parents

of Chithra and Gokila. They told me that the girls went for work on their own," said Dhanalakshmi. "Later, I slowly convinced them and educated them on the importance of education. Finally, they accepted my advice," the teacher added. Later, they were admitted to the CHEERS school and studied till Class VIII. They were later admitted to the Government HSS in Karungulam.

New Indian Express, June 13, P. 4

Child labour eradication week

NEW DELHI, 15 JUNE: Since 12 June has been declared as 'International Day Against Child Labour', Labour Department of Delhi has been organizing 'Child Labour Eradication Week' and decided to observe the same from 12 to 18 June every year. During this week, they have decided to conduct child labour rescue programmes, awareness campaigns and rallies throughout the Capital.

In order to spread awareness among masses, labour department took out a child labour awareness rally on 14 June in east Delhi. The motive behind organising the rally was to motivate and encourage people so that they will start contributing their attention in preventing and eradicating child labour. Several members of RWAs, employees of shopping complexes, residential houses and street vendors witnessed the event. The rally started from PSK (Sanskritik Kendra) in Nirman Vihar area, then went through Laxmi Nagar and Shakarpur.

According to the labour department official, on 12 June, they had rescued 25 child labours from Zari, Tai-

loring and Nickel polish units in Zafrahad area with the help of the office of the Deputy Labour Commissioner (east and north east), members of an NGO 'Bachpan Bachao Andolan' and police personnel.

"All the rescued children were medically examined by the Medical Officer and were produced before the child welfare committee of north east district called as Sanskar Ashram in Dilshad Garden and later sent to Mukti Ashram in Burari for their further care and protection. All 12 employers had also been arrested and booked under relevant provisions," said Deputy Labour Commissioner (east and north), Mr M K Gaur.

He further said, if any child labour is found employed by any employer at work places like factories, commercial establishments, shops, hotels, motels or residences, then suitable action will be taken against such employers under Juvenile Justice (care and protection of children) Act, 2000, Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976 and relevant provisions of IPC, besides Child Labour Act, 1986. **sns**

Statesman, June 16, P. 3

Child labour

It's an irony that at an age when they should go to school and play, a large number of children end up being exploited as child labour. It is a matter of great shame that the rights of the child are still being flouted in the State. What makes it worse is that no serious efforts are being made to ensure that the child is not deprived of his rights. The Convention on the Rights of the Child which has been ratified by 191 countries outline a number of guidelines aimed at ensuring all-round welfare for the child. In Assam, child labourers are found in significant numbers both in the rural and in the urban areas, in tea gardens, hotels, restaurants, garages and in homes as domestic help. A large number of children from the State land up in Nagaland as child labourers. Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi on Tuesday had announced that the State Government would bring in legislation to prevent employment of minor children by public servants and public representatives. The legislation if enacted and implemented in its true letter and spirit will definitely help in combating child labour.

It is only on special days like World Day against Child Labour, UN Child's Rights Day etc., the rights of the child are deliberated on detail, action plans announced, But in reality in most of the cases the assurances are seldom implemented. The very high infant mortality rate in the region speaks eloquently about the prevailing dismal scenario in the field of child care. Health care facilities apart, the children of the region are also vulnerable to all forms of abuse. The children are also not protected from trafficking and economic exploitation which in turn deprives a child from his childhood, right to education and development. It is time the authorities take up the cause of the child in the right earnest. Those engaging child workers should be hauled up. Rehabilitation and education schemes for the street children should be chalked out and implemented. Of course it would not be possible for the authorities alone to work for the rights of the child. The voluntary organizations too have a big role to play to ensure that the rights of the child are upheld. It will be very unfortunate if all forms of exploitation and neglect against the child are not done away with.

Assam Tribune, June 14, P.6

Who is a child?

With different Indian laws defining the age of a child differently, the fight against child labour remains blunted.

Shubhanshu Shrivastava

Ten years ago, in 2002, the International Labour Organisation launched the first World Day against Child Labour observed on June 12 every year. Earlier, in 1992, India became a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Encouraging as these two watershed events in ensuring universal child rights may sound, the very definition of the word 'child' according to Indian laws remains ambiguous. The 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as an individual who has not attained the age of 18 years. In India, different laws define the words 'child' and 'minor' differently.

At the receiving end of this ambiguity are children between the ages of 15-18. The clamour from child rights activists to include individuals belonging to the aforementioned age group under the category of children and preventing people from employing them is growing louder.

For instance—as per the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986—a child is defined as a person who has not completed 14 years of age. The act also prohibits employing children in 65 processes and 18 occupations that it views as hazardous, including beedi-making, tanning and brick kilns.

Other laws around child rights such as trafficking, marriage and juvenile justice have variable definitions of minimum age.

The Plantation Labour Act 1951 has separate definitions for child,

adolescent and adult. According to it 'child' means a person who has not completed his fourteenth year.

'Adolescent' means a person who has completed his fourteenth year but has not completed his eighteenth year where as 'adult' means a person who has completed his eighteenth year.

The Motor Transport Workers Act 1961, and the Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act 1966, both define a child as a person who has not completed 14 years of age.

Matrimonial laws such as Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 add to the confusion. It states that a male cannot attain majority until he is 21 years of age and the corresponding age for a female is 18. The recent ruling by the Delhi High Court that "a Muslim girl can marry without the consent of her parents when she attains the age of puberty" has done little to address such complications.

Due to lack of a clear cut definition, the unorganised nature of work and cases not being reported, it's easier for the employers to employ a large number of children without worrying about the consequences, say child rights activists.

Child Rights and You or CRY, a Non-Government Organisation working for underprivileged children, analysed data from the National Sample Survey

2009-10. According to CRY's analysis of 13 states, 25 per cent of children in the 15-18 age group are employed in some income earning activity. The situation is worse among Scheduled Tribe (36.1 per cent), Scheduled Caste (29.2 per cent) and Other Backward Caste (26.1 per cent) categories. States with the worst record in employing children in the adolescent age group are Gujarat, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

According to CRY CEO Puja Marwaha, "The government should amend the law to ensure that all forms of child labour are prohibited for children up to 18 years of age. CRY considers all those between 0 to 18 years of age to be children. And we urge the government to bring uniformity in law when it comes to the definition of a child."

To take on some of these challenges, the government has come up with initiatives including the Prevention of Offences Against the Child Bill, 2009 under which a child has been defined as any person who has not completed the age of 18 years.

However, in the larger context, the confusion surrounding the age of who is a child, remains. "So even before discussing further areas where laws like the Child Labour Act need to be applied, there needs to be some consistency on the definition of a child," say child rights activists.

Hindoo, June 15, P-11

26 बाल मजदूर मुक्त, 13 फैक्टरी मालिक बंदी

नई दिल्ली (एसएनबी)। अंतरराष्ट्रीय बाल श्रम उन्मूलन दिवस के मौके पर उत्तर-पूर्वी दिल्ली के भजनपुरा और जाफराबाद इलाके से 26 बाल मजदूरों को मुक्त कराया गया है। बच्चों से काम लेने वाले 13 फैक्टरी मालिकों को गिरफ्तार किया गया है। इस मामले में कठोर कार्रवाई कर चार प्रतिष्ठानों को सील कर दिया गया। मुक्त कराए गए बाल मजदूरों को बाल कल्याण समिति दिल्ली गार्डन के सामने पेश किया गया। जहां बयान दर्ज करने के बाद इन्हें बुराड़ी स्थित मुक्ति आश्रम नामक होम में भेज दिया गया। 19 व 20 जून को फिर से इनका बयान सौडक्यूरी के सामने दर्ज किया जाएगा।

मंगलवार को बचपन बचाओ आंदोलन की निशानदेही और बाल कल्याण समिति के सदस्यों की मौजूदगी में श्रम विभाग ने भजनपुरा व जाफराबाद इलाके में छापेमारी अभियान चलाया। छापेमारी अभियान में सीलमपुर के एसडीएम राधानरण और पुलिस मौजूद थीं। मुक्त कराए गए 26 बाल मजदूरों को ठग-ठग से 13 वर्ष के बीच है। छह माह में



► चार प्रतिष्ठान सील
► अंतरराष्ट्रीय बाल श्रम उन्मूलन दिवस पर की छापेमारी

विहार के मोतिहारी आर सीतामढ़ी जिले से लाए गए इन बच्चों से कढ़ाई (जरी), गारमेंट्स और केमिकल्स फैक्टरी में 12 से 15 घंटे तक मजदूरी के तौर पर इन्हें काम लिया जा रहा था। 150 रुपए साप्ताहिक दिया जाता था। छापेमारी अभियान में शामिल सौडक्यूरी दिल्ली गार्डन की सदस्य रितु मेहरा ने बताया कि 3-4 बाल मजदूरों से केमिकल्स की फैक्टरी में काम लिया जा रहा था, जबकि अन्य बच्चे जरी का काम कर रहे थे। अधिकतर बाल मजदूर वेसमेंट में अवैध तरीके से चल रही फैक्टरी में काम कर रहे थे। बिहार से दिल्ली पढ़ाई के बर्ताने या परिवार की माली हकलत देखते हुए रोजगार के बहाने लाने वाले लोग निकटस्थ हैं, जिनके बारे में जांच-पड़ताल की जाएगी। इन बाल मजदूरों को मुक्त कराने के लिए श्रम विभाग के अधिकारियों को काफी मशक्कत करनी पड़ी। पुलिस 13 फैक्टरी मालिकों को गिरफ्तार कर पूछताछ कर रही है।

*Rastriya
Sahara
June 13, P4*

Students pledge to help victims of child labour

BANGALORE, DHNS: More than 5,000 students from 40 schools across the State took out a rally in Bangalore on Tuesday, to mark World Anti-child Labour Day.

The rally, organised by the Department of Labour, started from Freedom Park and culminated at Kanteerava Stadium. Chief Minister D V Sadananda Gowda flagged off the event by distributing school uniforms and textbooks to children rescued from child labour. The rescued children will join school this year.

Addressing the gathering, the chief minister stressed the importance of education in giving a new lease of life to the vic-

tims of child labour. The students took a pledge that if they came across victims of child labour, they would immediately extend help.

The State has rescued 1,07,947 child workers since 2001 and provided rehabilitation by enrolling them in mainstream schools. In the last year, as many as 47,800 children were rescued and 18,915 cases were booked against employers, Gowda said. The State runs 126 schools in 17 districts as part of providing bridge course to 3,877 students, he added.

Those rehabilitated students who secured first class in the SSLC exam were given merit certificates on the occasion.

Deccan herald, June 13, P4

26 child labourers rescued

Staff Reporter

NEW DELHI: Twenty-six children were rescued from garment and metal industries at Ghonda Chowk in North-East Delhi on Tuesday, the occasion of World Day Against Child Labour.

The police arrested 18 employers and sealed four establishments following a complaint filed by non government organisation Bachpan Bachao Andolan.

Trafficked from villages in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, the children have been working in the factories for over a year. Aged between seven

• 19 children were involved in zari work, stitching

• Seven children were working at metal polishing units

and 13, they were working in deplorable conditions for about 12 hours to 14 hours a day.

Of the rescued children, 19 were involved in zari (embroidery) work and stitching of cloth, while the remaining seven were working at metal polishing units.

Hindu, June 13, P.3

Rescued kids make new start with studies

Tuesday Was World Day Against Child Labour

Ambika Pandit | TNN

New Delhi: From an exploited child labourer at a furniture workshop in Mayapuri to a budding child rights activist leading "Badhte Kadam" — a federation of 5,000 street and working children — as its national secretary, 17-year-old Vijay has come a long way in six years. And on Tuesday, which was World Day Against Child Labour, he took yet another step forward in his journey towards empowerment, clearing his Class X exams under the National Institute of Open School (NIOS).

In a programme at Vignyan Bhawan, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), along with International Labour Organisation and UNICEF, announced the campaign "Justice for Children—End of Child Labour". Before an auditorium packed to capacity with bureaucrats, activists, experts on child rights, newsmen, street children and freed child labourers, Vijay

spoke about his struggle and newfound dignity.

Until 2006, Vijay was one of the many children exploited in workshops, shops and houses as child labour. A resident of Muzzafarpur in Bihar, he came to Delhi with his

Experts say legal exploitation of children continues unabated because the definition of child labour is not universal

brother at the age of 11. Since he failed to find a foothold in the government school where he enrolled, Vijay ended up at a furniture workshop, slogging 12 hours a day and earning Rs 10. Frustration drove him to drug addiction and alcohol. But an encounter with activists from the NGO Childhood Enhancement Through Training & Action (CHETNA) and its federation for children, Badhte Kadam, changed his life.

Like Vijay, 15-year-old Chandni gathered the courage to speak of her struggle on the streets selling *bhutta* (corn on the cob), collecting rags and selling flowers with her mother. She is now enrolled in Class VI.

NCPCR chairperson Dr Shanta Sinha said, "Chandni's experience reflects the harsh reality of life. Legal exploitation of children continues unabated due to the definition of child labour being non-universal. The definition of child needs to be reviewed. There is a need to amend the Child Labour Act to bring it in harmony with the Right to Education Act and to ensure that all forms of child labour stand abolished without drawing distinction between hazardous and non-hazardous labour."

Sinha said strong legal instruments must be used to abolish the practice in the 14-18 age group. "Being school dropouts, a large number of them are in the market as wage earners and are trafficked to faraway unfamiliar workplaces," she added.

No updated database on child labour

Prema Sodhi & Divya Sharma | TNN

New Delhi: The Delhi government is yet to build a database on the number of child labourers in the capital. Replying to an RTI application filed by an NGO, the labour department has said it has figures only from the 2001 census and are waiting for the 2011 findings.

"The census department has not yet published the child labour population in Delhi and the data relating to child labour according to the census 2001 is attached," said the response to the RTI filed by Child Rights and You that asked for the data as in March 2011.

Under the proposed action plan, the government is going to carry out a survey to find out the number of child labourers in the capital.

The RTI also highlighted the number of prosecutions and the recovery of the penalty from the offenders. New Delhi and south Delhi had the poorest track record with no recovery of Rs 20,000 as stipulated by the child labour Act, 1986.

Sharing the findings on Tuesday, the NGO also announced the launch of a month-long campaign demanding that all children between 3 and 18 years be covered under the Right to Education Act, 2009.

Times of India, June 13, P.9

ज्यादातर बाल श्रमिक शारीरिक और मानसिक समस्याओं के शिकार

इंदौर, 12 जून (भाषा)। मध्यप्रदेश की आर्थिक राजधानी इंदौर की 10 झुग्गी बस्तियों में रहने वाले करीब 65 फीसद बाल श्रमिकों का बचपन न केवल काम के बोझ से दबा हुआ है बल्कि वे शारीरिक और मानसिक समस्याओं के भी शिकार हैं। यह तथ्य एक नैर सरकारी संगठन के अध्ययन से सामने आया है।

दीनबंधु सामाजिक संस्था ने यह अध्ययन झुग्गी बस्तियों के आठ से 18 वर्ष के आयु समूह वाले बाल श्रमिकों की स्थिति जानने के लिए किया। संगठन की प्रमुख कार्यकर्ता बेलू जॉर्ज ने अध्ययन के नतीजों के हवाले से संवाददाताओं को बताया- हमने शहर की 10 झुग्गी बस्तियों के 88 बाल श्रमिकों को अध्ययन में शामिल किया। इनमें से 65 फीसद बाल श्रमिक किसी न किसी शारीरिक या मानसिक समस्या के शिकार निकले। खासकर पन्नी बीनने, चटाई बेंचने और कचरा इकट्ठा करने वाले बच्चे काम की अमानवीय परिस्थितियों, चोटों, चमड़ी से जुड़े स्वास्थ्यगत विकारों और पैरों में अक्सर

बने रहने वाले दर्द से जूझ रहे हैं। ये बच्चे उदासी, असुरक्षा के भाव, चिड़चिड़ाहट और निराशा के भी शिकार हैं।

बेलू ने अध्ययन के हवाले से बताया कि बाल श्रमिकों में से 83 फीसद बच्चे स्कूल जाना छोड़ चुके हैं। इससे शिक्षा का अधिकार कानून को अमली जामा पहनाने को लेकर किए जाने वाले सरकारी दावों पर सवालिया निशान खड़ा होता है।

उन्होंने कहा कि बाल श्रम के कमजोर कानून, अस्थायी यसाहटी का बार-बार होने वाला विस्थापन और गरीबों की बड़ी आबादी के मुकाबले सरकारी स्कूलों की गंभीर कमी बाल श्रमिकों की बुरी हालत की अहम वजहों में शामिल है। उधर, श्रम विभाग के एक अधिकारी ने कहा कि वह नैर सरकारी संगठन की विस्तृत अध्ययन रिपोर्ट देखने के बाद ही इस बारे में कोई टिप्पणी कर सकेगा।

Jansatta, June 13, P.5

17 child labourers rescued from Nangloi junk market

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JUNE 11

On the eve of World Day Against Child Labour, 17 child labourers were rescued from west Delhi where they were allegedly employed in the hazardous task of segregation of electronic scrap.

All the children are under 13 years of age and the youngest is just six-years-old, the police said.

The children, rescued from the Nangloi junk market by the police following a tip-off from the NGO Bachpan Bachao Andolan (BBA), were involved in the extremely hazardous job of segregation of electronic

The children were exposed to dangerous metals like lead, silicon and toxic chemicals

scrap from computers, mobile phones and other electronics and were found to be working in oppressive conditions.

Nangloi is one of the biggest junk markets where all kinds of electronic, furniture and other scrap is transported to be segregated for recycling. There are nearly 1,000

scrap stores in Nangloi that are engaged in this work.

The rescued children used to work for scrap dealers for meagre wages. They were exposed to dangerous metals like lead, silicon, toxic plastic and chemicals that can cause damage to the body, the BBA said.

The six-year-old victim said, "I was brought here by a man in my village. I work from 9 am to 11 pm. Every day. I detach the parts of machines and I stay in the factory only."

The children were trafficked by middlemen and local agents from their native villages in U.P. and Bihar and many of them are homeless.

Asian Age, June 12, P.13

देश में 50 फीसदी बाल मजदूर शारीरिक शोषण के शिकार

भारत में बाल मजदूरी करनेवाले बच्चों में 50 प्रतिशत शारीरिक प्रताड़ना के शिकार हैं। इनमें से अधिकांश 14 वर्ष से कम उम्र के हैं और कई की उम्र 5 साल से भी कम है। बाल मजदूरी उन्मुलन के क्षेत्र में काम कर रही गैर सरकारी संगठनों की रिपोर्ट में यह खुलासा किया गया है। युनिसेफ की एक रिपोर्ट में भी कहा गया है कि भारत में सड़कों पर घूमनेवाले (स्ट्रीट चिल्ड्रेन) 68.8 प्रतिशत बच्चे किसी न किसी रूप में शारीरिक प्रताड़ना के शिकार होते हैं। एक अन्य रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक, विश्व में काम कर रहे बच्चों में 30 फीसदी भारत के हैं। होटलों, सिल्क उद्योग, चटाई बुनाई, फटाखों के उद्योग में करोड़ों की संख्या में काम कर रहे इन

मेहनत के लिए कम भुगतान किया जाना चाहिए।

खतरनाक उद्योग

अंतरराष्ट्रीय श्रम संगठन के अनुमान के अनुसार विश्व में 5 से 17 वर्ष की उम्र के बाल श्रमिकों की संख्या 21.8 करोड़ है। इसमें से 115 मिलियन (11.5 करोड़) बच्चे खतरनाक काम करते हैं।

पूरी दुनिया में बढ़त है बचपन

30%	50.2%
बाल मजदूर भारत में हैं दुनिया के सभी बाल मजदूरों में	बच्चे सप्ताह में सातों दिन काम करते हैं
53.22%	21.90%
बाल मजदूर यौन शोषण का शिकार	बच्चों का गंभीर यौन शोषण

बच्चों को शारीरिक प्रताड़ना के साथ-साथ यौन शोषण से भी गुजरना पड़ता है।

कम वेतन

गैर सरकारी संगठनों के मुताबिक, सात दिनों तक बिना किसी छुट्टी के काम करने वाले अधिकांश बच्चों की आमदनी 300 से 500 रुपये मासिक तक है। उधर, भारत सरकार के मुताबिक बाल मजदूर को औसतन 22.25 रुपये दैनिक मिलते हैं। सरकारी आंकड़ों के मुताबिक देश में फ्लिहाल ऐसे बच्चों की संख्या 2 करोड़ (20 मिलियन) है। जबकि गैर सरकारी संगठनों के मुताबिक यह संख्या 6 करोड़ के स्तर को छू चुकी है। यदि स्कूल ना जाने वाले सभी बच्चों को इसमें शामिल कर दिया जाए तो इनकी संख्या 10 करोड़ को पार कर जाएगी। कुल ऐसे बाल श्रमिक भी शामिल हैं, जिन पर 18 घंटे काम करने का दबाव डाला जाता है। युनिसेफ की एक रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर पर बाल मजदूरी घटकर 25 प्रतिशत से 10 प्रतिशत के स्तर पर आ गई है।

20 साल लगेगे बाल श्रम हटाने में

दुनिया के बाल मजदूरों के 14 प्रतिशत भारत में हैं, जिनमें से 9 फीसदी खतरनाक कार्यों में लगे हैं। संगठन ने कहा है कि बाल श्रम को हटाने के लिए 20 साल का वक्त लग सकता है और इसमें 760 अरब डॉलर खर्च होंगे।

बाल तस्करी

हाल में जारी की गई एक रिपोर्ट के

मुताबिक देश में गरीब बच्चों की खरीद-विक्री का कारोबार तेजी से चल रहा है। खासकर बिहार और झारखंड से बच्चों को प्लेसमेंट एजेंसियों के बेचने का मामला सामने आ रहा है। ये एजेंसियां दिल्ली, एनसीआर समेत अन्य शहरों में बड़े पैमाने पर बच्चों को रोजगार के लिए भेजती हैं। चूंकि बच्चे खुद अपने वेतन और काम के घंटे के बारे में बात नहीं कर सकते, इसलिए एजेंसियां मनमाने ढंग से उन्हें काम पर लगा देती हैं।

क्या कहती है रिपोर्ट

क्या है सजा	इसके कारण	विदेशों में बाल मजदूर
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> बाल मजदूरी कराने वाले व्यक्ति को तीन से छह माह की कैद उस पर दस से बीस हजार रुपये का जुर्माना बच्चों को जहां से मुक्त कराया जाता है, उन पर 20 रुपये हजार का जुर्माना एक आरटीआई के जवाब में सरकार ने कहा है कि बाल श्रमिक परियोजना के तहत 5 लाख बच्चों को मजदूरी मुहैयाकर स्कूल में पंखित कराया गया। 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> कमजोर कानून प्राथमिक स्तर पर कोशिशों में कमी गरीबी सामाजिक और आर्थिक रूप से पिछड़ापन प्राथमिक स्तर पर अनिवार्य शिक्षा की कमी बाल मजदूरी को लेकर माता-पिता द्वारा नजरअंदाज किया जाना बाल श्रम कानून और जुर्माने में कमी गहरे से दूर स्कूल स्कूल के अत्यव्यवहारिक और उबाऊ पाठ्यक्रम 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 61% एशिया में 32% अफ्रीका में 07% लैटिन अमेरिका में 15 करोड़ ही जाएंगे 2015 तक अफ्रीका में बाल मजदूर

गांव में बाल मजदूर

मूल व्यापारियों के अंतरराष्ट्रीय परिषद की एक रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि दस में से नौ बच्चे (90 प्रतिशत बच्चे) ग्रामीण इलाकों में अपने परिवार के लिए काम करते हैं। ये प्रतिशत बच्चे निर्माण, संघाओं और मरम्मत के क्षेत्र में जबकि लगभग 0.8 फीसदी बच्चे फैक्ट्रियों में काम करते हैं। देश के कुल रोजगार में इनकी 4 प्रतिशत की भागीदारी है।

Hindus Jan, June 12, P-9

संवेदना घटी

बाल मजदूरों को लेकर देश में संवेदना घटी है। क्राई की हाल ही में जारी एक रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक एक तिहाई दिल्लीवासियों को बच्चों के कई घंटों तक काम करने से कोई परेशानी नहीं है। वहीं राजधानी की 50 फीसदी आबादी मानती है कि बच्चों को उनको

Most rescued children are never rehabilitated

Lengthy Procedure, Poor Coordination To Blame: Experts

Purna Sodhi &
Sumeet Keswani | TNN

New Delhi: The teenage help who was rescued from a Dwarka apartment in March is now enrolled in a school in Jharkhand. She has received her wage arrears, besides support from the state. But hers is an exceptional story of rehabilitation. Experts say most trafficked children, even when rescued, lead bleak lives.

Take the case of two girls — aged 12 and 13 — who were brought to Delhi a year ago and sexually assaulted at a placement agency. After their rescue, they were sent to a shelter home in West Bengal, and have not received any significant help.

Experts say care and aid are lavished on victims only after their cases grab media attention. Generally, though, rescued children get trapped in procedural hurdles. The luckier ones are 'reunited' with their families but not rehabilitated and, occasionally, children even slip back into the hands of traffickers.

Rishikant, an activist from NGO Shakti Vahini, said, "We get many complaints and some of the offences are grave. The state machinery moves when a case gets highlighted. In most cases, the child welfare committees (CWCs) merely dump the children back home without follow-up," he said. The chairperson of the Lalpat Nagar CWC said, "Reuniting does not mean rehabilita-



MASKED EXPLOITATION: Street kids at a ghost march on the eve of International Day Against Child Labour

tion." Shakti Vahini claims that of the 200 children it rescued last year, none has been properly rehabilitated.

In most cases, delays occur due to poor inter-state coordination. "The authorities here are not so concerned as 90% of the cases are from other states. Their attitude is that the other state has to take care of them," said CWC chairperson Raaj Mangal Prasad. It is also observed that the CWCs of the other states are not so zealous in their work.

Rishi Kant, another Shakti Vahini member, said this hampers follow-up action. "The CWC might pass orders in the city and, to an extent, also recover children's due wages, but it becomes diffi-

cult to follow up on a case on a day-to-day basis." He suggests that the labour department should act as an intermediary between source states and cities from where children are rescued.

The director for policy and research at Child Rights and You (CRY), Vijaylakshmi Arora, said lack of manpower is another important hurdle in rehabilitation. "If you go to the district level or the CWCs, you don't find much manpower. It is usually one man taking care of 50 cases. That ratio has to be improved."

Arora said a system needs to be in place to track each and every child's case separately "as each child's case is different and the factors for

trafficking are different. This will also keep tabs on children who have been re-trafficked; at present there is no system to monitor that."

While lack of manpower and poor interstate coordination hinder the process of rehabilitation, Prasad said transferring the monitoring of child labour to the department of women and child development will help. "The Child Labour Act that falls under the labour department does not look into the rehabilitation of a child; this is done by the Juvenile Justice Act that is the responsibility of the department of women and child development," he said, adding, "Shifting the child labour issue to them would speed up the process".

Times of India, June 12, P.9

Loopholes in law fuel child labour

Prerna Sodhi | TNN

New Delhi: The educated know they're doing is against the law, but they still do it. Despite laws in place to curb child labour, institutions set up to protect them from harm, and the extensive coverage given to cases of violation, children working as domestic helps is not a rare sight. This, the experts say, reflects societal attitudes.

Affordability and the ease of controlling and moulding minors are often cited for justifying child labour. But, experts say, most of the exploitation occurs in the name of charity. "This happens with the subconscious awareness that it is wrong and the culprits can get away with it," said Vijaylakshmi Arora, director for Policy and Research at Child Rights and You (CRY).

According to CRY's recent report, 62% of 350 respondents said they could get off the hook by offering compensation to the child or parent if the child met with an accident. While activists agree that the capital has been prompt in taking up this issue,



OPEN ABUSE: 1,528 people were prosecuted for child labour in 2009-2011

they attribute much of its success to a proactive judiciary rather than stringent laws. They add it is the weak legislation, and the scope of bending laws that have contributed to the prevailing attitudes, and poor rate of prosecution.

"We have laws to prevent child labour, and anyone found guilty has to pay Rs 20,000. After HC orders, the rate of recovery of wages and compensation has gone up,"

said Bachpan Bachao Aandolan activist Bhuvan Ribhu. "While that may have acted as a deterrent to small-time employers, those employed children as domestic helps, which includes the educated, manage to skirt the law. Even if they get prosecuted, Rs 20,000, which has to be paid to the labour department, is not much," he added.

The labour department report says 1,528 people were prosecuted in 2009-2011. The penalty was collected in just 290 cases.

The chairperson of Child Welfare Committee Lajpat Nagar, Raaj Mangal Prasad, said though Section 26 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act makes the offence non-cognizable and non-bailable, many get away on the basis of interpretation of the law. He suggested that Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, should be made non-cognizable. "Section 26 deals with procurement of the child, holding his wages and bonded labour. The language is such that unless all three offences are committed, the section doesn't apply."

Govt to seal more shops, levy penalty

Ambika Pandit | TNN

New Delhi: The Delhi government is likely to intensify its crackdown on child labour. The labour department is going to seal more shops and workshops as part of its attempts to recover the fine of Rs 20,000, which goes towards rehabilitation of the child.

The records show that almost Rs 79.75 lakh has been recovered from employers. But this amount pertains to just 320 children whereas over 1,287 children were rescued by the

Delhi government along with NGOs in 2010-2011. Senior officials say notices have been issued in most cases but the recovery is slow.

On the eve of International Day against Child Labour, the brass of the government admitted that the follow-up mechanism for tracking the disbursal of the money to children needed attention. Documents—accessed by TOI—detailing the recovery amount transferred by the labour department to various states, show that Bihar tops the list of states from where

children are being brought to Delhi for work. UP comes next followed by West Bengal.

The labour department has released Rs 40.75 lakh to nearly 30 districts of Bihar as compensation for 163 children. Most of the children are from north Bihar. A sum of Rs 25 lakh has been released to districts in Uttar Pradesh for 103 children. A sum of Rs 6 lakh has been released to West Bengal for 24 children, and Rs 3 lakh has been released to Delhi for 12 children.

According to the law, Rs 20,000 is to be recovered from

the employer of the child and the state contributes Rs 5,000. According to a labour department report, 1,287 children were rescued from different parts of Delhi between July 2009 and October 2011 under the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986. The labour department is now banking on the power to seal premises of employers indulging in child labour till the time they pay the compensation. HC in a recent directive allowed the state to seal premises of violators who evade pay penalty.

'Anti-child labour cells need support'

Indrani Basu | TNN

New Delhi: Anti-child labour laws and their strict implementation have not been able to contain the problem of child trafficking in the city. Children are still being trafficked from states like West Bengal, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh and Assam to work in factories and households in inhuman conditions.

Industrial estates like Okhla, Wazirpur and Jhilmil Colony see a number of such children steadily working when they are guaranteed free education under the Right to Education Act.

While Delhi Police's anti-human trafficking cell is over a year old now, and has helped rescue child labourers, there are several areas that need to be worked upon.

Ravi Kant, Supreme Court advocate who is conducting a study on several such cells in Delhi and across the country said, "There is no convergence between the ministry of women and child welfare and these cells and both agencies are working in isolation. The ministry needs to support the work of the police." Kant's study will form the India Country Assessment Report for the

tion," he said. Many times, the victims and their families do not show up in court due to social stigma. "There is need to conduct these cases over video conferencing to encourage victims to testify. Right now, employers are not getting convicted in a lot of cases because of this," he added.

Activists also say that the creation of these cells have helped the process of rescue of

child labourers. Till April-end this year, 34 cases of child labour have been reported and 149 such children rescued. In 2011, 135 cases were reported and 1,144 children rescued.

Activists say that responsive nodal officers have helped them crack down on employers faster. Increase in registration of cases of missing children is a positive step in this regard. "Each of these state cells are given Rs 35 lakhs per year and a jeep to help them in raids. Video cameras have been provided by MHA for detailed recording of these rescue operations," said Rishi Kant of NGO Shakti Vahini.

Currently, the cell in each district is headed by one inspector with sufficient number of upper subordinates and supporting staff. "In case of any organized trafficking racket that comes to notice, instructions are that the probe of that case shall be transferred to Anti-Kidnapping section of the Crime Branch for further necessary action," explained a senior police officer.

While 33 persons - including 22 women - have been arrested under the immoral trafficking (prevention) act already this year, 121 such persons were arrested last year.

KIDS SAVED		
YEAR	NO. OF CASES	NO. OF CHILDREN RESCUED
2008	18	286
2009	45	793
2010	106	996
2011	135	1,144
2012*	34	149

*Up to April 30

ministry of home affairs.

"While district level sensitization is going on, the justice delivery system needs to be strengthened. The legal aid system does not properly support the victims right now as the victims have to travel between states and testify in a court. While the travel expenditure is taken care of by the court, the state does nothing to ensure their accommoda-

*Times of India,
June 12, 15*

NGO's call to ban child labour

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, June 10—Every year, the observation of the World Day Against Child Labour on June 12 is becoming more elaborate and grand, but regrettably, the condition of the underprivileged children compelled to earn hasn't improved at all. The sight of a child working in hazardous occupation or a child as young as four or five years old working as a domestic help is very common despite the laws prohibiting it.

Calling upon the authorities concerned to implement the laws meant for protection of child rights, World Vision India, Guwahati, which has been advocating for school education of all underprivileged as a step towards eradicating child labour, stressed the need for stringently prohibiting child labour.

"Thousands of children are working to provide for their families. The law was enacted many years back to prohibit child labour, but unfortunately the underprivileged children are still engaged in various hazardous occupations," said Gamliel Sherio of World Vi-

sion India, Guwahati.

He pointed out that the society has to change its attitude if the underprivileged children are to be taken out of slavery.

"The society is comfortable providing good education to a section of children at the cost of the underprivileged children who are employed as domestic help," said Sherio adding that political will and sincere commitment from all stakeholders was very important to make a difference to the

lives of the child labourers.

"Every child out of school is a potential child labourer and this is a stark reality in our society. If we have to eliminate child labour, we must ensure that all children have access to quality education," said Sherio.

Sherio said that World Vision India wants a total ban on child labour till the age of 18 and proper implementation of the Right to Education Act in communities. He mentioned that the communities have to be proactive in protecting child rights and eliminating child labour.

"Steps should be initiated to form district child protection units," insisted Sherio.



Assam Tribune, June 11, P.5

Vidarbha children dump school to work in cotton farms to feed their families

As agriculture is not specifically disallowed for children under 14 under the Child Labour (Prevention and Regulation) Act 1986, farmers across Maharashtra employ children: sometimes as full-time labourers like Somirao, otherwise as daily labourers as and when they need them.

Activists say it leads to children missing out on education altogether. Vidarbha is a glaring example of this.

"While the amount of children working in agriculture, and thus losing access to education is more in Yavatmal, there is largely a societal 'sanction' for using children for farm work all over Vidarbha," says Suresh Bolenwar, a farmer-activist with the Vidarbha Jan Anolan Samiti (VJAS).

Yavatmal is one of the worst-affected districts of the agrarian crisis, he adds. "Rs 25,000 is more than what the parents would earn through the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, if it is implemented fully. It is difficult to pull the children out when the needs of the family are concerned."

Girls too are part of the many children in the region dropping out of school at an early age. Vrinda Atram, Surekha Rampure and Parvati Tekam of Ambezari village have said they are enrolled in ashramshalas meant for tribal children, but their attendance is irregular as they have to travel to different villages to find work.

The day this correspondent met them, they were waiting at a bus stop, with food and clothes to last them for a week, in search of work.

"Someone told us we could find work in the chilli fields here, but everyone has finished picking chilli. Now we have to wait till we find something else," says 13-year-old Surekha. She and Vrinda have dropped out af-

ter Standard 6, while Parvati is still studying in Standard 9. "The school does not care if we don't show up. For every day of work that we get in the field, we get Rs.100-150. So nobody complains," Vrinda, 13, said.

The NGO, Save the Children, has been working in some of the districts in Vidarbha, trying to encourage farmers and parents to stop children from working, in order to complete their education up to the age of 14, as mandated by the Right to Education Act. In the last three years, the organisation claims to have mainstreamed more than 12,000 children in 986 villages: some had completely dropped out while some were irregular for months. And yet, villages across Yavatmal are untouched by intervention

by any organisation.

In the villages that are supported by Save the Children, farmers say the number of child labour has gone down, "but it is difficult to refuse needy parents."

At a farmers' gathering in Dabhade village in Amravati district, cotton growers lament that parents themselves are insisting on making their children work. "What the government pays us farmers is not enough, and so we cannot give the labourers enough money. So they eventually get their children to work on the fields too," says Triambak Raut, a farmer.

"We know that we cannot afford agriculture: the labourers cannot afford to be just labourers. So they have to send their kids to the farm

to work." For some, it is justified because the parents can then pay for the children's education and other needs. "The children work in the sowing season in June, just before the rains. At least

then the rest of the year the children can go to school in peace," Devidas Patil said.

Ashok Pingale, State programme manager of Save the Children, believes that the discrepancy between the Child Labour Act and the RTE is holding back the spread of basic education. "Only if the government bans all forms of child labour for children under 14 under the Child Labour Act, as recommended in one of the amendments, will we be able to realise the potential of the Right to Education Act fully."

National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) member Yogesh Dube, who recently released a study that said child labour is prevalent in cotton seed farming in Andhra Pradesh, said the Commission was not aware of the children working on cotton fields in Maharashtra. "If we get media reports about the occurrence we will definitely look into it," he told *The Hindu*.

Hindu, June 11, P15

Childhood in shreds

Bindu Shajan Perappadan

Forced to work for 14-hours at a stretch and even carry pesticides on their back, the plight children engaged as child labour in the Bt cotton production has often gone unnoticed, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has said in its latest survey report.

To rescue these children and in an effort to curb the growing problem of child labour in Bt cotton fields in some states, the Commission in collaboration with the labour department of Andhra

Pradesh, conducted a State-wide meeting with Bt cotton seed companies in Hyderabad in May.

"Child labour is being engaged in large numbers in Bt cotton fields in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan. They are forced to work for 14 hours and even carry pesticides exposing themselves to toxins," said Commission member Dr. Yogesh Dube who visited the area. "Plants producing Bt cotton seeds require children of low height for cross pollination. Besides children make easy and cheap labour,"

he added.

He noted that there was an urgent need to step up documentation of the problem to help implement the measures to curb it. "Child Welfare Committees (CWC) should be made more accountable, helpline numbers should be put in place so that people can directly call them up. More efforts should be put in to improve network and rehabilitation," he added.

The NCPCR representatives also held meeting with 12 companies manufacturing Bt cotton seeds. Representa-

tives of some of the companies claimed that engaging children in Bt cotton seed production had come down in the State following intense monitoring by the labour department in the last few years coupled with measures taken by the multinational companies.

The NCPCR team's report also noted that during a member's field visit to certain places in southern Rajasthan including Dungarpur, Udaipur, Banswara children were found trafficked from Rajasthan to Gujarat's northern districts like Sabarkan-

tha, Bansakantha and Patan.

The Commission suggested that all stakeholders prepare an action plan for total elimination of child labour in Bt cotton seed production in the country.

"We observed that in several areas, child labourers were working in Bt cotton seed companies and carrying huge quantity of pesticides on their back... harsh working conditions (are) resulting in unreported deaths. Most of them hail from poor families of tribal communities.

The Commission had also brought these facts to the notice of the Gujarat government and the State government had also initiated action on the recommendation of the Commission and established some seasonal hostels for migrant children, established check posts at the borders in Rajasthan as well as in Gujarat," noted the report.

The Commission also passed a resolution that all Bt cotton seed companies incorporate a clause in the agreement between the contractor and the farmer stating that they will not engage any child below the age of 14 years.

The other points in the resolution included that the

seed companies should formulate 'village committees' to monitor employment of child labour, and that the committee should monitor that children under 14 years are not sent for such work.

"We also suggested that the labour department initiate all measures to eliminate child labour in coordination with departments like education, social welfare, panchayati raj, police, revenue, etc. and conduct meetings every fortnightly... since Bt cotton seed companies operate in more than one state...emphasised to think beyond Andhra Pradesh. Stringent action will be initiated against farmers engaging child labour," noted Dr. Dube.

Hindu, June 7, P10

'Poultry farming hazardous for kids'

Bhimsen Chalageri

KOPPAL: The district administration has appealed to the government to declare poultry farms, cattle and sheep rearing and cotton crossing as high risk sectors given that child labour is high in these sectors.

The fact that children working in these sectors are prone to eye diseases, asthma, lung diseases, skin ailments, besides stunted physical, mental development and disability, makes them high-risk areas, says a letter written by Deputy Commissioner Tulasi Maddineni to the Commissioner of the Karnata-

ka State Child Labour Eradication Project Society. These sectors should be in-

cluded in the high-risk category and the suitable law should be amended for the purpose.

Bringing these sectors under the high-risk bracket would help take legal action against those employing children in these sectors, the letter says. Children working in these fields are also deprived of education, it says.

Harish Jogi, trainer under the child protection scheme of Unicef, said a minimum of five districts have to submit such proposals.

Only then, the State government can prevail upon the Centre to bring about suitable changes to the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act. Koppal is the first district to have sent a proposal to include the above mentioned sec-

tors as high-risk ones. A few more districts have sent similar requests.

As per a recent survey conducted by the Koppal district Child Labour Eradication Project Society, there are 4,752 child labourers in the district. Of these 1,252 children work in agriculture fields; 873 as daily-wagers; 701 in cotton crossing units; 1,147 in cattle and sheep rearing and 672 as domestic workers.

Gangavathi taluk recorded the highest of 1,935 child labourers, followed by 1,009 child workers in Kushtagi, 987 in Yelburga and 821 in Koppal taluk.

DH News Service

Deccan herald, June 22, P 7

AP Has Set an Example in Dealing with Child Labour

It is heartening that Andhra Pradesh which has had a shameful record of child labour in the past has woken up to the need to control this menace. Significantly, its vigorous implementation of the Minimum Wages (MW) Act to discourage child labour has prompted the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) to seek its execution plan for replication in other States. The MW Act empowers authorities to impose penalties up to 10 times the difference between the wage paid and the minimum wage, as compensation to the child. Not only has this law been taken recourse to on a major scale in Andhra in recent months but cases under this Act are tried in 'open courts' to shame the employers in front of the people. This acts as a strong deterrent.

While the 2001 census revealed that Andhra Pradesh was the second largest employer of child labour in the country after Uttar Pradesh with over 13.63 lakh employed children, State labour officials are confident that these figures would have come down when the yet-to-be released 2011 census figures come out. However, regrettably, of the 36,621 incidents of child labour identified, only 13,774 have been rehabilitated and admitted into schools in 15 years. It is sad indeed that most children are forced into work by their parents to ease their financial burden. This points to the need to address the basic issue of poverty.

It is a matter of concern that a whopping 47 per cent of girls below 20 years are married in Andhra, as per official figures. That this is hindering children from their right to gain education points to the need to address the child marriage issue too. Evidently, the State still has a long way to go in addressing the child labour issue. But that there is an honest effort to deal with this problem is a matter of satisfaction. The sooner the Andhra example is replicated by other states the better it would be.

*New Indian Express
June 19, 1-8*

2,898 child labour toiling in Dimapur

CORRESPONDENT

DIMAPUR, June 20 - There are 2,898 child labourers engaged in commercial sectors in Dimapur, according to a survey conducted in 2011 and 2012 by Community Educational Centre Society (CECS) supported by the Labour department. This was informed by Project Director CECS Subonenba Longkumer on the occasion of 'World Day Against Child Labour' on Tuesday last.

The Project Director stressed on the spotlight provided by the World Day observation on the right of all children to be protected from working and from other violations of fundamental human rights. He pointed to the prevailing condition of child labour

in Dimapur and Nagaland as a whole and stressed that child labour is an impediment to children's rights and a barrier to development.

He said the survey had found 2,898 child labourers engaged in commercial sectors in Dimapur while there are more than 2,000 to 3,000 children in domestic sector employed as domestic servants where most of them are physically, sexually and verbally abused by their employers everyday.

He further presented some documentary videos and pictures showing the pathetic condition faced by children in their work places and also testimonies of some of the children where they cited the situations leading them to work

as labourers.

Children are brought from different corners of the State and even from the neighbouring borders and are either sold off or kept as domestic helps in different houses, the Project Director pointed out. He also revealed that eight children, victims of trafficking, had been rescued during the last two months where most of them mentioned that they were physically abused by their employers and were made to work in very harsh conditions.

Apart from these, there are still a large number of children who have been trafficked into Dimapur and are working as domestic servants in many houses under pathetic conditions, he said.

*Assam Tribune
June 21, 1-7*

Too early to judge

A few misinterpretations of the law shouldn't make parents lose faith in the new Protection of Children From Sexual Offences Act, writes PINKI VIRANI

Once is a one-off. Two, may be, a me-too. But thrice? Now that's a pattern. And when it stems from a select quarter — law lords in one city's local courts — it's a cause for concern. It is hoped their aggravation will not be elevated shortly — even as India's children receive some alleviation — when the President signs into being the country's first-ever law against child sexual abuse: The Protection of Children From Sexual Offences Act.

What is not in the Act is making their honours 'editorialise', a point noted by the chief justice, who once remarked on a few of his black-robed flock straying afar from the sum-total of the need of their judgements. Yet they come, those appended assertions: "A woman should follow her husband the way Sita did," "Helpless boys become victims as they do not understand the consequences of their act."

The latter is reported as his honour's view on sex with 16-year-old girls, though the girl eloped when she was 15. The Act is then called "a step backward". Another lordship garners publicity for dubbing the Act "undemocratic" after a minor girl runs away from home, parents file a report and the girl is 'married' by a religious movement, which did not care to ask for age-proof. Perhaps — as adults who broke the law — they, too, did not "understand the consequences of their act" in a patriarchal framework fed further by filmi images of a touchingly-trusting virgin-girl forsaking all for love.

Reality check. That young maid who tossed the infant out of the balcony? She, too, ran away. He married her and fed her into the human-trafficking chain. Much later, while tending to the child, something snapped. The consequences of child sexual abuse tend to have long-reaching and horrific outcomes; they don't conveniently stop at that one victim.

The Act is about sexual acts upon children by adults. It does not concern itself with acts of minors upon each other; be it sexual experimentation or criminal acts. This comes under the existing Juvenile Justice Act. The Act does not demand the lowering of the age of majority, which starts at 18, since this would also mean that privileges accorded to the teens between 16-18 years would be lifted — be it a civil case or a criminal one — and the child will then be dealt with in adult courts as per adult law, this requires wide-ranging national debate. Not by politicians or NGOs but by parents, principals,

psychiatrists, paediatricians, other stakeholders like grandparents and guardians, and the teens themselves on whether they want the loss of legal protection. If so, what should the dropped cut-off age be — 17 or 16? And where should it stop to drop since both, hormones and criminal tendencies, are coming in to play much before 13?

Meanwhile, the Act sets out boundaries, it expects adult self-accountability, it clearly spells out the consequences of each sexual act upon a child. The Act also keeps in mind that the age of consent for men has always been 18. However, the age of consent for girls was 16. This means that she was 'rape-able' from then on. So the Act brings parity in age — 18 for boys and 18 for girls.

Here are some statistics. Children form a sickening chunk of the ₹40,000-crore female and male prostitution business in India. Of this, 25% of child prostitutes are between 15-18 years of age. Five lakh boys and girls are forced into this trade every year; it would be safe to surmise that many of these were seduced into elopement by adult men.

Yet, while sending out messages that our girls are less than our boys, they romanticise matters. They generalise the exceptions. They imply that parents should not bother protecting their children, simply leave the girl to her 'fate' because she ran away anyway. They ominously warn of the opening of 'floodgates for prosecution of boys by girls' parents even when she is consenting'. Thus, they term the Act 'regressive'.

That term would actually apply to the deeply distressing ruling where a Muslim mother, appealing to the secular law of the land, has been reminded of her *auqaat* through her *jaat*. (The police had not pursued her complaint that her 15-year-old daughter was kidnapped, that the man had criminally intimidated her with the abduction of her second daughter.) A week later, albeit in a different context, the Supreme Court wisely points out that the "basis cannot be only religion".

Special courts will be set up as part of the Act. Judges heading them will presumably be sensitised to apply

the law from the victim's point of view. Hopefully, they will apply it judiciously too. Not only for the 'overlap' cases wherein a 16-17 minor might register a complaint against an 18-19 major. But also in a marriage case at the tender ages of 17 or 18; an early marriage decreases the chances of education and later comes in the way of making other important choices.

Which is why judges are needed by the country. Or else any law, in any country, suffices to apply directly at a police station. Misinterpretations need not mar the faith that parents wish to place in the new law of the land. Our children need to be protected, our judges are our elders and best placed with the Act to do so.



CHILDREN FORM A SICKENING CHUNK OF THE ₹40,000-CRORE FEMALE AND MALE PROSTITUTION BUSINESS IN INDIA. OF THIS, 25% OF CHILD PROSTITUTES ARE BETWEEN 15-18 YEARS

Pinki Virani is the author of *Deaf Heaven*, a fictional take on fate versus free will. The views expressed by the author are personal. Barkha Dutt's column *Third Eye* will appear on July 7.

Handwritten note: Hindu Jan Times, June 23, P.12

Child panel peeved with NGO for refusing admission to girl child due to overcrowding

Staff Reporter

NEW DELHI: Taking strong exception to a shelter home for girl children run by a non-government organisation denying accommodation to a girl on the ground of overcrowding, a Child Welfare Committee here has directed various government agencies to ascertain the occupancy rates of various shelter homes and apprise it of efforts to set up new shelter homes for girl children.

The order, passed by Lajpat Nagar Child Welfare Committee (CWC) chairperson Raj Mangal Prasad and member P. C. Chaturvedi, has also reprimanded the authorities of the Prayas Home

for Girls, Tughlaqabad, stating that "in case the institution found it difficult to accommodate the child in view of overcrowding, the matter could be discussed the following day with the committee but shelter should have been provided for the night which was quite possible".

The child was sent to the shelter home on June 18 by the order of the CWC. The social worker who accompanied the child told the committee that she contacted NGO's head Amod Kanth over telephone but he told her that the management had decided to refuse shelter because of overcrowding.

The CWC said that Rule

25(h) of the Delhi Juvenile Justice Rules, 2000, allowed the Committee to direct the officer-in-charge of children homes/shelter homes/drop-in-centres to receive children requiring shelter and care and that Rule 86(1)(b) also made it clear that the officer in-charge of the institution "will comply" with the orders of the committee.

"We all are aware of the space crunch for girl children in all the institutions and it is

unfortunate that we are finding it difficult to provide shelter to girl children even in the Capital of the country. It is the duty of the government to arrange accommodation whether run by its own or by NGOs, which are licensed. Despite several reminders, nothing concrete has been done by the Department of Women and Child Development [DWCD] in this regard. This issue needs to be addressed by the Child

Protection Unit [CPU] of the State government on priority. The CWC should be informed within a week as to where the girl children should be sent for shelter, care and protection," the order said.

After Prayas denied the child admission, she was taken in the late hours of the night on June 18 to Courage and Healing Home, Neb Sarai. On this, the CWC said:

"Officer-in-charge of Prayas needs to explain as to why the child was denied shelter, causing harassment and unnecessary inconvenience to the child and the worker. The explanation as to why the child was denied shelter on that night as per CWC order

be submitted by the In-charge, Prayas, on or before June 29."

The Committee also directed that a copy of the order be also sent to Child Protection Unit Deputy Director, DWCD, to ascertain the vacancy position in institutions where girl children could be sent for shelter, care and protection.

"The committee should also be informed about efforts to start new homes for girl children in Delhi by Government or by an NGO. A copy of order should also be sent to Joint Director [Licensing] informing her about non-compliance of Juvenile Justice Act provisions by the institutions."

Hindu, June 24, P-3

When Shelters for Kids Become Torture Chambers

Nothing is more shocking than reports of children being ill-treated if only because they look upon adults as their protectors. But, it isn't only the generally isolated cases of under-age maids or servants being deprived of food or beaten in private houses which are deplorable. Even more so are the instances of the shelters for the children turning into virtual torture chambers where the inmates are at the mercy of sadistic and perverted people who are in charge. In the aftermath of the horrifying tales of depravity in a Haryana home, there are reports that for every case of abuse of children in a child care institution, there are 10 unreported ones, which is only to be expected because the victims are scared of complaining about their "superiors" lest they be subjected to more agonising torment.

The Haryana case only came to light because three children managed to escape and report how they had been maltreated. But there are also cases of silent suffering such as those of the six minor girls who have gone missing from Ghaziabad and may have been forced into the flesh trade. According to official figures, 29,000 children live in 638 homes, which are registered under the Juvenile Justice Act. But there is no reliable data on the unregistered homes. An idea, however, of their number can be obtained from the study by a committee which found that 59 per cent of the Mumbai Development Corporation homes were not registered.

But the problem is compounded by the fact that even the unregistered homes continue to receive government grants-in-aid, suggesting a lack of political and administrative will to implement the law. While some donors to these homes insist on there being a child protection policy in place, the government is not bothered. Most of these children are from the underprivileged sections. Little wonder that a survey has shown that the children regard these "homes" as jails.

बाल संरक्षण गृहों की दशा से अनजान निगरानी समितियां

नई दिल्ली (व्यूर)। बाल संरक्षण गृहों में बच्चों से होने वाले दुर्व्यवहार और यौन शोषण को लेकर चिंतित महिला एवं बाल विकास मंत्रालय ने अब अपनी तीसरी ऑख खोल दी है।

बाल संरक्षण निगरानी समिति के काम-काज में खोटे की वजह से रोहतक के अपना घर समेत दूसरे बाल संरक्षण गृहों में भी बच्चों पर होने वाले अत्याचार के मामले सामने आने से डरकत में आगे मंत्रालय ने राज्यों से बातचीत कर कठोर कदम उठाने का निर्णय लिया है। मंत्रालय को मिली जानकारी के मुताबिक ज्यादातर राज्यों में निगरानी समिति काम नहीं कर रही है। राज्य सरकारों का ध्यान भी ऐसे मामलों पर कम ही जाता है। इस तरह की घटनाओं पर लगाम कसने में ज्यादातर राज्य असफल हो रहे हैं।

New Indian Express, June 21, P.8

Amar Ujala, June 27, P.10

बाल संरक्षण गृहों पर लगाम की तैयारी में है सरकार

नई दिल्ली, 26 जून (भाषा)। रोहतक के 'अपना घर' प्रकरण में बच्चों और लड़कियों के कथित यौन उत्पीड़न की बात सामने आने के बाद जागी केंद्र सरकार ने देशभर के बाल संरक्षण गृहों पर नजर रखने के लिए विशेष निगरानी समितियां बनाने की योजना बनाई है।

केंद्रीय महिला एवं बाल विकास मंत्री कृष्णा तीरथ ने कहा कि राज्य और जिला स्तरों पर बनने वाली ये निगरानी समितियां बाल संरक्षण गृहों का नियमित रूप से 'औचक निरीक्षण' करेंगी जिससे कि संरक्षण गृहों की वारंवारिक स्थिति सामने आ सके। मंत्रालय बाल संरक्षण

गृहों को बच्चों के लिए सुरक्षित स्थल बनाने के लिए महिला सांसदों से जल्द ही चर्चा करने वाला है और इन समितियों में केवल महिलाओं को शामिल किए जाने की संभावना है।

तीरथ ने कहा कि इन समितियों में राज्य की महिला सांसदों, सामाजिक कार्यकर्ताओं, गैर सरकारी संगठनों, राष्ट्रीय महिला आयोग और राष्ट्रीय बाल अधिकार संरक्षण आयोग की सदस्यों को शामिल किया जाएगा। ये

बाल संरक्षण गृहों का औचक निरीक्षण करके सीधे बच्चों से बात करेंगी और उनसे इन आश्रय स्थलों के बारे में जानकारी हासिल

करके रिपोर्ट तैयार करेंगी।

बाल आयोग ने नौ मई को रोहतक के बाल संरक्षण गृह 'अपना घर' पर छपा मार्कर बच्चों और लड़कियों सहित करीब 120 लोगों को छुड़ाया था। गैरसरकारी संगठन भारत विकास संघ द्वारा संचालित इस आश्रय स्थल पर बच्चों और महिलाओं के यौन उत्पीड़न और यातनाएं देने के आरोप लगे हैं। एनजीओ की प्रमुख जसवंती देवी और उसके एक रिश्तेदार के खिलाफ मुकदमा दर्ज किया गया है और आश्रय स्थल को सील कर दिया गया है।

राज्य सरकार द्वारा इस मामले की जांच केंद्रीय जांच ब्यूरो को 15 जून को सौंपी गई। तीरथ ने कहा- इस मामले में एनसीपीसीआर की रैगट खड़े कर देने वाली रिपोर्ट सामने आई है। मंत्रालय की ओर से हरियाणा सरकार को पत्र लिखा गया है जिसमें उनसे राज्य सरकार की रिपोर्ट मांगी गई है। उन्होंने कहा कि

एनसीपीसीआर के बाद अब राज्य सरकार की रिपोर्ट मिलने के बाद इस मामले में आगे की कार्रवाई की जाएगी। इस बीच, हरियाणा सरकार ने 'अपना घर' को चलाने वाले एनजीओ 'भारत विकास संघ' का नाम सभी राज्य समितियों से हटा दिया है।

Jansatta, June 27, P.7

जीबी रोड कोठे से छुड़ाई दस नाबालिग लड़कियां

नई दिल्ली (एसएनबी)। कमला मार्केट थाना पुलिस ने जीबी रोड के एक कोठे पर छापा मार कर दस नाबालिग लड़कियों को मुक्त कराया है। पुलिस ने यह कारवाई एक एनजीओ से मिली शिकायत के आधार पर की। पुलिस के अनुसार मुक्त कराई गई लड़कियों को उम्र 15 से 17 साल के बीच है। मुक्त कराई गई नौ लड़कियां पश्चिम बंगाल तथा एक बिहार की रहने वाली है। अतिरिक्त पुलिस आयुक्त देवेशचंद्र श्रीवास्तव के अनुसार रेसक्यू फाउंडेशन की ओर से 25 जून को सूचना मिली थी कि पश्चिम बंगाल के 24 परगना जिले से गुम हुई नाबालिग लड़कों जीबी रोड के कोठा संख्या 58 पर है। उससे जबरन देह व्यापार कराया जा रहा है। इस सूचना के आधार पर पुलिस टीम ने कोठा संख्या 58 पर छापा मारकर नाबालिग लड़कों को मुक्त करा लिया। मुक्त हुई लड़कों से पूछताछ में पता चला कि इस कोठे पर कई अन्य नाबालिग लड़कियों को रखकर उनसे जबरन देह व्यापार कराया जा रहा है। इसके बाद पुलिस टीम ने कोठे से अन्य नौ नाबालिग लड़कियों को मुक्त करा लिया। पुलिस के अनुसार बरामद लड़कियों में एक मूल रूप से बिहार की रहने वाली है। पुलिस ने इस बाबत जेजे एक्ट के तहत मामला दर्ज किया है। पूछताछ में पता चला कि अधिक रूप से कमजोर इन नाबालिग लड़कियों को नौकरी दिलाने का लाहलच देकर जीबी रोड के कोठे पर बेच दिया गया था। पुलिस इस मामले में एक भी दलाल को गिरफ्तार नहीं कर पाई है।

Rashtriya
Sahara,
June 27, 14

NINE KIDS RESCUED FROM TRAFFICKERS

Jaipur: The Udaipur police has rescued nine children to be taken to Gujarat to employ them on BT cotton fields. The police also has arrested two persons, including a jeep driver and a middleman. The children were rescued when the police launched a drive against trafficking of children for BT cotton. According to the police, a middleman lured the children promising their parents high wages. The children were picked up from the tribal dominated district of Pratapgarh.

Asian Age,
June 22, 15

18 Odisha Kids Rescued, Priest Detained in Kumari

Children were brought from Coimbatore and kept in a church

Express News Service

Nagercoil: A total of 18 children from Odisha, below 10 years of age, who were illegally confined at a church near Kulasekharam in Kanyakumari District were rescued by the Social Welfare Department officials on Friday. A Parish Priest was detained in this connection.

Acting on a tip off, the officials conducted an inspection at a Roman Catholic church, St Thresa's Church, near Kulasekharam and found 18 children from Odisha confined to a hall on the campus. "Under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000, as Amended in 2006, it is an offence to keep children from other states without proper registration. We rescued the children from there," District Social Welfare Officer

(DSWO) Devi Kumari said.

Fifteen of them were boys. Clarat (47), a Pastor from Puthenthurai, was tracked down by the Social Welfare Department (DSW) officials and handed over to the police.

The officials said the children were brought by Clarat on June 20 from Blessing Trust, an NGO run by his friend, Rajkumar, near Coimbatore, and lodged at the church where his friend, Fr Lawrence, was a Parish Priest. Clarat planned to set up a home in Kanyakumari and was in the process of identifying a place for it, Devi Kumari said.

"I had gone to Metupalayam for 'oozhayam' (preaching) where Rajkumar handed over the children and asked me to look after them," Clarat said. Their parents were daily wagers.



A section of the children who were rescued by the Social Welfare Department in Kanyakumari district | Express

WELFARE DEPT IN TOP GEAR

- In 2012 May alone 9 children's homes functioning in the district without proper registration were closed by the district Social Welfare Department.
- In 2012 June till date 2 homes were closed by the DSW officials and 4 unregistered homes were voluntarily closed by the concerned Home authorities.
- In Kanyakumari district 24 registered Homes are functioning and 40 Homes which have not yet registered have approached the DSW officials after the district administration's warning against unregistered homes.

New Indian Express, June 23, 15

Delhi Government, Police share data on missing children

"Delhi is the transit point for trafficking"

Bindu Shajan Perappadan

NEW DELHI: The sharp rise in the number of missing children and their aggressive trafficking has fast-tracked the State Women and Child Development Department's plans to integrate information on children lost and found in the city with the Delhi Police data base on missing children.

"Delhi is the transit point for trafficking of children and women. We receive a large number of runaway children who come here from various States including Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Even in the Capital itself we have a serious issue with children going missing. There are areas in Delhi which have seen children missing in greater numbers than the rest of the city. While we are working at an effective mechanism with various departments to support victims of trafficking, we are also engaged with the Delhi Police to integrate information on missing children," said Delhi Minister for Women and Child Development Prof. Kiran Walia.

"The Delhi Police have been maintaining data on Zipnet about missing children and the Department has data on children found in the Capital along with their detailed description. We are now looking at working with the police to take on an integrated approach wherein we will be able to locate and rehabilitate children much faster. Talks are also on with

• Plan to upscale the data sharing programme at a national level

• Integrated approach to locate and rehabilitate children faster

the police who are looking at upscaling the data sharing programme at a national level," said WCD director Rajiv Kale.

Stating that Delhi had become the destination and transit of the traffickers and that the Department was keeping a strict vigil on placement agencies who are exploiting both children and women, Mr. Kale said: "Using technology to our advantage, the police are working alongside the Department to ensure that we are able to identify and restore children to their families in the shortest possible time."

"The police are registering and putting up every single complaint of missing children along with their photographs/ description and we have spoken to the West Bengal Police to look at sharing information about missing children. There is also talks about scaling up and bringing in a national data sharing programme which will allow police from across the country to use the data base to relocate children who are found in their area," said ACP M. S. Bisht of the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit of the Crime Branch.

Hindu, June 16, P. 4

Not a minor challenge

Every hour, 11 children go missing in the country. Four of these remain untraced, concludes a nation-wide research on missing children.

During 2008-10, close to 1,17,480 children were reported missing in 392 districts. Of them, 74,209 children were traced while 41,546 remain untraced. The information has been collated by Bachpan Bachao Andolan (BBA) through Right to Information (RTI) applications, National Crime Record Bureau data, National Human Rights Commission and Zonal Integrated Police Network (ZIPNet) website. In 2012, around 13 children were reported missing per day from Delhi alone. However, till April 15, 2012, 1369 have gone missing. Till the first week of June, 775 children remain untraced.

BBA works on issues of child rights and has suggested to the Government that it form a National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children and establish a highly skilled investigation and rapid response task force to deal with the issue. It also wants the Government to make compulsory registration of, and investigation into all missing children cases.

Rakesh Sanjar, national secretary of BBA, says that the States which are worst affected by the menace, like Gujarat and Rajasthan, have not given them data through RTI.

According to the data available with BBA, with 26,211 children gone missing, Maharashtra tops the list, followed by West Bengal (25,413), Delhi (13,570), Madhya Pradesh (12,777), Karnataka (9956) and Uttar

Pradesh (9,482).

The total number of untraced children at 41,546 is more than one third of the number of the total children gone missing in 2008-10. West Bengal tops the list of the States where missing children remained untraced during 2008-10, followed by Maharashtra, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh.

The border districts of West Bengal, such as 24 Parganas, Medinipur, Malda, Dinajpur and Murshidabad have large number of untraced children.

Interestingly, when it comes to children being traced, again Maharashtra (18,706) tops the list followed by Delhi (11,870), Madhya Pradesh (9,537), Uttar Pradesh (7,586), West Bengal (6,653) and Karnataka (3,522).

Showing data procured through the RTI Act, the study reveals that 24,744 children were reported missing from metro cities of Hyderabad, Kolkata, Bangalore,

Mumbai and Delhi. Delhi tops the list of metro cities on both indices of missing children as well as children untraced. On an average every year 6,785 children disappear from Delhi with 850 children remaining untraced, which is 12 per cent of the total reported missing. Out of the total untraced children from these metro cities, Delhi and Kolkata combined constitute 89 per cent.

The study claims that, "If the average number of 150 reported missing children per district (from available data) is extrapolated to all 640 districts in the country, the total number of missing children in India every year would come to the tune of 96,000, which means 263 children reported missing in a day and 11 children missing in an hour."

The BBA founder, Kailash Satyarthi says, "The biggest problem... is the apathy of law and enforcement agencies because the majority of children going missing are not even being acknowledged, let alone registered and investigated."

"The report which has data compiled from police records suggests that the number of children going missing is so high, but the same police record maintained by the National Crime Records Bureau suggests that only 16,595 cases have been registered in this time period which is less than 15 per cent of the cases that have come before the police," argues Mr. Satyarthi.

Some of the reasons which the study points out behind the increase in the number of missing children include what it terms as, "no provision on addressing the issue of missing children in the Indian legal system." For instance, it goes on to add, because no clear-cut definition of missing children is available in the Indian legal system, largely confusion prevails in conditions of missing children as they go missing due to a variety of causes including trafficking, forced labour, bonded labour, false adoption, forced begging, forced marriages and rag-picking.

The study highlights an absence of "proper mechanism to document and update the database". Information on the number of registered, traced and untraced cases of missing children is another important roadblock in dealing with the issue, besides lack of coordination between the agencies dedicated to the task.

"Defining a missing child is very important to help investigating agencies to deal with the phenomenon. It is important to have a clear policy guideline on definitions of trafficking and missing children," recommends the study.

Hindu, June 8, P.11

Worrying trend

The sharp rise in the number of children who go missing in the country is indeed alarming. The data procured from the Union ministry of home affairs by the NGO Bachpan Bachao Andolan found that during 2008-10, 1,17,480 children were reported missing in 392 districts. The study found that West Bengal accounts for most of the disappearances with districts bordering Bangladesh registering the largest numbers, pointing in the direction of cross-border trafficking. A large number of children who go missing are from the national capital Delhi and other metros. From Karnataka, 99 girls were reported missing in 2008, which fell to 41 the next year and then surged to 130 in 2010. Country-wide figures for missing children provided by the National Crime Records Bureau too show a similar trend. While some children run away from home, many are victims of organised gangs engaging in human trafficking. They are sold as bonded labourers or to begging mafias in the big cities. Some even land up in the sex trade. Others are abducted for harvesting of organs.

Tracing missing children is difficult because often they are too young to be able to articulate information about their families and homes to the police. Besides, the human trafficking network is immensely powerful. This

network includes policemen. The very people who should be tracing missing children are part of the trade. Since most missing children belong to economically weaker sections they lack the clout to get the police to hunt for the children. Especially in the case of adolescent girls they insist she has eloped. Meanwhile many hours are lost giving the traffickers a head start and making tracing of the child all the more difficult. Children of migrant labourers have been found to be the most vulnerable to trafficking. It is when parents go to work leaving children behind that traffickers swoop in and take away the child.

The government must make it mandatory for builders to provide safe creches at construction sites. Moreover, co-ordination between states on tracing children is reportedly poor. The home ministry has suggested computerisation of records and DNA profiling. The country needs a specialised agency to deal exclusively with missing children. We need a national centre that has an all-India database for tracking missing children. With the advance in technology, tracing missing children should not be difficult.

Deccan Herald, June 11, P.10

4 kids go missing every day

93% JUMP OVER 2011 Cases of missing kids register a sharp rise; maximum children disappeared from southeast Delhi

Jatin Anand

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NEW DELHI: From the worrying figure of two children per day to the more shocking one of at least four - the capital has witnessed a huge increase in the number of children reported missing this year.

According to Delhi Police records, 407 children, aged up to 16 years, had disappeared between January 1 and June 19 in 2012.

This year, 788 went missing during the same period - an alarming increase of more than 93 per cent.

"This is beyond a sociological phenomenon," said Rakesh Sengupta, national secretary of the Bachpan Bachao Andolan

(BBA), an NGO that works for child rights.

"These figures could mean the existence of another, though more brutal, episode such as Noida's Nithari."

"Children from less-privileged socio-economic backgrounds are falling prey to everything from sexual abuse at the hands of paedophile men to child contracting (HIV) to being used by criminal gangs who want to misuse their juvenile status," said Rangana Kumari, director, Centre for Social Research (CSR).

The highest number of children who have gone missing, 128, was reported from south-east Delhi where, according to Sengupta, only two to three have returned after months of

DISTURBING STATISTICS

407 No. of children went missing between Jan 1 and June 18, 2011	788 No. of missing kids between Jan 1 and June 18, 2012	93% Percentage increase in number of missing children this year
MAXIMUM DISAPPEARANCES	Southeast district Northwest	128 112
	Outer Northeast	112 84

"Instead of following the trafficking trail to get to the ring leaders of the racket, police would rather just finish their paper work and close the file for good."
Rakesh Sengupta, national secretary, Bachpan Bachao Andolan

absence. One of these children who returned home after a gap of more than six months, Sengupta said, claimed to have escaped from a circus where he had been hired by a tout.

Equally notorious in this respect, according to the police statistics, are northwest and outer Delhi districts - both of which reported 122 cases each of missing children.

Coupled with southeast Delhi, the three districts, which mostly consists of illegal colonies and settlements, account for 352 of the extra 381 children who have gone missing till June 18.

"Even after the creation of the Delhi Police's anti-human trafficking units (AHTUs), which were supposed to look into cases of child trafficking, not a single thing has changed. Instead of following the trafficking trail to get to the ring leaders of the racket, they'd rather just finish their paper work and close the file for good," Sengupta said.

When confronted with allegations of inaction, the police chose to remain evasive and claimed they were doing "all they can" to track missing children.

"Investigations into such cases are conducted as per the SoP and, as such, an organised racket indulging in human trafficking has come to light so far," a senior police officer said.

Hindustan Times, June 19, P.7

In seven months, 13 children go missing from E. Delhi shelter

NEW DELHI: Thirteen children between the age group of 10 and 16 years have gone missing from a shelter in east Delhi over a period of seven months.

Sources said the children had run away from their homes but were found later and then sent to the shelter.

A senior officer from Pandav Nagar police station said, "We have received complaints regarding missing children from the authority of Matra Chhaya, Bal Sadan, Rajendra Ashram, on different occasions. All the cases that we have registered are that of kidnapping since the children are all minor."

Police sources said it is not clear yet whether the children have run away from the shelter home or someone lured them or there is an organised racket behind it.

East Delhi's Child Welfare Committee (CWC) has, meanwhile, ordered an inquiry and

DELHI'S DISMAL FIGURES

407 Number of children missing between January 1 and June 18, 2011

788 Number of children gone missing between January 1 and June 18, 2012

381 More children have gone missing this year — an increase of more than 93%

has asked the police and the shelter to submit their reports at the earliest.

"These children have gone missing over the period of seven months. All of them were produced before the CWC and we

had sent them to that shelter house. We are very serious about the matter and have asked the police to trace the children," a CWC member said.

"We are questioning staff of the shelter home to get a better understanding of the working of the home. There were around 100 children in the home and we have asked the management whether they were allowed to go out. Investigations are on to trace them," the police officer added.

Hindustan Times, June 26, P 3

Cases of disappearing girls increasing in State

BANGALORE: Two hundred and seventy girls went missing in the State over three years - from 2008 to 2010, and the number shot up alarmingly in the third year.

According to information made available by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), 99 girls were reported missing in 2008. The figure dipped to 41 the next year, but jumped to 130 in 2010. Data for 2011 and the current year is under compilation. Over the three years, 79 boys too disappeared.

The MHA has acknowledged that organised gangs may have become victims of trafficking gangs, for being pushed into illegal activities including bonded labour.

In an advisory to the Karnataka government on January 31, 2012, the MHA suggested steps to protect children from such gangs and to trace them. The suggestions to facilitate the tracing of

missing children included computerisation of records, DNA profiling, involvement of NGOs and other organisations, community awareness programmes etc.

According to the information made available by MHA, in Karnataka, 14 boys and 99 girls were victims of kidnapping or abduction in 2008, while the number stood at 38 and 41 in 2009, and 27 and 130 in 2010. The figures for 2011 and 2012 are being compiled.

In 2008, different agencies registered 99 cases, but there was a lone conviction. In 2009, 67 cases were registered, but

there was no conviction. In 2010, 125 cases were registered, with six persons convicted.

According to information provided by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), the number of disappearing children is increasing by the year. Over 2008-10, as many as

28,595 children disappeared all over the country. While 7,862 were reported missing in 2008, the figure shot up to 9,436 the next year and rose to 11,297 in 2010. A total of 27,265 cases were booked, but only 4,262 persons were convicted.

In a further advisory on April

30, 2012, the MHA issued guidelines to law enforcement agencies on the manner and modalities regarding effectively dealing with the organised crime aspect of human trafficking.

It advised that the crime prone areas be identified and a mechanism instituted to ensure the safety and security of students, especially girls.

State governments have been advised to increase the number of beat constables; the number of police help booths/kiosks, especially in remote and lonely stretches and the number of policemen patrolling, especially during nights.

They have also been advised to post police officers especially women, fully equipped with policing infrastructure in crime-prone areas in adequate number was also among the many things advised.

Although the figures for Karnataka are disturbing, the trend in the neighbouring is worse. In Tamil Nadu, in the same period 1,035 girls went missing, while in Andhra Pradesh, the figures were even more scary - 1,471.

DH News Service

Convictions

YEAR	CASES	CONVICTIONS
2008	99	1
2009	67	0
2010	125	6

Cases and convictions in Karnataka

Number of children abducted

STATE	2008	2009	2010
Karnataka	14,95*	38,41*	27,130*
Andhra Pradesh	43,390*	83,549*	49,532*
Tamil Nadu	15,266*	18,284*	14,485*
Kerala	13,74*	10,77*	17,103*

* Rest as boys, girls

Deccan Herald, June 5, P 2

लापता बच्चे

अनाथाश्रमों, आश्रयों आदि की स्थापना के पीछे एक नेक मकसद रहा है। पर ऐसी कई संस्थाएं न सिर्फ अपने उद्देश्य से दूर होती गई हैं बल्कि वहां बच्चों के साथ दुर्व्यवहार और उत्पीड़न की घटनाएं भी होती हैं। इससे आजिज आकर वहां से बच्चों के भागने की खबरें भी जब-तब आ जाती हैं। कई बार बच्चों के गायब होने के पीछे कोई और कारण भी होता होगा। गौरतलब है कि पूर्वी दिल्ली के मातृछाया नामक बाल आश्रम से पिछले नौ महीनों में इक्कीस बच्चे गायब हो चुके हैं। इस मामले की रपट पुलिस में दर्ज करा दी गई है। बाल आश्रम के प्रबंधक का कहना है कि गायब हुए सभी बच्चे नशे के लती थे और वे दीवार फांद कर भाग गए हैं। हैरानी की बात है कि ये सभी बच्चे एक साथ गायब नहीं हुए, पिछले नौ महीनों में एक-एक कर लापता हुए हैं, फिर इसकी रपट इतनी देर से क्यों लिखाई गई। पुलिस अभी तय नहीं कर पाई है कि ये बच्चे

सचमुच दीवार फांद कर भाग गए या इसके पीछे किसी गिरोह का हाथ है। इस आश्रम में दो तरह के बच्चे रखे गए थे। कुछ बच्चों को बाल कल्याण समिति की सिफारिश पर रखा गया था तो कुछ को बाल श्रम से मुक्त करा कर यहां शरण दी गई थी। लापता बच्चों की उम्र आठ से सोलह साल के बीच बताई जा रही है। पिछले कुछ सालों में जिस तरह दिल्ली में इस आयु वर्ग के बच्चों के लापता होने की घटनाएं बढ़ती गई हैं, उससे पुलिस का शक वाजिब है कि कहीं इस मामले में भी किसी गिरोह का हाथ तो नहीं। अपने बचाव में बाल आश्रम के अधिकारी चाहे जो दलील दें, मगर जाहिर है कि वे बच्चों की सुरक्षा और उनके हितों को लेकर संजीदा नहीं थे।

संयुक्त राष्ट्र घोषणापत्र के मुताबिक भारत सरकार भी बाल

अधिकारों की रक्षा के लिए प्रतिबद्ध है। बालगृहों की स्थापना के पीछे मकसद यही होता है कि उनके जरिए निराश्रित, भूले-भटके या असामाजिक तत्त्वों की किसी साजिश के तहत गलत धंधे में फंस चुके बच्चों को सुरक्षित जगह पर लाकर रहन-सहन की बुनियादी सुविधाएं और शिक्षा, रचनात्मक कौशल के विकास के अवसर उपलब्ध कराए जा सकें। सरकारों के अलावा समाज कल्याण के काम करने वाले बहुत सारे संगठन भी अनाथाश्रम, बाल सुधार गृह या बाल आश्रय खोलते हैं। इन आश्रमों में बाल कल्याण समितियों या पुलिस की सिफारिश पर निराश्रित, लावारिस, बाल मजदूरी से मुक्त कराए गए, खोए हुए बच्चों को रखा जाता है। विडंबना है कि जिन संस्थाओं के भरोसे बेसहारा बच्चों को एक बेहतर जिंदगी देने की पहल की जाती है, उन्हीं में से कोई-कोई संस्था उनके लिए मानसिक-शारीरिक उत्पीड़न और शोषण का अड्डा साबित होती है। पिछले महीने रोहतक के एक बालगृह में बच्चियों के यौन शोषण का मामला सामने आया। निश्चय ही वह एक भयावह कांड था पर उस घटना के चश्मे से दूसरी संस्थाओं को देखना ठीक नहीं होगा। बुरे बर्ताव और शोषण के वाक्ये और जगह भी होते हैं। यह शक भी बेबुनियाद नहीं कहा जा सकता कि गायब होने वाले बच्चे कहीं किसी गिरोह के चंगुल में न पड़ जाते हों। कई अध्ययनों से उजागर हो चुका है कि हर साल हजारों बच्चे और बच्चियां यौन-व्यापार, बंधुआ मजदूरी, भीख मांगने आदि की यातनाभरी दुनिया में धकेल दिए जाते हैं। इनमें आश्रयों से लापता हुए बच्चे भी होंगे। लिहाजा, सरकार को ऐसे मामलों की तह तक जाने के साथ-साथ ऐसी संस्थाओं की जवाबदेही संबंधी कुछ कड़े नियम बनाने की भी पहल करनी चाहिए।

Jansetta, June 27, P.6

Govt's choice for child rights panel chief flayed

Appointment political: Activists

Nandini Chandrashekar

BANGALORE: The State government has announced the name of H R Umesh Aradhya hailing from Shimoga as the new chairperson of the Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights.

The appointment of Aradhya has sent a buzz of speculation as he is relatively unknown in the field of child rights. Even activists in Shimoga, who have been working for child rights for decades, professed their complete ignorance about him.

When contacted, Umesh Aradhya was himself unaware of his appointment, but said that he had served as member of the Child Welfare Committee (he could not remember the term), served with the Rotary Club and was also the secretary of a school for the mentally challenged called Asha Kirana in Shimoga.

Child rights activists are dismayed at what is seen as a political appointment, as there were several applications from people who have decades of experience in the field of child rights. The Commission holds an important place in the field as it not only examines safeguards for protection of child rights, but also makes recommendations for implementation of these rights.

It also receives hundreds of complaints about violation of child rights and hears these petitions.

The Department of Women and Child Development, which is responsible for calling in applications for the post and se-

lecting the members, gave a strange response. Principal Secretary Ramesh B Zalki said it was a political appointment and was made in the chief minister's office, who is the minister for the department.

There is also no clarity on who constituted the selection committee, which is expected to include two experts from the field, apart from the minister concerned, the principal secretary and the director of the department.

A member of the child rights group, who frequently interacts with the Commission on various child rights issues, said they would now have to spend more time fighting on various issues rather than working with Commission.

What has galled activists is that heavyweights in the field of child rights like Vasudev Sharma and Sheela Devaraj have been ignored.

The present chairperson Nina Nayak has been a thorn in the government's side on many issues on implementation of child rights. The move is being seen as an attempt to bring in someone more compliant and aligned with the view of the government on all the issues.

The other members who have been chosen for the committee are Fr Edward Thomas of Bosco, Venkatesha Lambodar Naik from Sirsi, B S Anuradha who was with National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development till 2008, G R Mukta from Bangalore, Vanitha Torvi from Bijapur and Shivaraje Gowda from Ramanagara district.

DH News Service

Child rights body for wider publicity of norms for digging bore-wells

Staff Reporter

NEW DELHI: Concerned about the safety of children and annoyed at non-compliance on the part of the State governments and the authorities concerned with the directions of the Supreme Court order asking for measure to be put in place for prevention of incidents of children falling into abandoned bore-well, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has written to the Director-General of Doordarshan asking them to give wide publicity to the guidelines through national television.

"A copy of this order be sent to the Chief Secretaries of all the States/Union Territories who will forward the same to the district collectors of all districts of their respective State," said NCPCR member Vinod Kumar Tikoo.

"As per the order, the own-

er of the land/premises, before taking any steps for constructing bore-well/tube-well must inform in writing at least 15 days in advance to the authorities concerned in the area, i.e., district collector/district magistrate/sarpanch of the gram panchayat/ concerned officers of the Department of Ground Water/ Public Health/ Municipal Corporation, as the case may be, about the construction of bore-well/tube-well. Also registration of all the drilling agencies, viz., govt./ semi govt./ private etc. should be mandatory with the district administration. Also erection of signboard at the time of construction near the well is essential. We fear that these regulations are not being followed which is proving to be dangerous for the children. We have requested that wider publicity be given to the order to ensure the safety of children," said Mr. Tikoo.

Hindu, June 27, P.4

*Deccan Herald,
June 30, P.7*

Conviction for child rape shockingly low in State

Of the 366 arrested only 22 convicted during 2008-2010

Chethan Kumar

BANGALORE: Pascal Mazurier, the French diplomat facing charges of raping his three-and-a-half-year old daughter, might have hogged the headlines in the last couple of days, but the case definitely is not a stray incident in Karnataka, or the country.

As many as 16,298 cases of rape against children were registered in the three years - 2008, 2009 and 2010 - in the country and Karnataka accounted for 309 of these cases.

Following investigations into these cases, a total of 19,069 persons were arrested across the country and 18,224 persons were chargesheeted. However, only 3,781 persons were convicted.

In Karnataka, investigations into the 309 registered cases saw as many as 366 persons being arrested but only 22 persons convicted for the crime. The situation is similar in other states.

Looking into the statistics in Delhi, Maharashtra, Tamil

Glaring numbers

	2008			2009			2010		
	CR	PAR	PCV	CR	PAR	PCV	CR	PAR	PCV
All-India:	5546	6363	1177	5368	6308	1236	5484	6398	1368
Delhi:	301	312	84	307	387	104	304	349	172
Karnataka:	97	127	8	104	135	5	108	104	9
Kerala	215	259	14	235	315	19	208	240	18
M'rashttra:	690	905	37	612	797	49	747	936	55
TN:	187	176	44	182	199	16	203	208	31
AP:	412	484	48	416	492	36	446	559	30

Note: CR: cases registered; PAR: persons arrested; PCV: persons convicted

Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala, it is found that a total of 5,465 cases were registered, investigations into which saw 7,718 persons being arrested but only 757 persons have been convicted. This is going by the statistics provided by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).

Investigating agencies and experts, in their defence, point fingers at many challenges involved in bringing the accused to justice and argued that the problem is more complex than it is perceived to be. A senior IPS officer said: "In many such

cases the suspects/accused are from the victims' families and a lot of cases, after being registered, end in compromises. Many times they withdraw the cases as social stigma plays a big role."

Also, he pointed out that not all the registered cases have reached the desired end. "Given the burden on our judicial system, a lot of these cases are still pending. So it becomes very difficult to accurately determine the percentage of conviction versus cases registered. But we can safely assume that it is at least 30 per

cent," he explained, there is also the problem of witnesses turning hostile.

And worse, such crimes have only been increasing year-on-year, especially in the metros.

Vinaya Prabha V Baligar, a psychologist, explains: "Such people generally suffer from personality disorder and in many cases, they themselves would have gone through such experiences during their childhood, which makes them aggressive. It is a clinical problem."

DH News Service

Deccan Herald, June 19, P 4

Child marriage rampant in Mandya

MANDYA: Prevalence of child marriage in the district despite the formulation of numerous stringent laws and social schemes for women empowerment has become a cause of concern. According to the Women and Child Development Department, 62 cases of child marriages were reported between April 2011 and April 2012.

The Department officials in association with Birds, a non-governmental organisation, rescued child brides in 60 cases. Mandya tops the taluks where 25 child marriages were reported, followed by Srirangapatna with 12 cases; eight in Malavalli, five in Nagamangala, four each in Pandavapur and Maddur, and two cases in Kr-

ishnarajpet.

In KR Per and Panadavpur taluks, two cases were booked against the parents for continuing with the wedding plans even after they were warned of the legal consequences by the officials. Such offenders would be ripped of all the benefits given by the government, and if arrested, they would be sen-



Picture for representation purpose only.

tenced to two-year rigorous imprisonment and fine up to Rs one lakh.

Four cases were reported between April 2010 and April 2011. However, there could be more instances of child marriages held surreptitiously. For, the Child and Women Development Department has not registered any cases of child

marriages since 2006, but for the above mentioned 60 cases in the past two years.

According to Venkatesh, a member of the Birds, on an average, 15 child marriages are held every month in the district. As many as 20 child marriages were prevented in May this year alone, he said. Ironi-

cally, the number of early marriages has increased since the year-long campaign against the child marriage was launched in November 2011.

The number of child marriages have increased in Mandya, Nagamangala, Malavalli and Srirangapatna, he added. Most of the marriages involve minor girls from economically and socially backward families in rural areas. Apart from the poverty, the parents' fear of girl's sexuality

and the anxiety that the daughters may fall in love if they go to colleges, drive them to marry off the children at young age, Venkatesh said.

In several instances, the officials and the volunteers received threats from the influential persons and supporters of the local leaders when they went to rescue the child brides.

The awareness programmes taken up to sensitise the public on illegal practice of child marriage and its adverse impact on children, family and society, have not yielded desired effect.

The law on prohibition of child marriages and women empowerment programmes by the government have also failed to dissuade people from the evil practice, Venkatesh said.

Deccan Herald, June 11, P.6

Ensuring safe route to school

Ensuring children's safety while they travel to school and return home is often a difficult task. Not that there are no efforts to this end. But, the lack of a viable solution acceptable to all stakeholders, especially parents and school managements, is the chief reason for the apparent failure of all the efforts.

Most children in private schools travel by private vehicles — school buses/vans, autorickshaws, parents' vehicles, et al. While some others take BMTC buses, those living nearby simply walk to school. Children in government schools mostly walk the distance and some of them ride a bicycles.

Children, however, face problems whichever mode of transport they take. Private buses/vans are driven by negligent drivers, autos are overcrowded, and parents struggle to find parking space near schools. Bus stops are far from school and walking on busy roads can be too dangerous. The fact that many popular schools are located in densely populated localities makes matters worse. The issue is multi-layered. For parents, safety does not just mean that their children travel or walk to school without meeting with an accident. They must also not face any harassment, sexual or otherwise, parents assert.

That explains parents' constant opposition to attempts by the traffic police to tell them which is the safest way for their wards to reach school and return home. Only they know what is safe for their wards, parents argue.

The 'Safe Road To School' (SRTS) campaign launched by the traffic police in 16 schools in 2005 almost came a cropper precisely because most parents were not quite happy with the solution it offered: don't ferry children in private vehicles; use BMTC buses or pool cars instead.

BMTC buses were projected as "an efficient, safe and affordable" mode of transport. But parents were not impressed. A survey conducted for the campaign showed that only 33 BMTC buses were used for school duty in the jurisdiction of 21 traffic police stations, as against 1,071 private school vans and 502 school buses.

The campaign, however, managed to implement two of its other proposals: segregation of school timings and a ban on

vehicle parking within 200 metres from schools. Most schools now function from 8.30 am to 3.30 pm. The ban on parking is still in force. But the campaign failed in its most ambitious solution. M A Saleem, Additional Commissioner of Police (Traffic and Security), admits. It was he who had launched the campaign in his capaci-

ty as the DCP (Traffic-East). He says the campaign is still on and will be implemented in 93 schools this academic year.

But parents' opposition might make it futile. "Parents are still unimpressed with the feasibility of BMTC buses or pooled cars. We will try again to convince them," Saleem told *Deccan Herald*.

The traffic police held a meeting with school principals in May this year. Another meeting is scheduled for July. Until then, the issue would remain in the cold storage. Saleem said, adding that the traffic police had more important things to do at present. Still, police want to

make up for their hard-pressed time and resources. They are currently penalising auto drivers ferrying more than six schoolchildren. As many as 3,042 such cases were booked in 2011. In the first six months of 2012, 1,537 cases have been booked. Saleem says autos were being monitored strictly.

The existence of laws and regulations on schoolchildren's safety has been of little help. The worry, however, is the lack of their effective implementation. Regular monitoring of school vans is still missing. The Transport Department would swing into action only when a tragedy strikes.

Like it did when Abhilash, a 13-year-old schoolboy, was killed when his school bus rammed a tree and rolled on its side down the road near Attibele on Karnataka-Tamil Nadu border in December 2010. The laxity reappeared as soon as the incident faded from public memory.

The other dimension of the debate is that the safety of children who walk to school has been mostly ignored. Walking on Bangalore's narrow and choked roads is very risky.

B Kishore Kumar, student of a government school, was killed when a vehicle mowed him down on Hosur Road when

he was returning home from school on January 28, 2011. There is no specific programme to ensure the safety of such students, Saleem admits.

On its part, the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) says it has little role to play in children's safety. "It's not in our domain. We deal only with what happens inside the school," A Devaprakash, Director of Primary Education, says.

Still, the DPI joined hands with the traffic police for the SRTS campaign.

Parents agree that private vehicles, especially autorickshaws and vans, were unsafe for their wards. Accidents would occur anytime. Yet, using BMTC buses or pooled cars is hardly any better, parents feel. The solution has other flaws also. BMTC buses would not always drop the children near the school. Children would have to walk to school, often all alone.

Their safety in the buses was another thing that worried parents. "Would my child be safe in the bus? What if the man at the wheel drives rashly? What if other children bully my child?" These are the things parents are never convinced about. In short, children's safety while they travel to school is still a concern. Do we require another accident to wake from the slumber? One hopes not.

Muthi-ur-Rahman Siddiqui

Deccan Herald
June 17, p. 2

Supreme Court guidelines

- 'School Bus' must be prominently written/displayed on the front and back of every vehicle carrying school children
- If the vehicle is a hired bus, 'On school duty' should be prominently displayed
- No bus belonging to an educational institution should carry children in excess of its permitted seating capacity
- School bus must have a first aid box
- Windows of the school bus must be fitted with horizontal grills/bars
- Every school bus needs to be equipped with fire extinguisher
- Every driver of a school bus must have a minimum of five years of experience in driving heavy vehicles and must not have any previous record of traffic offences
- In addition to driver, there must be a qualified person in every school bus as provided in Rule 17 of Motor Vehicles Rules
- There should be an escort from the school, preferably a teacher, in the bus to ensure safety



It's time to act

Talk about transport safety of school-children and the tendency of schools, authorities and other related agencies has been to take the matter seriously only when a tragedy occurs.

For instance, the case of a mini school bus accident near Tindlu Gate in December 2010, which claimed the life of a 13-year-old student and injured several others. School authorities, the education department and the transport department opened rule books to check what went wrong and who should be punished, only after the public outrage over the incident.

As civic expert Dr A S Kodanda Pani points out, what we lack in our system is regular monitoring of school transport vehicles, both from the school management side as well as the government side.

For the same reason, tragedies keep repeating even though there are set guidelines in various Acts and also from the Supreme Court regarding ensuring safety of children during their transportation from home to school and back.

Transport expert Radhakrishna M N says that after two tragic school van accidents in Kerala in 2011, there has been a recent amendment to the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 in that State.

One of the interesting guidelines is that a driver fined even once for over-speeding, drunk-driving or dangerous

driving should not be employed in a school vehicle. A driver fined more than twice in a year for offences such as jumping the signal or violating lane discipline should not be allowed to drive a vehicle. Similar stringent norms need to be replicated in Karnataka also, he adds.

Radhakrishnan says a fire extinguisher, a well-maintained first-aid box, ample space under the seats to keep school bags safe, and qualified attendants are must in a school vehicle transporting children.

A costly affair

Some schools say 'no' to student transport and put the onus on parents, because managements think transport is a costly affair, says Pani. Having no choice, parents resort to not-so-professional transport agencies to ferry their children to school and there is more risk of accidents in such cases, he adds.

With another academic season having just begun, the agencies concerned should have initiated safety campaigns targeted at schoolchildren. Transport Commissioner T Shyam Bhat says there are no such plans, as of now.

"However, we are always ready to act if we receive any complaints regarding violations of the Supreme Court guidelines or the Motor Vehicles Act for that matter," he says.

Bhat observes that whenever the de-

Tragedies

- January 2011: A spastic student and the driver of the school van were injured after their vehicle collided with a truck in Kumaraswamy Layout
- January 2011: A seven-year-old student of a government school and resident of Priyanka Layout, Kishore Kumar died when a school van of Sujatha School hit him on Hosur Road when he was returning home
- June 2011: A mini tempo carrying 22 students to Doddaballapur town fell into a roadside ditch at Kolar; 12 kids were injured
- December 2010: Abhilash, 13, was killed and 15 other students were injured when a mini school bus rammed into a tree near Tindlu Gate and rolled on its side down the road. The bus belonged to St Philomena's High School on Attibele Main Road
- December 2006: Twenty-eight people, including children, were injured when a school van overturned near Kengeri bus depot on Mysore Road. The children from Malur in Kolar district were on an excursion to Mysore

partment initiated similar drives against violations, there were outcries by school managements as well as transport agencies complaining of harassment.

"What we do is just following the court or government orders. There needs to be more awareness among school managements in this regard as our ultimate goal is to ensure safety of children," he contends.

It's scary when children aren't safe on roads

Children cycling to schools was a norm a decade ago. Today, as the City chokes with vehicles, travelling even a short distance has turned a nightmare for students.

A majority of them depend on vans or autorickshaws and others prefer public transport to reach schools. But, are these modes of transport safe? Many parents are not sure and wouldn't let their children travel alone, although schools do their bit to ensure the safety of students.

Bangalore International Public School on Subramanyapura main road at Chikkalasandra was set up 14 years ago

when the area was a quaint locality on the outskirts. Now, it's an arterial junction connecting Urtarahalli and Banashankari. Of late, the school has had to take extra care to ensure the safety of its students. "Traffic has increased manifold on this stretch in the past few years. We don't let students out of the gates during school hours, as crossing the road here is risky," says Anitha Shashidhar of Bangalore International Public School.

The school is thankful to the policemen manning the road in the peak hours. It has also ensured that children travel either by school van or are dropped by par-

ents. "The vans drop kids inside the school premises, not even in front of the gate," adds Shashidhar.

Not every school zone is manned by policemen. Many lack signals and sign boards, making it dangerous for school kids. There is a need for better management of traffic at Central Mall Junction as there are many schools in the surrounding areas. A police constable around here would be of great help for kids, says Shivshankar, principal, Nalanda English School. "Most of our students travel by bus and walk the distance from the bus stop to school. Others are

dropped by parents and a few get their bicycles. Our school is located beside a narrow lane, but there are vehicles speeding by all through the day," he says.

Lack of pavements and poorly managed traffic junctions force parents to accompany their wards to school every day. Ramesh B, a parent whose daughter studies at Stella Maris in Sadashivanagar, points out that school vans are no longer safe as drivers tend to be negligent. His house is in Yeshwantpur and he is particular about accompanying his daughter to school every day. Public transport is not always the solution as not every school



has a bus stop nearby, he observes. Van driver Nagaraju agrees. Private van drivers have to be more careful as the onus of dropping children safely at schools is directly on them, he says. He ferries seven students to Stella Maris every day and he says he is anxious till he has dropped them safely at the school. "Parents trust me. Unruly traffic during peak hours mounts pressure (on me). I have to be conscious every minute when I ferry children."

Parents' worries are not misconstrued as children too say they feel unsafe on roads. Amit Kumar, Bharath N and Sunil P, all class 9 students of Community Centre School near JC Road, travel from their homes near KR Market. When they get their bicycles out, they say they are always under the threat of being run over by motorists. "It's not so much about what the government can do. It's more about people being sensitive. If we are cycling, people overtake us ruthlessly. There should be a separate lane for bicycles, as students cannot always rely on public transport," says Amit Kumar.

There is one thing parents, children and school managements say in common: Provide footpaths for pedestrians and do not leave school zones unmanned at peak hours.

Shruti H M



'Weak laws allow child labour in agriculture'

Special Correspondent

JAIPUR: The Rajasthan State Commission for Protection of Child Rights is developing a protocol for elimination of child labour with its contents devoted to various aspects of child trafficking, children being forced into hazardous occupations and rehabilitation of rescued child labourers.

Panel chairperson Deepak Kalra said at a workshop on child labour here on Monday that the protocol would be submitted to Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot with request for urgent action to control child labour and "save the childhood" of thousands of kids.

Emphasising the need for a strong protocol, Ms. Kalra pointed out that similar codes of practice exist in Delhi, Maharashtra and Bihar. Adoption of the protocol will facilitate the colossal task of rescuing child labourers, estimated at about 12.60 lakh in the State, she said. Banswara-based advocacy group Vaagdhara organised the half-day workshop in collaboration with Plan India to mark the International Anti-Child Labour Day being observed on Tuesday.

Delivering the keynote address, Ms. Kalra said the Com-

mission recognised child labour as a complex issue needing a multi-pronged strategy and had appointed a separate cell headed by its member Govind Beniwal to deal with the issue. The Commission has also launched a project in association with some voluntary groups to make Jaipur district child labour-free in the next three to five years.

She expressed concern over continuing trafficking of children from southern Rajasthan districts to Gujarat for working in the Bt Cotton fields and said she would be visiting Dungarpur later this month to monitor the situation. About 30,000 to 40,000 children are still being taken from the tribal-dominated regions to Gujarat every

year for labour.

"Piecemeal interventions are not going to serve the purpose in the face of a pathetic situation created by weak laws such as the Child Labour Prohibition Act, which allows agriculture as an occupation in which children can be engaged," said Ms. Kalra. She affirmed that legislations like the Juvenile Justice Act and the Right to Education Act perceive the issue in the perspective of child rights.

Ms. Kalra said it is a myth that child labour exists be-

cause of the rampant poverty, destitution and hunger. Studies have revealed that parents willingly sent their children for labour in 70 per cent of the cases without any remorse.

Others who addressed the workshop included State Resource Centre Chairman Rajendra Bora, Commission members Mr. Beniwal and Jyotsana Rajvanshi; Rajasthan University's Centre for Mass Communication head Sanjiv Bhanawat; Vaagdhara secreta-

ry Jayesh Joshi and Save the Children's Amit Chowdhury.

Mr. Beniwal said laws framed in 1986 for prevention of child labour were proving to be inadequate. "Wherever child labour is found as a rampant practice, the dropout rate of children in schools is very high," he said while calling for connecting every child with formal schooling and adoption of a policy on the issue.

Mr. Bora said the child labour issue remains unresolved

mainly because of lack of will of the State Government, which should give more powers to the Commission. "Children are nowhere in the priority for the Government because they do not have the right to vote."

Mr. Joshi said Vaagdhara, which presented a draft plan of action for elimination of child labour to Rajasthan on February 6, is still waiting for its response. The advocacy group

nas launched an awareness campaign against child trafficking in the tribal-dominated districts of Banswara, Dungarpur and Udaipur, he added.

Mr. Chowdhury made a presentation on the status of child labourers in India and pointed out that Rajasthan occupies the third rank in terms of their number. The laws for prevention of child labour should be revised, he said.

The leading sectors employing child labourers in Rajasthan identified in the workshop were gem polishing, *aari tari* (embroidery with thin wires) and carpet weaving. Besides, children work at *beedi* manufacturing units in Tonk, stone quarries and mines in and around Jodhpur and Pali, brick kilns in Nagaur and at hotels and in houses as domestic help in the urban areas in the State.

Hindu, June 12, P-9

No Safe Passage to School for These Kids

Express News Service

Namakkal: Worried over the safety of their kids, dalit residents of a village near here have stopped sending their children to school for the last couple of days.

The residents of Pulavarpalayam, located along the Salem-Karur National Highway, claimed that education department was yet to respond to their long-pending demand to shift the Panchayat Union Primary School from Thattankuttai to Pulavarpalayam to ensure safer and easier access for their children.

Panchayat president K Karupannan said, "The children have to cross extensive farm lands to reach the school. All the 36 students are from our village and hence, the demand."

Some parents said that on

June 4, some miscreants chased their children while they were on their way to school. "Our kids said they ran to escape from the miscreants who were having a drink on the farm land," claimed a parent, S Janaki.

Even if the children avoided the pathway, Janaki said they had to walk two km and cross the national highway, which could prove dangerous. On the other hand, all the children from Thattankuttai, a nearby village where caste Hindus were believed to be a majority, were sent to private schools. "Aversion towards dalit kids" could be the reason for this, sources said.

On Monday, a team led by elementary education officer A Arulmozhidevi, visited the village and tried to convince the parents to give up their stir, but in vain.

New Indian Express, June 12, p. 4

स्कूल बस होगी सेफ

विंडो पर मजबूत लॉक

जयपुर स्टूडेंट्स को सुविधा और सुरक्षा को बढ़ाने की कवायद के चलते सेंट्रल बोर्ड ऑफ सेकेंडरी एजुकेशन (सीबीएसई) ने नए दिशा-निर्देश जारी किए हैं। सीबीएसई ने एक सर्कुलर में एफिलिएशन बाई-लॉज को मोडिफाई करते हुए स्कूल ट्रांसपोर्टेशन को सुरक्षित बनाने की कोशिश की है। सुप्रीम कोर्ट के दिशा-निर्देश और पेट्स को मांग के बाद सीबीएसई ने यह कदम उठाया है। सर्कुलर के मुताबिक स्कूल को म्यूनिसिपल अथॉरिटी, डिस्ट्रिक्ट कलक्टर या ट्रांसपोर्ट डिपार्टमेंट से प्रिकॉन्स से जुड़े सर्टिफिकेट्स लेना अनिवार्य होगा और हर पांच साल बाद रीन्यू करवाकर इसे सीबीएसई को भी पिजवाना होगा। इसके अलावा और भी कई कदम उठाने होंगे।

स्कूल बस की विंडो पर मजबूत लॉक और फायर एग्जॉस्टर लगाना आवश्यक होगा। विंडो में हॉरिजेंटल ग्रिल्स लगे होने चाहिए। बस की स्पीड भी 40 किलोमीटर प्रति घंटा निर्धारित की गई है। बस में फर्स्ट एड बॉक्स रखना भी जरूरी होगा।

ट्रांसपोर्ट मैनेजर

सीबीएसई का मानना है कि स्कूल बस की सुरक्षा के लिए मैनपावर भी अहम है। इसके चलते स्कूल को एक ट्रांसपोर्ट मैनेजर या फिर कॉर्डिनेटर लगाना जरूरी होगा। इसके अलावा बस में कम से कम एक टीचर की इयूटी भी जरूरी होगी। साथ ही ड्राइवर का मेडिकल चेकअप भी स्कूल की जिम्मेवारी होगी। खासकर ड्राइवर को हर साल आई चेकअप करवाना होगा।



Rajasthan Patrika, June 26, P. 15

Making the ride to school safer

Vijesh Kamath

BANGALORE: The Transport department is likely to make it mandatory for all school cabs to obtain special permits to ferry children. These permits will be issued only if the vehicles meet the safety norms specified by the department.

Besides, every school that employs vans to ferry its students will have to constitute a 'safety committee' to ensure safe transport of schoolchildren.

The State Transport department has notified the Karnataka Motor Vehicles (Conditions for vehicles engaged in transport of schoolchildren) Draft Rules 2012 which specifies 19 conditions that all school cabs or vans must fulfill.

The draft rules notified on June 16 specifies that a 'school cab safety committee' will be responsible for ensuring that all safety measures specified are followed in the school cab.

"While school vans owned by educational institutions have to be registered separately, there is no proper regulation for private vehicles ferrying children to schools. The new rules make it mandatory that all such vehicles get permits from the Transport department. They will have to mandatorily follow all guidelines issued by us," Transport Commissioner T Sham Bhat told *Deccan Herald*.

Only vehicles with seating

capacity not exceeding 12+1 will be issued these permits.

The rules make it mandatory that school cabs will have to be fitted with speed governors limiting the maximum speed to 40 kmph. Besides, the age of the vehicle should not be more than 10 years.

The school cab will have to be white in colour, with a horizontal strip in highway yellow

colour of 150 mm wide running across the middle on all sides. The words 'School Cab' will have to be prominently displayed on all four sides of the vehicle on the yellow strip. Only authorised LPG kits will have to be installed and certified by the registering authority. No tinted or coloured glass is permitted.

Once the final rules are no-

tified, even school vans outsourced by educational institutions will have to get the permits after their vehicles are inspected by the Transport department, Bhat said.

Complete list

The complete list of children travelling in the school cab including their name, class, residential address, contact / mo-

bile number, blood group and the points of stoppage for pick-up and drop with a route plan attested by the school authority will have to be carried in the school cab.

The driver will have to wear a light blue shirt, light blue trouser and black shoes. His nameplate will also have to be displayed on his shirt.

DH News Service

Riders

Among the 19 safety conditions specified by the Transport Department are:

- Vehicles must be fitted with speed governors limiting the maximum speed to 40 kmph
- Age of the vehicle should not be more than 10 years
- Doors of the vehicle must have reliable locks
- Driver must have a valid licence to drive a Light Motor vehicle (LMV) and must have driven LMVs for at least four years
- Seating capacity should not be altered at any cost
- Sufficient space must be provided to keep school bags inside the vehicle
- No roof carriers allowed and bags should not be hung on the outer portion of the vehicle
- Vehicle to be used as school cab must be closed body type with complete steel body.
- No vehicle with canvas hood can be permitted

Deccan Herald,
June 23, p.5

Rocking the cradle of hope

Much before the eye-opening first episode of Ajmir Khan's chat show *Satyamev Jayate*, which brought the reality of sex-selective abortions to our drawing rooms and triggered a national debate, an initiative in Rajasthan's Udaipur has been doing its bit to save newborn girls.

In August 2006, within a span of two weeks, two female foetuses were reported to be found floating in the city's famed Fatehsagar Lake. Almost simultaneously, another similar incident was reported from the neighbouring district of Chittorgarh. Those incidents changed the life of a city businessman forever.

An inquiry into Rajasthan's child sex ratio revealed that there were only 909 girls in the 0-6 age group for every 1,000 boys, according to the 2001 Census. Unfortunately, this number has only declined over the last decade — the 2011 Census reports just 883 girls for 1,000 boys.

Where have all those missing girls gone? What can be done to turn this dismal situation around? Devendra Agarwal had no answers to these questions that were troubling him. But he was determined to do something to salvage the situation.

Once a successful marketing professional, Mr. Agarwal recalls: "I was moved by the visuals of foetuses floating on the water. I thought if someone could take care of the unwanted girls, they would neither be killed nor abandoned or dumped in hedges and dustbins."

He started out by putting up a cradle outside his home in the city's busy Surajpole area. Within a week, he had

three baby girls in his home. He smiles, "We were looking for a sister for my two sons, and suddenly we had three."

The three girl child gave a new direction to Mr. Agarwal's life plans. When the Udaipur Child Welfare Committee (CWC) came to know that he had abandoned newborns in his home, it decided to take them away, saying that they needed to be put up for adoption. When he tried to stop the CWC, legal hassles followed. "I fought the case right up to the Supreme Court where, too, I lost. I

couldn't save these girls. In the meantime, I was charged with contempt by the Rajasthan High Court and arrest warrants were issued against me twice."

Those were tough times for him and his family but that was when he decided that saving newborn girls was going to be his new calling. Mr. Agarwal set up an organisation, the Maa Bhagwati Vikas Sansthan, under which the Mahesh Ashram was set up. Built with a loan of Rs. 23 lakh, this home based in Udaipur's Bhuwada locality,

today has 19 abandoned baby girls who are getting quality professional care.

Says Mr. Agarwal: "I realise that a lot of women are compelled to give up their daughters because of family and social pressures. In fact, many a time, the mother is not even aware that the girl she gave birth to has been taken away from the hospital bed and dumped. We want to save such lives. All we say is 'Don't throw them, give them to us'."

The Mahesh Ashram has put up two cradles — one out-

side the busy MB hospital and the other at the ashram's doorstep. In the five years the ashram has been functional, Mr. Agarwal and his team have been able to save 67 girls. "Unfortunately, we lost six girls, who were very sick when we found them. One of them was thrown from a running car. She was bleeding profusely when my team found her. We rushed her to the hospital, where three units of blood were given, but she couldn't survive. Another one was left under a running tap in a hospital's bathroom on a cold winter night. She was on ventilator support for nine hours before she succumbed," Mr. Agarwal recounts with sadness.

To give the children the best of healthcare, the ashram has acquired photo-therapy machines, warmers and oxygenators besides a dedicated staff of 20 *ayahs* (local nurses) and one general nurse and midwife (GNM). Saving the little ones, however, is not Mr. Agarwal's only mission. The Mahesh Ashram has also taken up the responsibility of finding loving, stable homes for them. Says Mr. Agarwal, "I failed in my first attempt because I had no knowledge of what the law said regarding the adoption of abandoned babies. But once we started the ashram, we are more organised in our approach." He formed a child-care committee, comprising senior government officials — an IPS officer, an IRS officer, the Vice-Chancellor of a university, a chartered accountant and Mr. Agarwal himself on the board — to conduct the ashram's adoption-related activities.

In fact, in 2009, Mahesh Ashram became a specialised adoption agency after getting



a licence from the Social Justice and Empowerment Department of the Government of Rajasthan. To date, they have found homes for 41 babies, although Mr. Agarwal admits that it's not easy to find homes for them because people in the State are still fixated on boys. (WFS)

Hindia, June 19, 2010

लड़कियों के प्रति कायम है बेरुखी

हमारा सभ्य समाज आज भी लड़कों और लड़कियों में भेद करने से गुरेज नहीं करता है। भले ही लड़कियाँ आज हर क्षेत्र में लड़कों के साथ कदम से कदम मिलाकर चल रही हैं लेकिन समाज आज भी उन्हें अबला मानकर चल रहा है। भारतवर्ष में आज भी मान सम्मान की बातों को सबसे ऊपर रखा जाता है। जनगणना-2011 के अंतिम आंकड़ों में छह वर्ष तक की उम्र के बच्चों के लिंगानुपात में आजादी के बाद से सर्वाधिक गिरावट देखे जाने पर प्रसव पूर्व गर्भ परीक्षण से संबंधित पीएनडीटी कानून को लेकर सवाल उठने लगे हैं। 2001 की जनगणना में छह वर्ष तक की उम्र के बच्चों में प्रति हजार लड़कों पर लड़कियाँ 927 थीं लेकिन 2011 की जनगणना के आंकड़े बताते हैं कि एक दशक में इस आयुवर्ग में लिंगानुपात घटकर 914 हो गया है। यह बाल लिंगानुपात में आजादी के बाद सबसे खराब है। पीएनडीटी कानून बनने के बाद भी साल दर साल कन्याभूण हत्या के मामले लगातार बढ़ रहे हैं। भले ही चाहे सरकार जनगणना-2011 में जनसंख्या पर लगभग लगाने का डंका पीटती नजर आ रही है लेकिन इसकी सबसे बड़ी वजह छह वर्ष तक की उम्र में लड़कियों की संख्या का कम होना भी है।

ताना आंकड़ों में यह चिंता का विषय है कि देश के 27 राज्यों और सभ-शासित राज्यों में बाल लिंगानुपात में 2001 के आंकड़ों की तुलना में खासी कमी दर्ज की गई है। तीन वर्ष पहले सरकार के समक्ष प्रस्ताव रखा गया था कि पीएनडीटी कानून में अहम संशोधन किए जाएं लेकिन सरकार ने इस पर अब तक कोई ध्यान नहीं दिया। जिसका नतीजा यह है कि दिन-प्रतिदिन कन्याभूण हत्या में इजाफा होता जा रहा है। मैट्टर फॉर रिसर्च का अनुमान है कि बीते 20 वर्षों में भारत में कन्या भूण-हत्या के कारण एक करोड़ से अधिक बच्चियाँ जन्म नहीं ले सकी हैं। पीएनडीटी कानून के उल्लंघन की स्थिति में दंड की मात्रा काफी कम है। कई मामलों में तो मामली अर्धदंड लगाकर दोषियों को

छोड़ दिया जाता है। लवर् कानून के कारण दोषियों के हॉसल बूलंद हैं। वैसे भी हमारे देश में बेटे के मोह के चलते हर साल लाखों बच्चियों को इस दुनिया में आने से पहले ही हत्या कर दी जाती है। लड़कियों की इतनी अकहेलना, इतना तिरस्कार चिंताजनक और अमानवीय है। जिस देश में स्त्री के त्याग और ममता की दुहाई दी जाती हो, एक कन्या के आगमन पर पूरे परिवार में मायूसी और शोक छ जाना बहुत बड़ी विडम्बना है। यूनिसेफ के अनुसार दस प्रतिशत महिलाएं विश्व जनसंख्या से लुप्त हो चुकी हैं। स्त्रियों के इस विलोपन के पीछे कन्याभूण हत्या ही मुख्य कारण है। भूण हत्या का कारण है हमारे समाज में व्याप्त स्त्रिविवादिता और लोगों की संकीर्ण सोच। दरअसल, हमारा समाज आज भी दकियानुसी विचारों से ग्रसित है। संयुक्त परिवारों को बात तो दूर, न्युक्लियर परिवारों वाले आधुनिक समाज में भी आज बदलाव नहीं आया है।

कन्याभूण हत्या पर नजर रखने के लिए बनाई गई एक वेबसाइट पर पिछले दो सालों के दौरान 700 से ज्यादा अल्ट्रासाउंड, क्लिनिकस और रेडियोलॉजिस्ट के खिलाफ शिकायतें दर्ज हुई हैं। हैरानी वाली बात है कि ये शिकायतें उन हिस्सों से आई हैं जहां उच्चवर्ग के लोगों की संख्या अधिक है। इन शिकायतों में 60 फीसद से अधिक दिल्ली, पंजाब, हरियाणा, आंध्र प्रदेश, और तमिलनाडु से की गई हैं। अफसोस की बात यह है कि लड़कियों के प्रति बेरुखी अपनाते के मामले में निचले वर्ग और उच्च वर्ग की सोच एक जैसी ही है। भले ही आज हम अपने को आधुनिकता की श्रेणी में रखते हैं लेकिन मौजूदा दौर के हालात में हमारी मानसिकता बेटियों के प्रति बदली नहीं है। यह एक चिंता का विषय है। पिछले दिनों अभिनेता आमिर खान ने भी अपने कार्यक्रम में कन्याभूण हत्या की यह सचवाई उजागर कर लोगों को सोचने पर मजबूर कर दिया है कि आज हमारा देश भले ही आधुनिकता के सारे में जी रहा है लेकिन बहुरे देशवासियों की सोच स्त्रिविवादिता से ढकी हुई है।

Rashtriya
Sabara
June 18, 12

Girl child under duress in Rajasthan

Special Correspondent

JAIPUR: In a severe blow to the Rajasthan Government's campaign to save the girl child, four suspected cases of female infanticide have come up in Jaisalmer district since early this month. The shocking cases involve newborn girls either being starved to death or left to die without medical treatment during sickness.

According to police sources, the suspicious cases have been recorded in different areas after the parents of baby girls allegedly left them to die of hunger and thirst. Three newborns were found buried in the backyard of their houses and the condition of the corpses suggested that severe malnutrition was the cause of death. Jaisalmer district has a child sex-ratio of 825 girls for every 1,000 boys as against the State's average of 863 girls of up to six years of age, according to the 2011 Census projections.

Police have arrested one Dileep Singh in Sangad village on charges of deliberately denying treatment to his infant

• 3 malnourished newborns were found buried in backyards

• Authorities must be apprised of all such cases, orders district administration

daughter after the Fatehgarh sub-divisional officer submitted a report in this regard. A special team has recovered the baby's body for autopsy, while the accused has been remanded in judicial custody for 15 days.

Three other baby girls have died of unknown causes during the past few days in Tejmalta and Mandai villages. A girl, born on June 8 in full health, was brought to the Jhinghnyali primary health centre in a serious condition the next day. She died of malnutrition.

In Mandai village, police exhumed the body of an infant girl from a grave in the backyard of a house after getting a tip-off about her death in suspicious circumstances. The family said it was a case of premature delivery and the infant did not survive. A case has been registered

against the girl's family members under Section 315 (act done with intent to prevent child being born alive or to cause it to die after birth) of Indian Penal Code and an investigation is in progress.

The district administration, pushed into action after a series of these incidents, has issued general instructions that all the cases of newborn girls' deaths have to be communicated compulsorily to any of the authorities, such as the revenue officer, municipal officer, panchayat functionary or the police station.

The administration is also reportedly peeved at the "inhuman methods" adopted by the people to dispose of the bodies in order to escape the law. They pour salt or other chemical agents on the corpses to accelerate decomposition, which hampers the post-mortem process.

Hindu, June 22,
P.5

Wails from the valley

Due to years of conflict, the status of the girl child, which was always low, has taken a further beating

Zeenat Zeeshan Fazil

Though Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan are known for the practice of killing the girl child, it happens in other States as well with varying intensity.

Jammu and Kashmir in one such State where communities do not prefer the girl child and even when they are allowed to be born, they face discrimination all their lives. In 2011, the State's overall sex ratio was pegged at 883 females per 1000 males, indicating a fall of 9 points as compared to the Census of 2001.

The reason families give for female infanticide is because they feel the girl child cannot be a good wage earner, increases the family's expenditure as she advances in age, and dowry embroils the family in debt.

Lawyer and social activist, Abdul Rashid



IN TIMES OF CONFLICT: Kashmiri women have it hard. PHOTO: NISSAR AHMAD

Hanjoora believes that although the plight of a girl child is not as bad in the valley as it is in other states, the conflict of over two decades has escalated her problems, especially in rural areas. This reflects most distinctly on the education front.

In South Kashmir, the girls who are allowed to be born aren't allowed to seek an education and hence live in the shackles of illiteracy. Parents, on their part, have

their own set of arguments for not sending their daughters to school. They say they avoid sending their girls to school because they would have to cross security force camps en-route and there is no guarantee of their safety.

Incidences of abandoning girl children are also prevalent in the valley. Newborn girls were found abandoned in one of the wards in Lalla Ded hospital.

Though the media and

civil society here shy away from picking up the sensitive issue of discrimination against women, there are several examples when mothers are beaten, tortured and even divorced if they fail to give birth to a male child.

Hanjoora believes that for the protection of the girl child, the State government not only needs to implement all the centrally sponsored schemes in letter and spirit but should also look at other options to provide some financial assistance to the parents who have more than one daughter. The assistance can be in the form of job reservation, skill development etc.

In 2009, the Centre launched the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) and asked the states to provide children with protection and a safe environment to develop and flourish. The purpose of the scheme was to provide for children in difficult circumstances, as well as to reduce the risks and vulnerabilities that children face in situations and actions that lead to their abuse, neglect, exploitation, abandonment and separation.

It is disheartening to point out that the ICPS, launched by the Centre three years ago, is yet to take shape in Jammu and Kashmir. (Charkha Features)

Hindu, June 19, p-10

Hindu
June 23, 19

'Tendency to give women secondary status is responsible for female foeticide'

Mohammed Iqbal

JAIPUR: Spurred by alarming reports of female foeticide continuing unabated across the State, the Rajasthan Government has initiated the process for adoption of a new girl child policy with emphasis on saving the female foetus as well as newborn girls. The policy will be the first of its kind anywhere in the country.

Principal State Women & Child Development Secretary Sarita Singh said at a workshop on gender-based discrimination here on Friday that the policy is being formulated on a request made by Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot in view of the declining sex ratio Rajasthan has a skewed sex ratio of 863 girls for every 1,000 boys, according to the 2011 Census projections.

"In addition to the specific emphasis on saving girls, the policy will also address the

important issue of child rights," said Ms. Singh. Besides, it would comprise a chapter devoted to the role, contribution and responsibilities of civil society organisations.

Addressing the valedictory session of the two-day workshop, Ms. Singh called upon non-government organisations and voluntary groups working for gender equality to submit their suggestions to the State Government for promoting a "positive mindset" about girls.

"All tendencies giving secondary status to women must be nipped in the bud as they are responsible for the disquieting trend of girls being killed in the womb," said Ms. Singh. Movies justifying discrimination against women and depicting them in poor light must be banned, she added.

The workshop was organised jointly by Action Aid

• 'Movies justifying discrimination against women, depicting them in poor light must be banned'

• Block level officers spend money allocated for women on general work

and civil society groups Prayati and Jago Sakhi Seva Sansthan to highlight women's struggles in the desert State. Global bodies such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Plan International were also represented at the event.

Deliberating on the issue of gender budgeting, about which the State Government has been making tall claims, the participants felt that funds for the purpose were insufficient in most of the departments.

Besides, officers at the block level are usually ignorant of the concept and they spend the money allocated for women on general work.

Four working groups were formed on the workshop's last day to deal with different aspects of saving girls and forming linkages with different sections of society.

The first group was devoted to youths, adolescents and children, second to government agencies, third to professional associations and fourth to caste and community elders and religious leaders.

Women's rights consultant Vijaylakshmi Joshi said formulation of women-oriented policies will help improve governance. She said the conventional patriarchal preference for male children is responsible for sex-selective

abortions.

Plan International State head Rajiv Nagpal said an honest and transparent universal birth registration system could help check female foeticide to a significant extent. Gujarat-based activist Sofia Khan said associating the progressive groups of creative people will help in generating awareness on the subject.

Prayati chief executive Malay Kumar pointed out that women's movement in the State had picked up momentum after the infamous Deorala Sati incident in 1987.

It later assumed the shape of a public movement with groups joining in to raise the issues of domestic violence, minimum wages, right to information, employment guarantee and declining sex ratio.

"Considering the changes in [broader] policy environment and social situations,

we need to sharpen our strategies to develop a better response and address women's issues in an effective manner," said Mr. Kumar.

Others who addressed the workshop on the concluding day included UNICEF State chief Samuel Mawanganidze, Save the Children State coordinator Prabhakar Kumar, Action Aid regional manager Shabnam Aziz and Dignity of Girl Child Foundation president Meeta Singh.

The details of the "Chahat Hai Jiney Ki" (We Yearn To Live) project launched by Prayati with the support of Action Aid in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh were also provided in the workshop.

The project has emerged as a role model in Dholpur, Jhalawar, Karauli and Morena districts by developing cadre with the participation of about 10,000 activists and 5,000 adolescent boys and girls.

Female foeticide: A campaign to educate women is a must

The female foeticide has led to such a pass that parents in certain parts of India are now finding it difficult to get brides for their sons. Parents travel to faraway places to 'buy' a bride for their son. In some cases parents settle for brides from lower castes and faraway places. In many cases poor are brought from abroad. The solution to this demographic imbalance in the sex ratio is due to the lack of empowerment of woman. Therefore, the state and Center should start a vigorous campaign to educate society in general and women in particular to address the issue of female foeticide.

Free Press, June 6, 10

Special squads to check female foeticide

Staff Reporter

MUMBAI: In the wake of the continual recovery of aborted female foetuses, and a series of illegal sex determination cases in Beed and some districts of Maharashtra, the State government on Monday decided to form special squads to check the menace.

On the directions of State Chief Secretary Jayant Ku-

ports to the government.

Mr. Banthia on Monday called a video conference of officials concerned across the State, after aborted female foetuses were found recently in Beed, Solapur and Latur districts. He directed the police to take strict action against doctors violating the law on sex determination.

Investigators have been instructed to probe illegal storage of medicines used in

mar Banthia, special teams comprising police personnel and Revenue and Health department officials will be formed in each of the 35 districts.

The teams are tasked with inspecting sonography machines and maternity clinics for violations of the Pre-conception and Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act. They have to submit daily investigation re-

abortions and chemists selling these medicines with a special focus on stand-alone sonography clinics.

Expressing concern on the festering situation in the poor sex-ratio districts of Marathwada, the All India Democratic Women's Association (AIDWA) too called for inspection of sonography machines and nursing homes in critical districts, and spot-cancellation of licences.

Hindu
June 5
P19

Beed foeticide horror: Govt cracks the whip on officials

Beed

Maharashtra Health Minister Suresh Shetty, today said that, stern action would be taken against government officials if their involvement were found in illegal sex determination tests and resultant instances of female foeticides that came to light in the district, reports PTI.

"Those officials who have been complacent or are found to have abdicated their responsibility in checking the female foeticide will be dealt strictly," Shetty told a review meeting at the district civil hospital. The meeting was held

against the backdrop of a string of incidents of female foeticides in the district, which has the lowest male-female sex ratio among children under the age of 6 in the state.

Three doctors from Beed district, two from neigh-

bouring Nanded district and five medical practitioners from Osmanabad district have so far found guilty of carrying out illegal sex determination tests and aborting female foetuses.

"The instances of female foeticides have brought a bad name to progressive state like Maharashtra not in the country but among the global community as well," Shetty said.

Clarifying that the state government will not harass law-abiding doctors, the health minister said only those sonography centres that have failed to maintain mandatory records will be sealed. He informed that

the state government would nominate two public prosecutors for trying the female foeticide cases and foot the legal expenses. Minister of state Fauzia Khan, who also attended the meeting, termed as 'disgusting' the incidents of female foeticides.

District

guardian minister Jaidatta Kshirsagar, civil surgeon Dr Gauri Rathod, Resident Medical Officer (RMO) Ramchandra Giri and other officials attended the meeting.

The illegal abortions came to light after three foetuses were found

dumped on June 2, at various places in the district.

The district authorities on May 25, sealed a private hospital run by a doctor couple for allegedly carrying out illegal abortion of a 30-year-old woman, that resulted in her death on May 18.

*Free Press
June 10, P. 5*

The mystery of the missing girls

*Hindu, June 5,
P. 9*

Nothing can get gorier than the recent reports of a three-month old girl battered by her father for being unwanted finally succumbing to cardiac arrest or the feeding of aborted foetuses to dogs by a doctor couple. These and several such micro-incidents add up to the macro facts when 2011 census ushered in that the sex-ratio among 0-6 year olds in India has worsened in the past decade. The crux of the issue and of the book under review is the denial of the right to live or to be born for some girls by their families and often as-

sisted by medical professionals. Sharada Srinivasan examines the context and mechanisms that sustain daughter elimination focussing on the district of Salem in Tamil Nadu. This book covers social, cultural, economic and political processes that have surrounded the phenomenon of — as the author refers to — daughter aversion and son preference (among some families) in Tamil Nadu leading up to either its murderous forms: sex selective abortion and killing of female infants; or the neglect of female child if they are lucky to survive.

Outlining the parameters in the opening chapter the author's choice of this state for her enquiry was that daughter elimination was noticeable since mid-1980s compared to its observance since early 1970s in northern India. More importantly, it has been happening in a state with better human development indicators including women's status and was also the first in India to acknowledge the presence of daughter elimination and leading the way in bringing in measures to curb this practice.

The following chapter details the state's performance

in terms of women's well-being in the last four decades contributed by its socio-political framework. However, it also concludes that this same structure and despite the idea of radical feminism of Periyar — the originator of Dravidian political vision — has not succeeded in dismantling the patriarchal view of according to women the status of wife or mother.

The analysis of the state's spatial and temporal features using various official statistics in the next chapter captures certain contrasting features of daughter deficit. The state as a whole shows a

decline in 0-6 sex ratio since the 1990s with urban ratio being far better than the benchmark values but some districts in rural areas alone show a further decline. An equally important finding is the transformation in the source of daughter elimination from post-birth to pre-birth excess female mortality.

The broad socio-political and quantitative analysis lends its way into a micro-study of a distinctly agrarian set-up in Koviloor village of Salem district. The chapter is an interesting documentation of the caste-class nexus

in this region that has led to the spread of sex-selection which was hitherto practised only by the Gounder caste, even though to a lesser extent and that too mainly in the form of infanticide. Improved economic status of this dominant caste group arising out of access to canal irrigation in the region since mid-1980s resulted in increased economic inequality with the other two dominant caste groups in this region - Vanniyars and Dalits among whom there was also an emergence of wage labour and non-agricultural self-employment.

Male dominance

The decline in kinship marriage, larger sums of dowry for daughter's marriage, greater preference for smaller family size, and higher emphasis on the continuance of family lineage by one son were changes in practices that came to be noticed among the upper caste Gounders. These were in turn emulated by many others in this region, paving the way for a widespread environment of girl aversion and son preference. Further nuanced aspects that sustain an

atmosphere of daughter elimination are presented in two subsequent chapters using narratives and personal discussions with individuals further highlighting the role of both male dominance and a better use of scientific technology by the local medical community. The final chapter highlights that since the problem is contributed by several factors and hence multi-pronged interventions both by the state and the civil society seems to have brought some success in curbing infanticide but the more private and modernised nature of female foeticide makes public

intervention very challenging. Overall the book takes us from the broad picture to the narrow confines of the issue with a good dose of both quantitative and qualitative analysis though one may have wanted to know some more about why urban Tamil Nadu is able to hold on while urban India as well as parts of rural Tamil Nadu are slipping away. Attempts including the opening episode of 'Satyameva Jayate' are being made to create awareness and yet facts from parts of the U.K. and Canada show distorted sex ratios among immigrants.

FOETICIDE: STATE CRACKS DOWN ON CHEMISTS

After a spate of female foeticides was reported in the state, the state has swung into action against those who aid and abet illegal abortion, or Medical Termination of Pregnancy, as it is called.

The state drug administration has booked five city chemists for illegally selling drugs used to induce abortions.

FDA commissioner Mahesh Zagade said that FDA has been raiding wholesale and retail chemists since June 6 in an effort to curb illegal sale of abortion drugs. The booked chemists did not have complete records of the number of MTP drugs sold by them and the name and

contact details of each purchaser and prescribing doctor.

In addition, the Food and Drug Administration has booked five chemists in

Beed district for the same offence.

FDA is also prosecuting three others in Jalgaon and Amravati.

In the past five days, FDA has investigated 688 retail chemists and 266 wholesalers, booking 340 for their patchy records. 29 of

those booked are in Mumbai.

During the recent raids, FDA found that a homeopath in Bhayandar had prescribed MTP drugs. In

addition, FDA wants chemists to check the details of the prescribing doctor.

BMC planning to give cash aid to couples raising second girl child

With cases of female foeticide in the news across the state, Mumbai's civic body has decided to offer financial aid to Mumbaikars who raise a second girl child. The BMC standing committee has yet to approve the scheme, which was announced on Tuesday. But mayor Sunil Prabhu hopes this will be a formality.

Prabhu took the decision during a meeting in his office on Tuesday. This

meeting was a closed-door affair attended by deputy mayor Mohan Mithbaokar, Health Committee Chairperson Geeta Gawli, Women and Children Welfare Committee Chairperson Falguni Dave, and key municipal councillors. Municipal commissioner Sitaram Kunte with other municipal officials and Shiv Sena Member of Legislative Council Neelam Gorhe were also present.

*Free Press
June 13, P-7*

Testing time for schools as textbooks fail to arrive

New syllabus books for class V, VIII still in press

Shruthi H M

BANGALORE: Schools will receive the textbooks for class V and class VIII by June 10.



The State government has introduced a new curriculum on a par with the NCERT syllabus this year.

"We have sent the core subject books for class V and class VIII for printing. The delay is because the lessons for both first and second semesters have been combined in a single book for each of the subjects. Schools will receive these books by June 10," Textbook Society coordinator Mudambadithaya told *Deccan Herald*. Some schools have not yet received even the class IX and X textbooks, the syllabi for which have remained unchanged.

"These books have already been sent to the respective block education offices (BEOs) and schools may collect the

books from there. There is no shortage of books," he said. The government has printed 1.14 crore textbooks for students across the State, from class I to X.

On the other hand, the schools, especially the ones that reopened two weeks ago for the new academic year, have been left in the lurch over the past few days as they are forced to conduct classes without textbooks.

"We were assured that we would receive the books by the end of May. When the department expects us to follow the rules prescribed by them, it should keep its word," said

Harini, principal of Geeta Education Society. Schools usually place orders for textbooks by July every year, for the next academic year. Yet, they end up getting the books late.

While last year, the quality of second language English textbook for class V was not up to the mark, this year the textbooks are complicated for Kannada medium students, she said.

Hema Narayan, principal of Sudarshan Vidya Mandir Institutions, said her school had not received the textbooks for class IX and X yet. The school has only received a few textbooks for class V. "The new social science textbooks could have concentrated more on world history apart from lessons on Indian history. Also, students study civics, including electoral provisions, without actually realising their significance. The textbooks could have given more information on such topics," she opines.

Mariam Nilaya Convent is another school still awaiting textbooks. A few of the textbooks for class VII that have been received are damaged, said Sister Rose Mary, principal of the school.

"When we went to collect the textbooks we were told that they were out of print," she told *Deccan Herald*. Many schools are conducting bridge courses till the textbooks arrive. Schools hope the textbooks will reach them before the first unit test which will be held by the end of June. A few schools have been asking students to share last year's textbooks available in the school.

On a positive note, Padmini S, principal of RV Girls' High School, feels the English textbook for class VIII has been compiled well. "Teachers have to update themselves and we are looking forward to training sessions conducted by the government," she said.

DH News Service

Deccan Herald, June 7, P.4

सर्वशिक्षा अभियान करेगा समीक्षा

नई दिल्ली। सर्वशिक्षा अभियान (एसएसए) अपने कार्य की प्रगति की समीक्षा करेगा। इसके तहत बीते वर्ष में शिक्षा व्यवस्था को बेहतर बनाने के लिए बनाई गई योजनाओं पर मंथन होगा। साथ ही योजनाओं को असली-जामा पहनाने के लिए की गई कोशिशों और उसके परिणामों की भी समीक्षा की जाएगी। समीक्षा के लिए 14 जून को बैठक बुलाई गई है। बैठक के एजेंडे के मुताबिक जिला और ब्लॉक लेवल पर अभियान के लिए बनाई योजनाओं पर काम करने के बारे में चर्चा की जाएगी।

Amar Ujala, June 10, P.5

SHRC DIRECTS PROBE INTO HIGH TUITION FEES

The State Human Rights Commission on Thursday directed the principal secretary of School Education to inquire into a complaint by a child rights organisation against corporate schools collecting huge tuition fee with attractive brochures, but denying the children basic facilities.

In its petition, Balala Hakkula Sangham com-

plained that though corporate schools like Narayana, Sri Chaitanya, Bhashyam, Kesava Reddy and Goutham model schools are collecting high fees from students, they are being made to study in rooms without ventilation and water facility.

"In the name of keeping watch on girl students, they are also installing spy cameras," a member of the NGO told the Commission.

Deccan Chronicle, June 8, P.6

Celebrating school enrolment

Schooling was never so much fun. Instead of crying and wailing toddlers being dragged to school on the first day, Gujarat has made school enrolment an annual festival where new entrants are welcomed with toys, toffees and textbooks.

More so, in the rural areas where enrolment is traditionally low and drop-out rate high. Worse, girls are often kept away from school to help in household work, look after siblings or even married off early.

Despite being a highly industrialised State, Gujarat lagged behind in some of the social indicators such as health and education until very recently. In terms of overall literacy as well as in female literacy, Gujarat was marginally better than the country's average number in 2001 census.

To overcome this, Gujarat government adopted two separate programmes involving the entire administrative machinery in the State to implement Kanya Kelavani Rathayatra and Shala Praveshotsav, to address low school enrolment and drop out issues, and Gunotsav to improve the quality of education and teachers.

The main objective of Kanya Kelavani and Shala Praveshotsav is to ensure 100 per cent admission and bring down drop out at the primary levels to zero per cent. Started in 2003, the programme is conducted for three days at the beginning of the new academic session in June every

year when the entire State administration including the chief minister, ministers, and all levels of bureaucrats visit the primary schools and participate in the school admission process.

The children taking admission in Class 1 are welcomed in the presence of the village community and the meritorious students of higher classes felicitated. Each child enrolled in a government school automatically comes under the health insurance scheme. The result has been impressive, with the net en-

rolment ratio rising to 98.8 per cent and substantially bringing down the drop-out ratio of Class 1 to V to 2 per cent in 2009-10 from a high of 17.83 per cent in 2003-04. Similarly, the drop-out ratio in Class 1 to VII which was 33.73 per cent in 2003-04 has been brought down to 7.56 per cent in 2011-12.

To make the implementation effective, each officer of an elected representative visits at least 15 villages after a common briefing cum training session to acquaint the officers with issues and what

they are expected to do when they go to a village. All IAS, IFS and IPS officers are also involved in this exercise.

"We identify the children to be enrolled in schools while they are still at the anganwadi centres so that there are no out of school children," says Mansoori Zarina Bano, an anganwadi worker at Mautanda village in tribal-dominated Sabarkantha district. The villagers here are either farmers or casual workers who leave early and would not even consider it necessary to enrol their children in

schools, but now the community itself is involved in ensuring that every child goes to school. "My two daughters go to school and the teachers are very good," says Kamini Vajara who is also a vocal member of the school management committee.

The State government's Kanya Kelavani Nidhi has a corpus of Rs 58.37 crore and this fund is used to sponsor children for higher education and vocational education. So far, Rs 20.28 crore has been utilised and 45,348 children benefited. Gunotsav is a programme for annual rating of every primary school and every teacher to enhance the level of teaching and learning. This is done every year in November for three days and all officers and elected representatives spend one full day in a school to independently assess its performance and compare it with the self appraisal done by teachers. The schools are then graded and teachers sent for training if found not-up-to the mark. Within three days 9,000 schools of the 32,000 primary schools in the State are randomly assessed. "The idea is not to compare one school with another because urban schools would certainly grade better than rural ones, but just to improve," Manoj Aggarwal, Commissioner (Mid Day Meal) told *The Hindu*. Initiated in 2009, Gunotsav has made a noticeable change in the levels of learning in schools with the percentage of schools getting more than 6 out of 10 points, an increase from 26.22 per cent to 43.91 per cent in 2011.

*Hindu, June 20,
p. 10*

Incentivising students

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav may not have envisaged the unprecedented results of class X and XII boards that his state has recorded this year, when he was making a budgetary provision to provide free laptop computers and tablet PCs to students passing the two examinations.

Presenting his maiden budget for 2012-13 on June 1, he announced a provision of Rs 2,721.24 crore for free distribution of laptops and tablet PCs to the high school and intermediate pass students, fulfilling his promise to the electorate during the state assembly polls.

The populist announcement for free distribution of the computing devices made by Yadav may have been aimed at garnering votes in favour of the Samajwadi Party in the election, but it turned out to be a motivation for many youngsters in the state who toiled hard and performed well in their examinations. This is apparent from the high school and intermediate results, announced in the state recently.

According to UP board results, the overall pass percentage of the high school students in the state stood at 83.75 per cent, which was up by 12.93 per cent compared to the results of the last year.

In class XII board examination, the overall pass percentage of the students reached 89.40 per cent, which was 9.26 per cent higher than the pass percentage recorded last year.

"Children are now more career-oriented and focused on their studies compared to the past because of a growing competitive environment. Besides this, the promise of a free laptop, of course, seems to have worked as a catalyst which motivated many children to toil hard," said Rampravesh Mishra of Bareilly, whose son got through class XII board examination.

Many teachers of government schools in the state feel that the announcement of free laptop and tablet PC made by the SP government would also lead to an increase in enrollment.

"This is an affirmative move by the government. Students set to take the board examination next year are already enthusiastic about it. They always ask us if they

too would get a laptop on clearing the board exam. I think, the announcement will improve enrollment this year," Anand Singh, a teacher in Sri Harihar Mahadev Inter College at Devchandrapur in Varanasi, told Deccan Herald.

He, however, suggested that the government should ensure that the procedures for distribution of the laptops are kept simple, especially for girl students.

Off the record

An official in the UP school education board, however, said on condition of anonymity that introduction of an evaluation system in schools on the lines of Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has also played a key role in ensuring an unprecedentedly high pass percentage of students this year.

"For the first time, an internal evaluation system was adopted in all the schools. Under this, subject teachers of the respective schools were allowed to allot up to a maximum of 30 per cent marks to students in the subjects they taught. And rest of the marking was done on the basis of the student's performance in the examination conducted by the board. This helped push up the pass percentage," the official said.

Uttar Pradesh is not the only state where such populist schemes have been announced, aimed at improving school education outcomes.

While Chhattisgarh government is implementing Saraswati Cycle Yojna of awarding free bicycles to girl students entering high schools, Gujarat government has been giving out Vidhyalaxmi Bonds to girls enrolling in standard one, under which the bond amount of Rs 1000 together with the interest accruing on it is paid to the student when she passes out of standard seven.

Maharashtra government is also giving bicycles to school girls based on a system wherein the parents are required to deposit a minimal sum so as to enable their children to use the bicycles. Many non-government organisations promoting girls' education in the state say that since last one year the scheme is being pushed quite vigorously and is slowly gaining acceptance among the parents.

To ensure zero dropout at senior secondary level, Tamil Nadu government is

implementing schemes under which a cash incentive of Rs 1500 is given to every student on successful completion of class X and XI. They are given another Rs 2000 after they pass class XII.

Jayalalitha government is also implementing a free laptops scheme for senior secondary school students, besides students of government arts and science colleges, engineering colleges and polytechnics, in keeping with her party's 2011 Assembly poll promise.

Bihar government, which introduced Mukhyamantri Balika Cycle Yojana in 2006, perhaps has been witnessing the most remarkable positive results of launching such a populist scheme as the cash payment for purchase of bicycles has resulted in a steep rise in girls' enrollment in schools. This year, an increased sum of Rs 2500 per candidate will be given to girls under the bicycle scheme, benefiting an estimated 5,83,860 girls.

The government has extended the scheme to boys now, besides providing Rs 500 a year to girl students of Standards III to V for purchase of two sets of uniforms and stationery items required for their study, and Rs 700 a year to students of Standard VI-VIII for the same purpose.

Deccan Herald, June 16, p. 7

Contd...

"The girls used to dropout of schools due to the long distance and poor conveyance. In a way to help them reach the school, Mukhyamantri Balika Cycle Yojana was initiated in 2006. This gave a

tremendous boost. The state witnessed a sharp increase in the number of enrollments in schools ever since," a Bihar government official said.

Under Mukhyamantri Balika Cycle Yojana, over 5.83 lakh girls and 6.55 lakh boys have benefited till March 2012. Besides, Dr Rajendra Prasad Merit Scholarship Award was instituted for toppers of the secondary school examinations from 2011, under which the State topper gets Rs 15,000 in cash and a laptop worth Rs 35,000 with data card. The 2nd to 10th rank holders receive Rs 10,000 in cash and a laptop with data card.

The Bihar government also has a Mukhyamantri Balika Protsahan Yojana aimed at encouraging girls to pursuing their studies. Under the scheme, all girls who have passed the matriculation examination with first division are rewarded with a sum of Rs 10,000 so that they can pursue higher studies.

Recently, the Bihar government decided to include girl students of class IX to XII under the cash incentive scheme and provide them Rs 1000 each. The scheme is expected to benefit about seven lakh girl students, according to the official.

Copycat Patnaik

Last year in October, Orissa Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced a 'bicycle' scheme, emulating the Bihar example, for girls studying in class X and also for

boys belonging to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe.

The Akali Dal-BJP combine in Punjab too promised free laptops in its poll manifesto this year for scores of students of classes XI and XII. The promise, which was so far confined to a manifesto commitment, seems to be turning into reality.

On June 20, when the budget session of the state assembly commences, the plan may get approved, sources in the Punjab government said. The proposed scheme is already a hit as the mere idea of owning a free laptop is whipping up a euphoria among students.

The Parkash Singh Badal-led state government in Punjab is hoping to see some tangible impact of the scheme on the performance of students as well as in their near future. Political mileage, they say, is inherent in the scheme.

The Punjab government's bicycles scheme for girl students too has been a great hit. In fact, the Badal government started to give out cycles to school girls of class X onwards much before the elections in Punjab. Notwithstanding the controversy over the picture of the CM in front of the cycle basket, the scheme has been extended. Officials say, those who were left out will soon be getting cycles. "The least the scheme has ensured is a better attendance in classes," an official said.

Staggering education outlay in Tamil Nadu

From free atlases, colour pencils, geometry boxes, identical school bags to avoid neighbour's envy, four pairs of school uniforms—full pants for boys and salwar kameez for girls, textbooks, free notebooks to even a pair of footwear for each student at different levels of the school education system in Tamil Nadu, its raining freebies for children.

The icing on the cake comes from the Jayalalitha regime having introduced two novel schemes to ensure zero dropout at the Plus Two level. A cash incentive of Rs 1500 for every student who completes his 10th and 11th class, followed by another Rs 2000 on clearing the 12th class, makes each one entitled to a tidy purse of Rs 5000 at the end of Plus Two.

Another brave new world opened up as 'Amma' began to implement the free

laptops scheme for Plus one and two students in government and state-aided schools, in fulfillment of the AIADMK's 2011 assembly poll promise. Students of Government Arts and Science colleges, engineering colleges and polytechnics are also to be covered.

Push for quality

On the one hand, the notification of the rules under the Right to Education Act to ensure education for all in the age group of 6-14 years has enlarged the enabling matrix to ensure 100 per cent enrolment of children in schools. Juxtapose this with the mid-day meal scheme in schools launched earlier by MGR, free bicycles to children under the previous Jayalalitha rule and the latest laptops for students from Plus One level and other programmes like 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)', it seems an Utopial

Thus, the budgetary allocation in Tamil Nadu for School Education Department alone this year is a record sum of Rs 14,553 crore, according to State Finance Minister O Panneerselvam. Add to this Rs 912 crore earmarked last year to buy 9.07 lakh laptops, and another Rs 1500 crore to procure 7.84 lakh laptops for students in 2012-13, the State spend is truly staggering to push qualitative outcomes in education.

From the qualitative, educational point of view, the laptops "are to make students more responsive to E-learning" and get used to web-based pedagogy, officials said. The software pack-

age for the free laptops includes a 'Windows 7' or higher starter edition package.

The Electronics Corporation of Tamil Nadu (ELCOT), which is sourcing all

Contd...

the laptops through global competitive bidding, will also arrange for uploading the 'BOSS (Bharat Operating System Solution) Linux' from the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC), officials said, adding, educational content will be uploaded along with elements of Tamil computing too.

Excitement builds

Boys and girls in rural schools, in particular, are excited about the laptops given to them as their entire syllabus for the year is uploaded into it, besides some moral orientation content like couplets from the 'Thirukkural' of classical Tamil poet-Saint Thiruvalluvar. The benefi-

aries also get to learn to type on 'Word' format and 'spreadsheet' and gain in computer literacy.

Though Jayalalitha ambitiously flagged off the free laptops scheme - each one comes with a one-year warranty and other paraphernalia with a 2GB memory - all the hard discs manufacturers being in Thailand came as an unexpected impediment last year. The heavy floods in that country hit production units there and consequently disrupted the supply schedule here.

However, officials plan to clear the entire backlog of laptops to be given to students by December 2012, besides completing this year's distribution target.

Shortage of textbooks hits schools in state

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 7

The shortage of textbooks has hit students ahead of the start of the new academic year from June 12.

Textbooks have not reached schools affiliated to the state board, even though the situation is better in the case of CBSE and ICSE students. Long queues are seen at the government textbook sales counter near Mint Compound, Hyderabad. The delay in printing is said to be the reason for the shortage of textbooks. Officials expect the situation to improve by July.

There is no problem of textbooks for students studying in higher and middle-rung private schools, as the managements insist that books should be purchased from their premises. However, students studying in lower-rung private schools and all the government schools are worst affected.

The government spends about ₹80 crore per annum on printing textbooks. A total of 6.03 crore books under 234 titles for classes I to X are required for the new academic year. Out of this, 1.93 crore books are meant to be sold to private schools, and the remain-

ing sent for free supply to students in all the government schools. The situation is far worse in Hyderabad, as of the total 16.60 lakh textbooks required, only 10 lakhs have been supplied so far.

"There was a delay in finalising the printing contracts this year. We could supply 80 per cent of the required textbooks. The rest 20 per cent textbooks are printed and at binding and packaging stages. We have planned to distribute the entire 100 per cent textbooks by June-end," said Mr Sudhakar, director, AP Government Textbook Press.

*Deccan Chronicle
June 8, p. 3*

Human values set to make inroads into CBSE syllabus

HT Correspondent
letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: From the next session, scoring a high percentage in CBSE schools would require not just a thorough knowledge of the subject but also the acumen with which you can knit it with human values.

Consider this — three astronauts are descending from a space station to earth when, suddenly, one of their air tankers bursts. Now, this may seem like a developing question to test the knowledge of a physics student — specifically how much force the astronaut will have to maintain for preventing a direct fall, or how it will affect his body mass — but the actual focus lies elsewhere.

Through this, the student will

THE BOARD DECIDED TO ALTER THE TESTING PATTERN, ADDING VALUE EDUCATION IN VARIOUS SUBJECTS

be 'tested' with regard to the values embedded in him. He will, instead, be quizzed on what the other astronauts should do in such a situation, and how the experience could weave a life-long camaraderie between the three. So, though the subject is fundamentally that of physics, the question would be more on the lines of value education.

This is what the CBSE has up its sleeve for all its subjects from the next session.

At its board meet on Monday,

the CBSE decided to change the testing pattern for students from Class 9 to 12, sprinkling a "dose" of value education in various subjects.

"There would be synergising of value education in all subjects from Class 9 to 12. So, instead of just testing the students' knowledge of a particular subject, there would also be questions that would help him imbibe certain values. The broader objective of this new introduction is to make students more sensitive and alert towards human values," an official said.

Including this line of questioning in science, humanities and commerce would help instill the basic values of friendship, honesty and integrity — among others — in students, he added.

*Hindustan Times
June 8,
p. 8*

Children's education

Rupa Barman Borgohain

The apex court has aimed to translate 'constitutional morality' into 'societal morality' by pronouncing 25% reservation of seats for the marginalized and deprived children of the country in private schools. This step alone, however, cannot ensure the Millennium Development Goal regarding education fixed for 2015, nor the target set under the RTE Act of 2009. The constitutional imperative regarding free and compulsory education by the State was enshrined in Article 45 and the onus was to attain this within the first ten years of the life of the Republic. Unfortunately, the education curve did not witness an upswing or escalation and hence followed the Unnikrishnan verdict (that education up to fourteen years of age is a Fundamental Right under Article 21) and the 86th amendment of 2002 (adding article 21A) and the RTE Act of 2009. All this makes for an ongoing process and narrative with no quick resolution in sight. Keeping in mind the ecumenical significance of education in an individual's life in particular and the nation's welfare in general the judicial pronouncement is most welcome.

In order to make education all-embracing and holistic the private players in the education sector have been assigned to play a more proactive and child-centric role (reserving 25% of seats at the entry level in private schools). The uncertain climate that has gripped private school education because of the judicial intervention is unwarranted because only 17% of the schools in the country are private and out of these only 2% can be called 'elite'. Hence, quantitatively the number of students admitted in private schools would be insignificant considering that a huge number of chil-

dren remain out of school in the country. Moreover, the private schools will not suffer any pecuniary loss by undertaking this radical step as the government would reimburse the cost of educating the child from an indigent background. The latest official reports in the country state that around 5 million children in the age-group of 5-14 are active as child-labourers and they account for about 2% of the child-labour populace of democratic India. Hence it ought to be the societal or moral responsibility of every educated individual to enable their unfortunate brethren to receive the minimum basic education at the beginning of the journey of life so that a decent living unfolds in the near future.

Research undertaken by Oxford University in the state of Andhra Pradesh reveals that even the low-income groups prefer private schooling over the government schools. This preference pattern is an all-India phenomenon which has led to the mushrooming of solely market-driven private schools all over the country. The recurrent steep hikes in the fee-structure does not guarantee that the quality of education imparted is inclusive and fulfilling as experience has shown that neither infrastructure nor the quality of education is in proportion to the quantum of fees appropriated. In this respect the government ought to play a proactive part by its mechanism of investigation to curb the inconsistencies of the private schools. Allowing the marginalized children to enter the forbidden gates of private schools at the entry level is no big matter as only 20% of the children of this country go to some

form of private institution. The claim by the private schools that this verdict would lead to further hikes in the fee-structure of the non-marginalized students is not tenable. Available figures show that the government spends about Rs 6,000 to 18,000 on a child annually at the elementary level. So the cost incurred for enrolling the marginalized lot would be reimbursed by the government. It is a different story – and a very sorry one – as to where the funds actually flow because in spite of enormous spending in the name of education (in government schools) over a million children were still out of school in 2009 (the majority being from under-privileged sections). According to the World Bank data only five countries outside Africa have a lower female literacy rate than India and the country houses 50% of the world's illiterates. It has been estimated that the number of people requiring primary and secondary education in the country alone exceeds the entire population of USA.

All hopes are pinned on the judicial verdict: that the 25% reservation will herald equality tackling the situation arising out of the deficiencies that have enveloped the education sector on one hand and the necessity to make education an achievable goal for the have-nots on the other. The equality mantra which is considered absolutely vital in this republic is losing ground because the contradictory principle, i.e., "equality only among equals," which ingrains inequality has proliferated. A child and the parents of marginal status and background have to undergo the trauma of being poor and breathe the air of 'inequality' as

the child is made to enroll in government or municipal schools while the privileged ones are admitted to the 20% private institutions. This social and economic 'stratification' has infused inequality in the child at birth as they have experienced the truism 'you are born free but not free in status.' Though educating a child is one's private matter, it's a matter of some concern for all that a section of people including our public representatives opt to educate their wards in the 2% elite private schools. Is it a pointer to the fact that the education standard is not up to the desired level or is it that the high and mighty want to create an exclusive class for themselves?

What impact the 25% reservation will make on the life of indigent children calls for a microscopic evaluation. The Planning Commission thinks that about 4.50 lakh crores are needed for the next five years for the implementation of the RTE Act. Serious doubts arise as to how effectively the money would be utilized as studies by the NGO PAISA have shown that the amount of money spent directly on children, for example on providing free text-books, uniforms etc. account for only 6% of the investment in elementary education. Moreover only 1% is spent in improving the quality of education and the largest chunk, 78%, is invested in teachers and management costs. All this doesn't take into account money changing hands illicitly. Coming to Assam it has been observed that from the year 2006-11 the money spent in primary education is Rs 12,631.47 crores and under the Sarba Sikshya Abhiyan it is Rs 2,779.97 crores. However, sadly enough till March 2011 as many as 1.25 lakh children remained out of school.

Assam Tribune, June 10, P. 6

Rethink on 'no detention' up to Class VIII

Hindu, June 8,
P.15

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: The Central Advisory Board of Education has decided to constitute a committee to revisit the 'no detention' provision under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009. The panel will submit a report in three months.

The Advisory Board, at a meeting on Wednesday, also endorsed the government's initiative to create a Credit Guarantee Fund to provide better flow of credit to deserving students. The Rs. 5,000-crore corpus will stand guarantee in case any student defaults on repayment of education loans.

The 'no detention' policy, for children up to Class VIII, is being implemented under Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE). Under the policy, students are not detained in any class, irrespective of their academic performance.

However, there was no clarity on the methodology of implementation of the 'no de-

business community that has so far rallied behind the President.

In Washington, the U.S. Treasury Secretary hosted a meeting of representatives from 55 countries, where the core theme was the imposition of exceptionally strong sanctions that would force the Syrian business class to abandon the regime. "Strong sanctions make clear to the Syrian business community and other supporters of the regime that their future is bleak so long as the Assad regime remains in power," said Mr. Geithner.

"And strong sanctions can help hasten the day the Assad regime relinquishes power."

Rajaratnam otive: Gupta

latter's fund.

According to arguments in court, Mr. Gupta allegedly made a \$5-million investment in a Galleon fund

• Committee to revisit the provision under the Right to Education Act

• 'Promoting students without assessment adversely impacting their performance'

tion' policy, saying that it was not well understood. There need to be some kind of assessment system to evaluate students, even if they didn't want Board examinations. The States were informed that the RTE Act did not allow detention of students and a structured examination, but there was no bar on some other forms of appraisal.

On Credit Guarantee Fund, he said he believed that education loans should be available to students at reasonable rate of interest. At present, loans were given at an interest rate of 11.5 to 13 per cent. Under the Fund, no collateral would be needed for loans up to Rs. 7.5 lakh, and the gov-

ernment would stand to repay up to 75 per cent of a loan in case of default.

The Advisory Board also decided to constitute a committee for developing the framework and processes of the National Mission on Teachers and Teaching. This committee will be headed by Minister of State D. Purandeswari. It will include State Education Ministers and have representation from academics and civil society. The committee will focus on teacher educators and developing teachers for inclusive education of children with special needs.

The report of the Advisory Board's Committee on Information and Communication Technology in School Education and the draft of the National Policy on ICT were unanimously adopted. Suggestions were given on making the digital version of textbooks on Akaash Tablets, for use by both teachers and students in schools and the capacity building of teachers' educators.

सरकारी स्कूलों के बच्चे, रहते तरसते

कैंग की रिपोर्ट पेश सुरक्षा, शिक्षा, खेलने की सुविधा से वंचित हैं छात्र

अमर उजाला ब्यूरो

नई दिल्ली। शिक्षा के प्रचार-प्रसार के लिए अभियान दर अभियान छेड़ने वाली दिल्ली सरकार के शिक्षा विभाग की कार्यशैली पर महालेखा प्रबंधक की रिपोर्ट (कैंग) ने चंद बड़े सवाल खड़े कर दिए हैं। बुधवार को विधानसभा में पेश हुई कैंग रिपोर्ट को मोटे तौर पर देखें तो सामने आती है कोताही, गड़बड़ियाँ और आलस।

पेश रिपोर्ट में बताया गया है कि मुफ्त पाठ्य पुस्तकों की आपूर्ति में देरी हुई है। इसी तरह स्कूल में मल्टी मीडिया युक्त खरीदने में काफी गड़बड़ियाँ देखी गईं। सुरक्षा, शिक्षा, खेलने की सुविधा से सरकारी स्कूलों के छात्र आज भी वंचित हैं। मिड डे मील वितरण में भी अनियमितता पाई गई है।

- 143 में 93 स्कूलों में कंप्यूटर लैब काम नहीं करते
- 33 में खेल परिसर ही मौजूद नहीं हैं
- मुफ्त किताबों की आपूर्ति में देरी हुई
- मिड डे मील के वितरण में भी गड़बड़ी पाई गई

सीएजी ने अपनी जांच में यह भी पाया कि कम्प्यूटर शिक्षा कार्यक्रम में 143 में 93 स्कूल ऐसे हैं, जहाँ कंप्यूटर लैब काम ही नहीं कर रही। इसी तरह 143 में से 59 स्कूलों में 24 कक्षाओं की कमी है। 33 स्कूल ऐसे पाए गए, जहाँ खेल परिसर ही मौजूद नहीं हैं। कई ऐसे स्कूल थे, जहाँ बिल्डिंग का निर्माण तो हो रहा है, लेकिन देरी से की वजह से लागत बढ़ गई है। इसमें पीतमपुरा, दक्षिणपुरी, जहांगीरपुरी आदि में बनने वाली स्कूल इमारतें शामिल

हैं। इतना ही नहीं स्कूल की सुरक्षा के साथ खिलवाड़ की बात भी सीएजी की रिपोर्ट में कही गई है।

रिपोर्ट के अनुसार, शिक्षा निदेशालय के अंतर्गत 942 स्कूल हैं, जो करीब 640 स्कूल इमारतों में चल रहे हैं। इनमें कई स्कूलों में अतिरिक्त उपाय की उपलब्धता में देरी पाई गई। सीएजी ने पाया कि गुरु नानक पब्लिक स्कूल, गुरु हरकिशन मॉडल स्कूल, महर्षि दयानंद पब्लिक स्कूल आदि में छूटे वेतन आयोग की सिफारिशों को

अभी तक लागू नहीं किया गया है। कैंग ने यह भी पाया है कि प्राइवेट स्कूलों में विकास शुल्क के नाम पर अतिरिक्त रकम-उसूल की जा रही है। सीएजी ने अपनी सिफारिश में कहा है कि शिक्षण स्टाफकी भर्ती के लिए तत्काल कदम उठाने चाहिए। इसी तरह बजट पूर्वानुमान वार्षिक अकरतों के आधार पर करना चाहिए।

क्लास रूम, खेल परिसर और छात्र-शिक्षक अनुपात को जल्द से जल्द ठीक करना चाहिए। सभी विभागों में बजटीय नियंत्रण ठीक करने की आवश्यकता है। जहाँ पिछले पांच साल से लगातार पैसे बच रहे हैं, उन्हें जैसे तभी दिए जाएं, जब उन्हें इसकी जरूरत हो। व्यय और संबंधित परिणामों को भी बजट प्रक्रिया में शामिल किया जाना चाहिए।

Amar Ujala, June 3, 15

Exam-free schooling attacked

States Say Kids Not Studying, Teachers Ignoring Work

Himanshi Dhawan | TNN

New Delhi: Faced with states' complaints that students had stopped studying with the "abolition of exams", the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) on Wednesday set up a panel to assess and implement the continuous and comprehensive evaluation (CCE) as a mid-term evaluation.

The decision was taken after several states, led by Bihar, complained that students were doing poorly in their board exams and were no longer serious about their studies. Bihar education minister P.K. Shahi said, "We feel the ban on exams has had a negative impact on children. Our country is not yet ready for the such a system. Students are studying less."

He was joined by the Assam education minister, who said that class X results in his state were very poor following the implementation of the CCE under the RTE.



MID-TERM CRISIS

Similar concerns were echoed by Chhattisgarh and Haryana, which added that teachers in government schools were no longer as conscientious in their work.

Responding to the complaints, the CABE decided to set up a panel to ensure assessment and implementation of CCE in the context of the 'no detention' provision in the RTE act.

While there was agreement that board examinations are not required, guidelines for implementation

of CCE need to be evolved for examining and testing the child during the elementary education cycle.

Educationist Vinod Raina clarified that while the RTE Act said that students could not be detained in a class, there was no reason why exams were not being held. "There is no proof that students who fail do well next year, while there is ample evidence that those who fail drop out of school," he said.

Considering the complaint, the CABE meeting, chaired by HRD minister Kapil Sibal, decided to set up the committee for assessment and implementation of the CCE in the context of the no detention provision in the RTE ACT.

The panel will be headed by Haryana education minister Geeta Bhukkal. The CABE committee, which will include education ministers from states, academics and civil society representatives,

will submit its report in three months after consulting the state governments and other stake holders.

The CABE committee also decided to constitute a committee for developing the framework and processes of the National Mission on Teachers and Teaching.

The panel will be headed by minister of state D Purandeswari. The committee will include other state education ministers with representation from academics and society.

The committee will give special focus to teacher educators and developing teachers for inclusive education for children with special needs.

Members endorsed the initiative to create a credit guarantee fund to ensure better flow of credit to deserving students.

A corpus of Rs 5,000 crore has been created to provide loans to students without collateral.

*Times of India
June 7, P.10*

Shortage of staff, books plagued govt schools

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Between 2008 and 2011, hundreds of government school students spent up to eight months without books; many went without food as contractors failed to supply mid-day meals or replace bad quality cooked food in time, and thousands were made to sit in the open due to shortage of classrooms and in some cases had to also cope with acute shortage of teachers. Also pointing towards large-scale unnecessary re-appropriation of funds from 2008-09 to 2010-11, the CAG has pulled up Delhi government for mismanagement of school education.

The CAG says that Delhi government's directorate of education, right from 2008 to 2011, delayed the release of funds for purchase of books and uniform to assist poor children in government schools. The funds for books and uniforms were released after half the session was over in 2008-09 and 2009-10, while the stationery funds for SC/ST/OBC students were delayed by over a year, defeating the very purpose of the schemes.

The report also points at

large-scale shortage of manpower and classrooms and delays in construction of school buildings. While the number of students in government schools increased from 11.87 lakh to 13.82 lakh, since 2007-08 there has been no revision of the sanctioned strength of staff. "The pupil-teacher ratio in government schools varied

Many students had to go without food as contractors failed to supply mid-day meals or replace bad quality cooked food in time

from 10 to 275 whereas according to Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, it should not be more than 40. Further, 106 schools were upgraded without allocating qualified additional manpower," the report said. It added, "Shortage of teachers in miscellaneous categories was particularly acute, ranging from 18% to 99%."

The report has made shocking revelations like the fact that Sarvodaya Co-ed Middle School, Buland Masjid, with

1,876 students, was functioning without teachers, while three schools - Government Boys Senior Secondary School, Vasantpura Enclave, Government Co-ed Senior Secondary, Ranihala and Sarvodaya Vidyalaya, Dr. Ambedkar Nagar - had no students.

Scrutiny of records of 143 schools revealed that there was a shortage of classrooms in 79 schools, going up to 24 classrooms. Moreover, in 90 schools, the average number of students in each class was more than 45. There were schools where there were 140 students in a class.

The report also rapped DDE for a deficient internal control mechanism, observing that although every school was required to be inspected at least once a year, only 2% to 3% of unaided schools were being inspected while there was no inspection at all in the aided schools.

The CAG report also revealed gross financial mismanagement and how in one particular case delay in construction of the school building in Khajoori Khas resulted in escalation of cost from Rs 66.67 lakh to Rs 99.91 lakh at the time of its completion in 2008.

*Times of India
June 7, P.2*

‘शिक्षा क्षेत्र में कुशल लोगों की कमी’

नई दिल्ली | विशेष संवाददाता

यह अफसोस व्यक्त करते हुए कि शिक्षा समुदाय उतना शिक्षित नहीं है जितना होना चाहिए, मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्री कपिल सिब्बल ने इस पेशे में बच्चों को पढ़ाने के लिए सर्वश्रेष्ठ मंचा शक्ति वाले लोगों की जरूरत पर जोर दिया।

केंद्रीय शिक्षा सलाहकार बोर्ड (केब) की 59वीं बैठक को संबोधित करते हुए उन्होंने कहा, ‘यह विदम्बना है कि आप हमेशा बच्चों की शिक्षा की बात करते हैं। हम यहां शिक्षकों की शिक्षा की बात कर रहे हैं। दूसरे शब्दों में, हमने इस तथ्य को स्वीकार कर लिया है कि हमारा शैक्षिक समुदाय उतना शिक्षित नहीं है जितना कि होना चाहिए।’ उन्होंने इस तथ्य को भी स्वीकार किया कि केंद्र और राज्य

सिब्बल की शिकायत

- ऊंची गुणवत्ता के लोग हासिल करने में विफल रहे केंद्र और राज्य
- आरटीई के संदर्भ में सतत समय मूल्यांकन पर समिति गठित

सरकारें भारत के भविष्य के निर्माण के लिए शिक्षा के पेशे में ऊंची गुणवत्ता के लोग हासिल करने में विफल रही हैं।

केब की बुधवार को हुई बैठक में हरियाणा की शिक्षामंत्री गीता भुवखल के नेतृत्व में एक समिति का गठन किया गया जो आरटीई लागू होने के बाद स्कूली स्तर पर सतत समय मूल्यांकन लागू करने पर और इसका मूल्यांकन कर इस बारे में उपाय सुझाएगी। बिहार, छत्तीसगढ़, हरियाणा, असम समेत कई राज्यों ने शिक्षा

का अधिकार कानून लागू होने के बाद ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में शिक्षा की गुणवत्ता प्रभावित होने की शिकायत की थी। इन राज्यों का कहना था कि आरटीई लागू होने के बाद आठवीं कक्षा तक कोई परीक्षा नहीं लेने को कहा गया है। साथ ही छात्र को स्कूल में बने रहने को कोई रूबरूखा तैयार नहीं की गई है जिससे ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में छात्रों का प्रदर्शन गिरा है।

जेईई का फैसला सर्वसम्मति से: अगले वर्ष से आईआईटी एवं अन्य केंद्रीय संस्थाओं के लिए साझा प्रवेश परीक्षा (जेईई) आयोजित करने की आलोचना को मिर से खारिज करते हुए सरकार ने कहा कि यह आईआईटी परिषद की बैठक में सश्रमति से मंजूरी किया गया और सात आईआईटी में से चार की सीनेट का समर्थन प्राप्त था।

Hindustan
June 7, P.7

कंप्यूटर की कक्षा

किसी बच्चे के माता-पिता या शिक्षक यह देख कर खुश हो सकते हैं कि वह शुरुआती कक्षाओं में ही कंप्यूटर सीखने में काफी रुचि ले रहा है। लेकिन क्या यह स्थिति बच्चे की पढ़ाई-लिखाई या उसके मानसिक-बौद्धिक विकास में मददगार साबित हो सकती है, जैसा कि अक्सर मान लिया जाता है? स्कूली शिक्षा में आइसीटी यानी सूचना और संवाद तकनीक को बढ़ावा देने के मकसद से केब यानी केंद्रीय शिक्षा सलाहकार समिति की ओर से एक समिति गठित की गई थी। समिति ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में साफ कहा है कि पांचवीं कक्षा तक बच्चों को कंप्यूटर आधारित शिक्षा से दूर रखा जाना चाहिए, क्योंकि इससे उनके कोमल मन-मस्तिष्क पर विपरीत असर पड़ता है। प्राथमिक शिक्षा के लिहाज से देखें तो कंप्यूटर की अपनी सीमा है। एक तरफ बच्चों के सामने खुला आकाश होता है जहां वे अपने सामने की हर चीज को बहुत रुचि से देखते हैं और उसे जानने-समझने की कोशिश करते हैं। घर में पालन-पोषण और स्कूलों में शुरुआती पढ़ाई-लिखाई के दौरान बच्चों का मस्तिष्क, उनके सोचने-समझने की क्षमता आकार ग्रहण कर रही होती है। दूसरी ओर, स्कूलों के हिसाब

से तैयार सॉफ्टवेयर के जरिए उन्हें केवल यह सिखाया जाता है कि वे कंप्यूटर का इस्तेमाल कैसे करें। यानी एक तरह से प्राथमिक कक्षाओं में कंप्यूटर की पढ़ाई का मकसद शायद बच्चों को कंप्यूटर का सिर्फ अभ्यस्त बनाना है। सवाल है कि इससे स्कूली शिक्षा में सूचना संवाद तकनीक का मकसद हासिल करने में कितनी मदद मिल सकती है।

दरअसल, आधुनिक तकनीकों के दबाव ने एक ऐसा जंजाल रच दिया है कि स्कूलों से लेकर अभिभावक तक यह मान चुके हैं कि अगर कंप्यूटर या ऐसी दूसरी तकनीकों की जानकारी शुरू में ही नहीं दी गई तो बच्चा पिछड़ जाएगा। नतीजतन, बहुत सारे जैसे बच्चे जो ठीक से अपनी किताब तक नहीं समझ पाते, उन्हें कंप्यूटर पर उंगलियां चलाने के लिए बैठा दिया जाता है। लेकिन इस पहलू पर

शायद ही किसी का ध्यान जाता है कि कंप्यूटर को स्कान, की-बोर्ड और माउस के सहारे एक साथ काम करने के लिहाज से छोटी उम्र के बच्चों के हाथ और उनकी आंखों के बीच तालमेल का विकास उचित ढंग से नहीं हो पाता है। इसके अलावा, जटिल और नीरस पाठ्यक्रमों ने पहले ही बच्चों के भीतर सीखने की क्षमता को इस कदर प्रभावित किया है कि पांचवीं कक्षा के बहुत सारे विद्यार्थी दूसरी कक्षा की किताबें भी ठीक से नहीं पढ़ पाते। ये तथ्य कई अध्ययनों में उजागर हो चुके हैं। इसलिए ऐसे सुझाव सामने आ रहे हैं कि शुरुआती शिक्षा की गतिविधि आधारित और पर्याप्त रोचक बनाया जाए, ताकि बच्चों की ग्राह्य क्षमता का सहज विकास हो सके। यों भी, प्राथमिक कक्षाओं में पढ़ने वाले बच्चों के लिए ‘सहज से जटिल की ओर’ के सिद्धांत पर जोर दिया जाना चाहिए। इससे उनके भीतर ग्रहण करने और सीखने की क्षमता एक ठोस शक्ल लेती है। इसके बाद वे किसी भी विषय को ठीक से समझ कर क्रमशः आगे की ओर बढ़ सकते हैं। जहां तक कंप्यूटर का सवाल है, निश्चित रूप से इससे एक नई दुनिया खुलती है। लेकिन इसका महत्त्व इसके रचनात्मक उपयोग पर निर्भर है। लगातार कंप्यूटर का इस्तेमाल बड़ी उम्र के लोगों के बीच भी कैसी मनोवैज्ञानिक जटिलताएं पैदा कर रहा है, यह कई सर्वेक्षणों से सामने आ चुका है। अगर कच्ची उम्र में ही बच्चों को तकनीकी सीमाओं में अपना दिमाग चलाने का अभ्यस्त बना दिया जाए तो इससे उनकी रचनात्मक संभावनाएं कुंठित हो सकती हैं। इसलिए केब की समिति की सिफारिश को गंभीरता से लिया जाना चाहिए।

Jansatta, June 5, P.6

276 विद्यार्थियों पर मात्र एक शिक्षक

नई दिल्ली (एसएनबी)। शिक्षा निदेशालय के स्कूलों में विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकानुपात शिक्षा का अधिकार कानून के तहत नहीं है। स्कूलों में विद्यार्थी व शिक्षक का अनुपात 10 से 276 तक है। जबकि आरटीई 2009 के तहत 40 बच्चों पर एक शिक्षक होता है। लेकिन स्कूलों में एक शिक्षक पर 10 से लेकर 276 बच्चों का भार डाला हुआ है। भारत के नियंत्रक एवं महालेखा परीक्षक की रिपोर्ट में इसका खुलासा किया गया है।

रिपोर्ट के अनुसार शिक्षा निदेशालय मिड डे मील योजना व विद्यालय कल्याण समिति जैसी नियोजित योजनाओं को लागू करने में उचित आंतरिक नियंत्रक की कमी पाई गई है। रिपोर्ट के अनुसार शिक्षा निदेशालय का प्रत्येक केंद्र मानवशक्ति की कमी से प्रभावित रहा। स्कूलों में मानवशक्ति का वितरण भी सही नहीं था, जिससे मंत्रालयीय स्टाफ में सबसे ज्यादा कमी थी। निदेशालय के 106 स्कूलों में बिना मानवशक्ति की व्यवस्था किये उन्नत कर दिया गया।

विभिन्न जिले में कार्य का वितरण भी समतुल्य तरीके से नहीं किया गया। रिपोर्ट के अनुसार शिक्षा निदेशालय स्कूलों में पर्याप्त मूलभूत ढांचा प्रदान करने में भी पीछे रहा है। रिपोर्ट में यह भी कहा गया है कि 143 चुने गये स्कूलों में से 61 स्कूलों में कक्षाओं की कमी थी। स्कूलों की इमारतों को बनाने में देरी हुई, जिसके कारण उनकी निर्माण लागत में इजाफा हुआ। साथ ही स्कूलों को पर्याप्त आधारभूत ढांचा नहीं मिल सका। इतना ही नहीं 143 स्कूलों में से 33 स्कूलों में खेल के मैदान तक नहीं थे। निदेशालय द्वारा निजी स्कूलों द्वारा जमा किए गए वार्षिक रिटर्नों की जांच व निरीक्षण द्वारा सरकारी सहायता प्राप्त व निजी मान्यता प्राप्त स्कूलों की कार्यप्रणाली का पर्याप्त तरीके जांच नहीं कर रहा है।

- ▶ शिक्षक-छात्र अनुपात आरटीई नियमों के तहत नहीं
- ▶ विद्यार्थी-शिक्षक का अनुपात 10 से लेकर 276 तक
- ▶ आरटीई के तहत 40 बच्चों पर 1 शिक्षक होना चाहिए

*Rashtriya
Sahara, June 7, P.3*

Teachers need education: Sibal

Stating that the teaching community in the country was not as educated as it should be HRD Minister Kapil Sibal on Wednesday said that the best minds needed to get into the teaching profession to secure the country's future. Addressing the 59th meeting of Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE), he said, "It is ironic that you always talk about education of children. Here we are talking about teachers' education. In other words, we have accepted the fact that our teaching communities are not as educated as they should be."

He also accepted the fact that both the Central and

state governments had failed to gain access to high quality people in the teaching profession to build the country's future.

"We have let that profession down by giving it a sectarian interest which is unfortunate. I think that as a nation we need to change our mindsets. We need to rethink our strategy."

"If we want to educate our children, we must get the best minds in the teaching profession," Mr Sibal said, emphasising on the need to improve the quality of teaching to "improve the quality of learning".

Meanwhile the CABE discussed the creation of a Credit Guarantee Fund for Higher Education to ensure better funds for students.

*Deccan
Chronicle,
June 7, P177*

Minorities not admitted in Gujarat schools: Activist

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JUNE 6

The meeting of Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE), the highest advisory body on education, witnessed a spat between social activist Shabnam Hashmi and Gujarat education minister Raman Lal Vora on Wednesday.

Speaking at the CABE meeting Hashmi alleged that in Gujarat there were several schools that didn't give admission to students from the minority community.

"Several schools have also installed boards stating that they do not allow Muslim children," Hashmi alleged.

However, the allegation was immediately objected by the Gujarat Education Minister.

IIT Delhi alumni criticises common test

The IIT Delhi alumni association has written to Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, attacking HRD Minister Kapil Sibal over the national entrance test for engineering courses. In its letter to the PM the association has said that "IITs are being destroyed by mindless tampering by people in the HRD ministry." The Association has warned that decisions like forcing a common entrance exam for all engineering colleges not only affect the autonomy of IITs but its world-renowned brand as well. The association has sought the intervention of the PM in resolving the issue.



"I ask you to name even one school that doesn't admit minority students. I challenge you will not be able to name even a single school," Vora said.

Responding to Vora's retort, Hashmi was not able

to name a school that didn't admit minority students.

Later, Chhattisgarh education minister Brij Mohan Agrawal with Vora and asked Mr Kapil Sibal to not allow anyone to level such allegation at the CABE.

FOR STUDENTS' BENEFIT

SIBAL PROPOSES CREDIT FUND FOR EDUCATION

DC CORRESPONDENT
with agency inputs
NEW DELHI, JUNE 6

The HRD ministry has proposed to set up a ₹5,000-crore fund to ensure better flow of funds to students pursuing higher education.

Mr Sibal stated that 70 per cent of Indians would be of working age in 2025 and the fund was needed to improve the Gross Enrolment Ratio in the country.

"In this context, universalising access to secondary education, increasing the percentage of our scholars in higher education and providing skill training is necessary," he added.

The establishment of the credit guarantee fund had been proposed in this year's Budget.

अब बोलचाल की भाषा में शिक्षा

नई दिल्ली (एजेंसी)। देश में विलुप्तप्राय बोलियों को संरक्षण प्रदान करने की कवायद के तहत सरकार ने स्कूली शिक्षा एवं पाठ्यक्रम को उस क्षेत्र की बोलचाल की भाषा में आगे बढ़ाने की योजना बनाई है। छह जून को केंद्रीय शिक्षा सलाहकार बोर्ड (केब) की बैठक में इस विषय पर चर्चा की जाएगी।

मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय के एक वरिष्ठ अधिकारी ने प्रेस से कहा कि राज्यों के शिक्षा मंत्रियों समेत शिक्षा से जुड़े विभिन्न पक्षों के साथ इसकी रूपरेखा तैयार की जा सकती है। केंद्रीय भारतीय भाषा संस्थान के निदेशक राजेश सप्टेदेवा के अनुसार, 11वीं योजना में विलुप्तप्राय भाषा एवं बोलियों के संरक्षण, सुरक्षा और विकास के उद्देश्य से 'भारतीय भाषा विकास योजना' तैयार की गई है। उन्होंने कहा कि स्कूलों में प्रत्येक समुदाय की भाषा में शिक्षा प्रदान की जाए और शैक्षणिक पाठ्य सामग्री में सभी को समान अवसर प्रदान किए जाएं ताकि बोलचाल की भाषा को मजबूत बनाकर संपूर्ण भाषाई भरोहर को संरक्षण प्रदान किया जा सके।

► 11वीं योजना में विलुप्तप्राय भाषा एवं बोलियों के संरक्षण, सुरक्षा और विकास के उद्देश्य से 'भारतीय भाषा विकास योजना' तैयार की गई है।

► यूनेस्को के दस्तावेज के अनुसार भारत में 100 गैर अनुसूचित बोलियों एवं भाषाओं में से 75 खतरे की श्रेणी में हैं।

सप्टेदेवा ने कहा कि संविधान की आठवीं अनुसूची में 22 भाषाएं हैं लेकिन हमारा दायित्व उन भाषाओं और बोलियों को भी संरक्षण व बढ़ावा देना है जो 8वीं अनुसूची में नहीं हैं। यूनेस्को के दस्तावेज के अनुसार भारत में 100 गैर अनुसूचित बोलियों एवं भाषाओं में से 75 खतरे की श्रेणी में हैं। मणिपुर, नगालैण्ड एवं पूर्वोत्तर के अन्य राज्यों समेत विभिन्न प्रदेशों से ऐसी मांग उठती रही है कि ऐसी बोलियां जो 1000 या 500 लोगों द्वारा उपयोग में लाई जाती हैं, उनके संरक्षण के लिए भी योजना बनाई जानी चाहिए।

मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय के परामर्श समिति की कुछ दिनों पहले हुई बैठक में विलुप्तप्राय भाषा एवं बोलियों पर चर्चा हुई। बैठक के दौरान मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्री कपिल सिब्बल ने कहा कि इनको संरक्षण और बढ़ावा देने के लिए बजटीय आवंटन पर्याप्त नहीं है जिसे बढ़ाया जाएगा। सरकार ने राज्यों से स्कूली पाठ्यक्रम को सरल एवं बच्चों की बोलचाल की भाषा में बनाने का सुझाव दिया है। छह से 14 वर्ष के बच्चों को निःशुल्क एवं अनिवार्य शिक्षा का अधिकार कानून के तहत मंत्रालय ने राज्यों के शिक्षा सचिवों, नवोदय विद्यालय समिति के जायकों, केंद्रीय विद्यालयों, सीबीएसई के अध्यक्ष आदि को इस संबंध में परामर्श भेजा है। सरकार का मानना है कि घर की बोलचाल की भाषा और पाठ्यपुस्तकों की भाषा में अंतर के कारण बच्चों के सीखने की रुचि प्रभावित होती है। इसलिए आरटीई कानून के प्रावधानों के तहत जितना व्यवहारिक हो, घर की बोलचाल की भाषा में पढ़ाई कराई जाए।

Rashtriya Sahara, June 4, P.13

25% mark rule on hold, for now

Good news for class IX students who did not score a minimum of 25% marks in written math and science this year.

The state temporarily scrapped its new rule introduced in 2011 which made it compulsory for students of classes IX and X to score at least 25% in math and science written exams to qualify for grace marks.

Now, the old 'lenient' rule that the students can be given 10 grace marks in three subjects if they fail the exam, will apply to those who appeared for their class IX and even class 10 board exams.

Seeing students struggling to secure the minimum required marks under the new rule, the government directed the state board to relook its tough rule.

With the class X results expected to be out in a few days, experts feel that this could be a pre-emptive move on the government because students might not have fared well in math and science.

"The rule was brought in when we found that students who had performed poorly in

their written exams made it to the next level by scoring well in practicals," said Sarjerao Jadhav, state board chairperson. "We realised that the teachers were helping them pass by marking them generously in practicals. But seeing the rising number of failures, the Rajya Mandal will review

the rule."

The decision was taken following reports of large number of students failing their class IX exam.

This year, 150 out of 300 class IX students of Antonio D'Souza School, Byculla, failed.

Similarly, 30% class IX students of Sacred Heart High

School, Worli, too failed.

These schools will have now to re-examine the results of these students as per the old rule and grant 10 grace marks to those who failed in three subjects.

A senior education official who conducted the inquiry on these schools said, "The inquiry showed that the results were declared as per rules and there was no foul play."

According to educationists the new rule of scoring a min-

imum of 25% in written math and science was tough on students. It was introduced with the upgraded syllabus initially for class IX and class XI and was gradually extended to class X as well.

"If students are unable to even score a minimum of 25% in their written papers, it reflects sadly on the teaching quality of the school. Teachers are not able to teach these subjects well. Scrapping the rule is only a temporary solution. The board needs to focus on training the teachers to teach these subjects better," said a principal from a south Mumbai school.

D.N.A., June 6, P.3

Govt checks minority claim of schools as RTE deadline nears

Puja Pednekar

As the June 10 deadline for implementing the 25% quota for students belonging to economically weaker sections draws near, the state has launched checks to verify the minority status of schools.

According to the Supreme Court judgment, minority unaided schools will be exempted from implementing the 25% reservation under Right to Education Act.

Suspecting that big schools might try to weasel their way out of implementing the provisions of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009, the state is acting tough.

To take cover under this clause, many schools have suddenly started brandishing their 'minority status', thus closing their doors to students from the weaker section.

The government is making sure they back their claims.

"We are serious about implementing the 25% reservation. Unfortunately, many

LEARNING TIME

Under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (2009) Act, all schools (except private minority unaided schools) will have to set aside 25% of seats for students belonging to economically weaker sections from this year itself

The state had give a deadline of May 31 to advertise the number of seats available

June 10 is the deadline to admit these students in schools

schools are taking shelter under the minority clause. But schools will have to prove to us whether they are genuinely minority. They will have to produce minority certificates and other documents to back their claims," said Sanjay Deshmukh, special project director, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan.

Every zonal education department has started to check

the veracity of claims by 'minority unaided' schools. They are required to have a minority certificate.

An education official from the South Zone said: "We have around 197 schools claiming to be a minority in south Mumbai to Dadar. We will check how many of them possess minority certificates. Those schools which do not possess such certificates will have to implement the RTE clauses including the 25% reservation."

Educationists said that most of the top schools are claiming to be a minority and that has limited the options of a good school for students from the economically weak background. "The RTE promised to provide good quality education to poor students. But most schools in the city are minority and that leaves only aided schools and small private schools that will take in these students," said Arundhati Chauhan, president of United Parent Teacher Association forum.

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June 6, P.3

And now, a mega blackboard scam in BMC schools

How much does a blackboard cost? Rs. 15,500? The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation thinks so. The market price for the blackboards is Rs. 3,000. But BMC paid the inflated price of Rs. 15,500 for 8,228 blackboards intended for municipal schools across the city. As a result, BMC ended up making an excess payment of Rs. 10,28 crore (in figures Rs. 10,28,50,000) to the blackboard supplier.

Now this matter is under investigation at the Anti-Corruption Bureau, confirmed Mumbai ACB chief Niket Kaushik. "We have received a complaint about corruption in the blackboard purchase, and

we are enquiring into it," Kaushik said.

BMC Education Officer Mirza Baig said, "There has been a misappropriation in the purchase of the green magnetic boards. I was not the Education Officer then. There is an ACB investigation, and I cannot say more."

Last month the ACB made a surprise visit to the BMC's Education Department and took away several internal documents pertaining to the blackboard purchase. To protect its investigation, ACB declined to reveal any further details.

Clearly, the blackboard scam may have originated in the BMC's Education

Department, but it had the sanction of the BMC's Standing Committee, which consists of our elected corporators.

The Standing Committee sanctioned the purchase of the blackboards at the inflated price through the proposal 869 dated 24 October 2008. The Standing Committee passed the proposal unanimously, which raises sev-

eral questions.

There's more to this story than inflated prices, however.

In a related development, the 8,228 blackboards were smuggled through the city without

paying octroi. Thus, an amount of Rs. 89.27 lakh in taxes was evaded. This is the finding of the Municipal Chief Auditor (his report Mu.Le.Pa/021/82 dated 7.1.2010).

The Audit Note said that the blackboard supplier, Gumina Venture (India) Pvt. Ltd., has not produced any receipt of having paid octroi to BMC. Yet the BMC Education Department promptly paid him at the rate of Rs. 15,500 per blackboard. There were, of course, 8,228 blackboards under purchase.

The Audit Note also says that 1421 of these blackboards have been hung on verandas, teachers'

Free Press
June 6
P.7

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Educating children, educating adults

santanu sinha chaudhuri

A RECENT article in *The Guardian* on what works and what doesn't to improve exam performance of school children discusses some research findings that fly in the face of conventional wisdom. The research was conducted by academics at Durham University. The issues are worth considering because the research deals with problems that are universal. The main findings are:

Reducing class sizes and setting homework for primary school children are among the least effective ways to raise standards. The benefits of reducing class sizes "are not particularly large or clear, until class size is reduced to under 20 or even below 15".

The benefits of homework are modest. The optimum time spent doing homework for secondary school children is one to two hours per school day, but the benefits tail off as the amount of time spent increases, and there is little benefit in primary school pupils doing homework.

One of the most effective uses of a teacher's time is in giving good feedback — which should be sparing, specific and encouraging. It is "more important to give feedback about what is right than what is wrong," researchers say. It is also best to praise a particular task that has been accomplished well rather than praise a pupil as an individual with phrases like "good girl".

Students should be encouraged to develop independent learning strategies and to learn from each other. Teachers should encourage pupils to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own learning.

Let's examine the situation in India. Critics often point out what ails our education system. But most commentators ignore the basic fact that education, like charity, begins at home. If parents botch up the early childhood training of their offspring, the latter are handicapped for the rest of their lives.

Although bringing up children is one of the most complex and difficult tasks humans perform, no one is trained for this responsibility, not at least in our country. Earlier, young parents had the benefit of the counsel of elders in the family, but that is no longer the case. And most parents have not the fuzziest idea about how to go about the job. Let me share a personal experience. One afternoon, I was on a crowded public bus. In front of me, a boy of about ten in school uniform sat splayed on a seat. A twenty-something woman, presumably his mother stood by his side. There was enough

room for both to share the seat, but mother had decided to make her son's journey comfortable and stood instead. She was even carrying his schoolbag! A little later, an elderly woman approached the boy and requested him to move aside and make room for her.

Son ignored her, and mother shouted: 'It's my seat. I have given it up for him!' This scene was repeated several times as new unsuspecting people — mostly women — got onto the bus and approached the child.

Although such insensitivity is rare even among well-heeled city dwellers, the general standard of parenting is hardly better. In my city, Kolkata, many parents admit their children to supposedly good schools far away from their homes. If you take the Metro in the morning/afternoon, you will see hundreds of school children commuting from one end of the city to the other. It is a common practice among young mothers to accompany the kid(s) to school, spend the entire school hours hanging around and gossiping with other moms, and return home in the evening. This, besides being a colossal waste of human resources, possibly tells the child (s/he is more likely to be a single child) that s/he is the fulcrum around which the family revolves. It won't be their fault if they grow up into selfish and cussed individuals.

If we may move over from ethical training to academic training, many Indian parents — from Kolkata to Kochi — would be scandalised if their secondary-school children were not allowed to do more than "one to two hours" of homework, as prescribed by the researchers of Durham University. For us, the motto seems to be: the more the merrier. And what matters are marks, not education. The goal is not learning, but admission to premier colleges. Dependence on "private tuition", the most pernicious system invented to kill the student's initiative, follows naturally. A private tutor is employed to

"help" the child do homework. The tutor in turn gives some more homework, and it is not uncommon that a second tutor is employed to take care of that. Every evening, one sees children carrying heavy bags scurrying from one tuition centre to another, at a time when they ought to have been on a playground. In the process, the child is deprived of two things.

The twenty-first century Indian child does not know much about childhood, and as they grow up, their faculty to think independently atrophies through lack of use. Once I asked my first-year students at an engineering college to write down their personal strategies about how to improve their English. The first assignment that I read was by a student with limited English language competency. But the language of his submission was impeccable; it had been written by his private tutor. More surprise was in store. Several students had copied his piece and turned it in as their own. So much for students "planning, monitoring, and evaluating" their own learning!

You may say that one cannot generalise a specific experience. But if you talk with college teachers in Bengal, you will come to know that a vast majority of our students just cannot think on their own. The situa-

States-
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tion is bad, and our planners and administrators do not seem to be aware of the problem. Therefore, there is no reason to hope that the situation will change for the better in the foreseeable future.

Imagine a situation when secondary school students will not focus on solving innumerable problems of maths or physics in milliseconds, but instead will focus on the concepts behind the problems ... when students, instead of "learning" a language, will focus on "using" the language creatively. Imagine a situation when the best of our graduate students who wish to do

research are not selected through a test that asks inane multiple-choice questions, but based on evaluation of real merit. It may never happen, but if it did, a necessary precondition would be that students were "encouraged to develop independent learning strategies and to learn from each other".

I even imagine that a day will come when the business of education will not be divorced from value and ethics. You may say I am a dreamer, but hopefully, I am not the only one.

75 students stuffed in one class, govt teachers fear fall in education quality

Neelam Pandey

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NEW DELHI: Government schools teachers in Delhi are caught in a fix. The number of students in their classes is increasing every day, but there are not enough rooms to accommodate them.

From a class of 40 students, several teachers are now teaching classes with up to 75 students.

In the recently declared CBSE results of Class 12, Delhi government schools fared better than public schools.

Most teachers were of the opinion that more schools needed to be constructed soon, otherwise the quality of education would suffer.

Last year, 1.4 lakh students were admitted into Delhi government schools. The construction of new schools, however, did not advance at the same pace.

The Education Department has written a letter to the Revenue Department, asking

ROLL CALL

15 lakh Total no. of students studying in Delhi government schools

1.4 lakh Total no. of students enrolled last year

1,100 Total no. of government schools

them to allocate land for the construction of new school buildings.

Figures provided by the Education Department have revealed that four lakh students, on an average, were added to government schools in the last three years.

This means, for instance, if 2,000 students are being admitted per school every year, the government needs to construct at least 50 new schools to accommodate them. On the contrary, last year only 11 new schools were constructed, some



From a class of 40 students, several teachers are now teaching classes with up to 75 students.

HT FILE PHOTO

of which will be functional only by next year.

There are approximately 15 lakh students enrolled in government schools and 1.7 lakh in government-aided schools.

"We are not being given land, though we have been raising the issue for quite some time. With the implementation of Right to

Education we cannot deny anyone admission, but the infrastructure is not able to keep pace with the increase in students. We need to open new schools soon, as the teacher-student ratio in many areas especially in east Delhi has touched 80 in many schools," said a senior Delhi government official.

Officials also said that many times they had to organise evening classes, which were not as good as morning classes, to accommodate students.

Hindustan Times, June 4, P-3

नई शिक्षा नीति पर विधायक नाराज, बदलाव की मांग

नई दिल्ली | विश्व संगठनात्मक

केंद्र सरकार की नई शिक्षा नीति युवाओं के शिक्षा स्तर को गिरा रही है। इस योजना से दसवीं कक्षा का परिणाम भले ही ऊपर जा रहा है, लेकिन 11वीं कक्षा में बच्चे फेल हो रहे हैं। यह चिंता विधायक नसीब सिंह ने जाहिर की।

उन्होंने कहा कि 11वीं कक्षा में 30 प्रतिशत बच्चे फेल हो रहे हैं। योजना में कक्षा 8 तक बच्चे पास किए जा रहे हैं। 10वीं के बाद बच्चों को एक राह तय आती थी और वे उसी दिशा में कड़ी मेहनत करते थे। इस योजना की वजह से शिक्षा का स्तर गिर गया है और बच्चों

का आत्मबल भी गिरा है। वे 11वीं कक्षा के बाद यह तय नहीं कर पा रहे हैं कि उन्हें किस क्षेत्र में जाना चाहिए। इसके अतिरिक्त तकनीकी शिक्षण प्राप्त करने के लिए तय डिप्लोमा में भी उन्हें दाखिला नहीं मिल रहा है। अमेरिका हमारी शिक्षा नीति का अनुसरण करना चाहता है और हम उसकी नीति का अनुसरण कर रहे हैं। यह नीति अमेरिका के लिए चिंता का विषय बनी हुई है और अब हमारे बच्चे इससे परेशान हैं। इसमें सख्त बदलाव किए जाने की आवश्यकता है।

वहीं, विधायक वीर सिंह धींगान ने पानी की किल्लत व देवेन्द्र यादव ने हाल ही में तबादलों का मामला उठाया।

*Hindustan
June 2, P. 4*

State hikes poor students' scholarships

DNA Correspondent

The state cabinet on Wednesday decided to reduce the income limit for the economically backward classes (EBC) from Rs4 lakh per annum to Rs2 lakh per annum. The move to cut the EBC family income limit is expected to save Rs350 crore annually.

The government has also increased the scholarship for such students from the Rs1 lakh to Rs2 lakh.

The cabinet said the state would fund the socially and economically backward class students in government and government-aided colleges, up to a specific limit per course. Engineering students would receive funding up to Rs50,000 a year while medical students would be eligible to get up to Rs2 lakh per annum. MBA students would get up to Rs60,000 for two years. SC and ST students will be funded even in private colleges.

D.N.A., June 14, P. 5

शिक्षा अधिकारी ने किया स्कूलों में शिविरों का निरीक्षण

कलासत, 2 जून (निस)। गर्मियों की चल रही छुट्टियों में सर्व शिक्षा अभियान के तहत आयोजित किए जा रहे जीवन कौशल शिविरों का आज खंड मौलिक शिक्षा अधिकारी जगदीश चंद्र ने स्टाफ सदस्यों के साथ निरीक्षण किया। खंड मौलिक शिक्षा अधिकारी ने छात्रों को संबोधित करते कहा कि सही मायने में इन शिविरों का तभी लाभ है जब शिविर में प्रशिक्षण ले रही छात्राएं यहां से कुछ अच्छी व जरूरी बातें सीखकर अपने घर जाएंगी। उन्होंने कहा कि लगातार 15 दिनों तक चलने वाले इस शिविर में छात्रों को न केवल अनेक प्रकार की जानकारियां दी जाएगी बल्कि उन्हें आत्मनिर्भर होने की दिशा में सिलाई, बुनाई व कढ़ाई जैसे कार्यों में दक्ष भी किया जाएगा। स्कूल प्रधानाचार्य संतोष लाठर ने बताया कि इस शिविर में विभिन्न कार्यालयों से छात्राओं को प्रशिक्षण देने के लिए कर्मचारी व अधिकारी आएंगे तथा उन्हें जीवनोपयोगी बातें बताएंगे।

छात्राओं को बनाया जाएगा दक्ष : सर्व शिक्षा अभियान के तहत जहां छात्राओं के बौद्धिक, मानसिक व शारीरिक ज्ञान में वृद्धि के लिए शिविरों का आयोजन किया जा रहा है वहीं राजकीय कन्या वरिष्ठ माध्यमिक विद्यालय में स्कूल प्राचार्य संतोष लाठर की अगुवाई में छात्राओं का राष्ट्रीय सेवा योजना शिविर का आयोजन भी किया जा रहा है। स्कूल में आयोजित किए जा रहे राष्ट्रीय सेवा योजना शिविर के बारे में पत्रकारों को जानकारी देते स्कूल प्राचार्य एवं कैंप की आयोजक संतोष लाठर ने बताया कि आयोजित किया जाने वाला यह कैंप अन्य आयोजित किए जाने वाले कैंपों से बिल्कुल भिन्न होगा। उन्होंने बताया कि प्रचंड गर्मी के नलते इस राष्ट्रीय सेवा योजना शिविर में जहां स्वयंसेविकाओं से केवल सुबह के समय ही कुछ श्रमदान का कार्य लिया जाएगा वहीं बाकी समय में छात्राओं को हस्त कार्यों में दक्ष करने का कार्य किया जाएगा।

Dainik Tribune, June 3, P. 6

Parents cautioned on illegal schools

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 13

The education department plans to launch a publicity campaign to alert parents about the unrecognised schools in their localities. The focus will be on the old city where there are a large number of unrecognised schools.

The department has decided to hire autorickshaws and fit them with public address systems. It is ready to spend ₹5,000 on each auto, which will campaign for two weeks till the

Managements act smart

■ Managements are shifting their schools to other premises and informing parents of the 'change in address'

■ They claim that the existing unrecognised schools were actually only the branches of recognised schools!

end of this month. The autorickshaws will be deployed in localities

where there are the most number of unrecognised schools.

Officials will read out a list of unrecognised schools over the public address system, cautioning parents against admitting their kids in them. They will also announce that the department will not be responsible for the consequences if parents ignore their warning.

Meanwhile, the managements of these illegal schools have found different ways to circumvent the campaign against them.

For instance, they are shifting their schools to other premises and informing parents of the 'change in address'.

Said Subba Reddy, district education officer, "The department has been conducting raids on illegal schools and closing them every year. However, the managements change the names and addresses of these schools and continue to run them. Without the parents' cooperation, it becomes difficult for the department alone to check unrecognised schools."

Deccan Chronicle, June 14, P. 3

Schools reopen, but no Class IX books yet

Kanchan Srivastava

While crores of state board students will go to schools with their new textbooks covered in shiny brown paper, it is likely to be a *masti ki path-shala* for Class IX students for at least a week. For, most of their books are still to go for printing at Balbharti, Pune, which designs and prints the textbooks for state board schools. State schools reopen on Friday.

The syllabi for all Class IX subjects, except science and mathematics, were to be revised from 2012-13, but the textbooks in none of the eight mediums Balbharti publishes them in have reached the students before the start of the session. Close to 16 lakh students are enrolled in Class IX across the state, with 3.5 lakh of

them in Mumbai.

Srishti Bangera, an English-medium student of Class IX who has been regularly checking with bookstores in Andheri, said, "I could only get mathematics and science textbooks and was told that the other books are yet to arrive from the government press."

TOON ROW TO BLAME FOR DELAY?

The extra caution being exercised by the board of studies, entrusted with the task of revising the syllabi, could be behind the delay in the printing of Class IX textbooks, sources said. The 'extra caution' instruction has come from the higher authorities, in light of the recent controversy over a 50-year-old cartoon in an NCERT text book rocking the nation.

An officer of Goregaon-based Balbharti Book Depot said, "The English and Marathi language books for Class IX arrived on Thursday. They will reach the market by Saturday, while other books will follow in a day or two."

Textbooks in mediums other than

English and Marathi are yet to be printed, said sources. A top official in the school education department said it's been a huge task for Balbharti to deal with the major syllabi overhaul in four subjects and in eight languages. Balbharti publishes 842 titles and nearly 12.61 crore books

annually, but with the syllabi revision has thrown its schedule off-track. Apparently, revised books, especially Social Sciences and Marathi have been 'proof-read' multiple times to ensure that no text, picture or caricature in them hurt sentiments of any political party or community, apart from embarrassing the department later. While an official said, "This exercise delayed the schedule of book prints", Jadhav denies any such instruction.

Admitting to "a bit of delay in the printing of Class IX textbooks", state board chairman Sarjerao Jadhav said,

"We are working on a war footing and the books have started reaching our 11 book depots across state."

First-year junior college (FYJC) textbooks, too, are at least a month away, but sources said, "As FYJC classes won't begin anytime soon, officials are at peace."

D.N.A., June 15, P.2

TN toon row: Panel will examine book, says Sibal

New Delhi

Amid protests in Tamil Nadu over a cartoon on anti-Hindi movement in NCERT textbooks, Government on Tuesday said the panel set up last month to review political science textbooks containing B R Ambedkar's cartoon is also examining "inappropriate material" on Tamil movement, reports PTL.

Just as the recent Ambedkar cartoon row, a sketch on the issue of anti-Hindi agitation in Tamil Nadu in the 60s in a NCERT class XII text book has created a storm in the state with key UPA ally DMK demanding its removal and other parties joining the chorus. In a statement, HRD Minister Kapil Sibal said



Kapil Sibal

that the NCERT has already constituted a committee on May 14 to review the classes IX - XII Social Science/Political Science textbooks of NCERT from the point of

view of identifying educationally inappropriate material in them and to provide suggestions for alternatives to be placed in the textbooks.

This issue (cartoon on anti-Hindi movement in the NCERT text books) is also being examined by the committee as a part of the exercise undertaken by the committee constituted under the chairmanship of S K Thorat, Chairman, Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), Sibal, who is in Washington, said.

The piece by renowned cartoonist R K Laxman printed in the class XII political science book is seen by the Dravidian parties as showing the student agitators against Hindi in 1965 in a poor light.

Free Press, June 13/12

English medium allowed in aided schools

BANGALORE, DHNS: The government will allow private aided schools change their medium of instruction from Kannada to English Class 6 onwards if they have necessary infrastructure, Primary and Secondary Education Minister Vishweshwara Hegde Kageri said on Tuesday.

He told mediapersons that about 341 schools in the State had sought permission to change the medium of instruction.

The current policy provides for education in Kannada language from classes I to 5.

On the opposition by the Kannada Sahitya Parishat to English medium, Kageri said he appreciated the concern

shown by the Parishat.

"But a section of parents and elected representatives are demanding that English be the medium of instruction in government schools in the interest of students. Being a minister, I have the responsibility to listen to the demands of all sections of society," he said.

Kageri said his department will organise on July 5 'Shaalegagi Navu Neevu,' a programme to create awareness on the importance of Right to Education, across the State. All the elected representatives from the chief minister to gram panchayat members, will visit a nearby government school and take part in the programme, he added.

*Deccan
herald,
June 13, P. 1*

Kannada schools in TN have no books

CHAMARAJNAGAR: Shortage of textbooks and teachers is causing great inconvenience to students of the Kannada medium schools and colleges in Talavadi firqa (revenue division) in Tamil Nadu, bordering Karnataka.

Talavadi firqa, with a majority of Kannada-speaking population, has 28 Kannada medium primary schools, nine middle schools, three high schools and two pre-university colleges.

Together, they account for over 1,700 students and the Tamil Nadu government is responsible for supplying textbooks, both for Kannada and Tamil medium students. However, only Tamil medium textbooks have been supplied till now.

The Kannada medium students of the colleges are compelled to study their lessons with photocopies of the text-

books.

The situation was no different last year. While the textbooks were not supplied in

time for students of first to tenth standards, the pre-university books were not at all supplied.

The lecturers conducted the classes by translating the Tamil textbooks into Kannada. The photocopies of the translated textbooks were supplied to the students.

"The books have not been supplied this year too. Hence, we are giving used copies of the photocopied textbooks to

students of Kannada medium," said Channanjamurthy, the secretary of Talavadi unit of Tamil Nadu Primary Teachers' Association.

Shortage of teachers

All the middle schools in Talavadi firqa are upgraded schools and according to the norms of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, graduate assistant teachers should be appointed to such schools.

However, the Tamil Nadu government has not taken any steps to fill up 17 teachers' vacancies in these schools

over the past nine years. Parents say that there were no teachers proportionate to the students' strength and even the teachers serving now were deputed.

Vacant posts

Channanjamurthy said the post of a Kannada lecturer in the government pre-university college, Talavadi, had not been filled for the past seven years. First grade colleges has not been established in this part of the State and hence the students of Kannada medium are forced to cut short their study at the pre-university level.

"Parents are therefore admitting their children to Tamil medium schools from the primary level. The Kannada medium schools may face closure if the situation continues," he apprehended.
DH News Service

*Deccan
herald
June 16, P. 6*

Kids' learning level takes a knock, says study

BANGALORE: A joint study conducted by Wipro Applying Thoughts and Ahmedabad-headquartered Educational Initiatives has revealed that in the top schools of five metros, the learning level, which was below expectation six years ago, has gone down further.

The study involved 23,000 students, 790 teachers and 54 principals from 89 prominent schools of Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bangalore and Chennai. The study included background questionnaires for students, teachers and school principals.

It involved tests for students from classes four, six and eight in which questions regarding general aptitude, knowledge of their subjects, values and at-

Shocking results

- Performance lower compared to international standards.
- Drop in learning levels
- Students prefer rote learning to deeper understanding of subjects

titudes were asked. The surveyors used international benchmarking like TIMSS and PIRLS.

Vijayanthi Sankar, Vice President (Large Scale Assessment), Educational Initiatives, told *Dewan Herald* that 64 schools and 54 questions were common in the surveys conducted in 2006 and 2012. The survey this year came out with

some startling facts. It showed that the students preferred rote learning to deep understanding of subject or application of subject.

Vasundhara Vyas, Assistant Manager, Educational Initiatives, said: "The performance is lower when compared to international average at class four. However, in class eight, students match the international standard."

Students from middle and upper middle classes were of the opinion that education for girls is not important. Misconceptions acquired in lower classes continue in higher classes without any correction. It was also found that the students exhibited diverse thinking on questions on gender equality, acceptance of

cultural and religious diversity, civic, citizenship and ecological responsibilities.

Performance in English, Maths, Science and Social Studies is quite lower when compared to international standards.

The learning level of students in schools affiliated to Council for the Indian School Certificate Examination (CISCE) and Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) is quite higher than other boards.

The survey, however, did not analyse the causes behind the poor performance. This study will be conveyed to all schools concerned so that they can take corrective measures.

DH News Service

*Dewan Herald
June 25, 14*

Tablets-for-kids plan put on back burner

HT Correspondent

htreporters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The city's cash-strapped civic corporations are yet to take steps to provide around two lakh tablet computers to students of Class 4 in municipal schools by July 2, as planned by the now trifurcated Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD).

According to a proposal approved by the MCD House last year, 1,98,000 tablets, each priced ₹2,000, were to be purchased and distributed in its 1,700 schools.

The budget for the project was ₹45 crore.

The schools will re-open next month, which is when the tablets were slated to be distributed. But a North Delhi Corporation

1,98,000 TABLETS, EACH PRICED ₹2,000, WERE TO BE PURCHASED AND DISTRIBUTED IN 1,700 SCHOOLS

member said a decision on the distribution of the tablets was yet to be taken and the project was now on the back burner.

"For us to purchase the tablets now, a new proposal has to be introduced. This is because each tablet now costs ₹5,400 and the corporations will have to spend more to buy so many of them," the member said.

The corporations are ruing a lack of funds, which could affect education at corporation-owned schools.

Hindustan Times, June 26, 15

Smaller Textbooks, SMARTER STUDENTS?

Teachers' Progress Will See If New System Scores Well

Teachers from various streams are appreciative of the work put into the textbooks, and say that the course work would be beneficial to students. However, the onus will be on teachers to ensure that the system works as the government intends it to.

But the shift from textbook-dominated classroom practices to a more interactive and involved method of teaching has some of them apprehensive. For those teachers who have been in the field for many years, the change in teaching methodology will take some getting used to. Just reading the text, marking answers and correcting the notebooks will no longer be enough. That was why close to five lakh teachers from all over the State were given training in the formative education and assessment system before the beginning of this academic year.

K Devarajan, Director of Tamil Nadu's State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), informs that every month, reinforcement training will be given to teachers across the State. The new system requires that teachers develop activities best suited to their students. This needs innovation. "It is the duty of the teacher to make sure that all children have reached the same level

of understanding before moving on to the next topic," he says.

Jessintha Amalarasi, a Class II teacher in a State-run school in Tirunelveli district, describes her training as an interesting experience. "We were asked to come up with activities that expanded the students' horizons. Being back in a classroom ourselves made us see things in a different perspective," she says.

"Sometimes I take my students out on nature walks among plants and creepers to show them the different types. It is not very easy to come up with different ideas every time, but it makes my work interesting," says the soft-spoken woman who has been a teacher for a decade now. "Some teachers would do it because they have to; others do it because they like it. If the teachers do not implement the system properly, it will be the children who lose out," says Jessintha.

Nalini Karunakaran, a chemistry teacher for over 30 years, and set to leave the profession in a few years, says she finds the new textbooks and syllabus exciting. "Teaching my subject through activities makes it very interesting and keeps the students engrossed," she says. However, she adds that the topics are sometime repetitive and too simple espe-

FOR THOSE TEACHERS WHO HAVE BEEN IN THE FIELD FOR MANY YEARS, THE CHANGE IN TEACHING METHODOLOGY WILL TAKE SOME GETTING USED TO. JUST READING THE TEXT, MARKING ANSWERS AND CORRECTING THE NOTEBOOKS WILL NO LONGER BE ENOUGH

cially for classes VI to VIII.

While many schools have separate teachers for biology, physics and chemistry, it will be teachers in government-run schools who could have a tough time adapting to the new system, feels Nalini.

"Since the teacher would specialise in one subject, that is what he/she may focus on. In the process, will the importance of other subjects be diluted and the effectiveness of their teaching and evaluation compromised? This is a potential pitfall and needs to be addressed effectively," she suggests.

Some teachers feel application based topics like physics or maths might require students to go back to the previous term's books but Shirley A Zac backs the new system.

Principal of a matriculation school in Thiruvottiyur, she says, "Rather than crowding too much into one school year, it is better they learn less and learn well. If they get their concepts strong, they will keep it in mind for many years."

*New Indian Express,
June 25, P2*

Activities Will Add to Your Grade

Remember those activities given at the end of chapters in school textbooks, asking you to perhaps visit a museum or make a pinhole camera? Odds are your teacher would have asked you to skip over them and concentrate on the detailed answers instead.

Students these days cannot afford to ignore them as they are an integral part of the Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation

(CCE) system that has been introduced in schools for classes I to VIII from this academic year. The CCE requires the completion of these activities for a wholesome evaluation of the students' progress. The participation and quality of work put in throughout the term and school year will account for a large part of students' grades.

STEP BY STEP

TERM TEXTBOOK SYSTEM

Instead of a single textbook for each subject for the whole year, every subject will have a new textbook each term

After the end of term, the corresponding textbook will not be used for the rest of the year

CONTINUOUS, COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION

Evaluates students over an entire academic year, rather than judging their potential and performance based on term-end or annual exams

Formative Assessments (FA) are conducted throughout the term and carries 40 marks

A written Summative Assessment (SA) is conducted at the end of each term and carries 60 marks

Co-scholastic elements like life skills, arts, sports activities will also taken into account

TRIMESTER SYSTEM

The academic year has been divided into three terms

I Term

June, July, August, September

II Term

October, November, December

III Term

January, February, March, April

Schools look out to get around Maha no to minority tag

Several city schools have found a way to wriggle out of reserving 25% of their seats, under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, for students from weaker sections. They have begun acquiring minority certificates from other states, reveal officials.

Since minority, unaided schools are exempted from implementing several RTE clauses, such as the 25% quota, several schools have been rushing in for a minority certificate. Although the state had tightened the screws on the issue of minority certificates, educationists claim that this has done little to stop city schools in their tracks. Many schools have now hit upon the idea of acquiring such certificates from agencies outside the state, like the National Commission for Minorities.

Education officials say such certificates are making it difficult for them to pull up errant schools. Recently, VIBGYOR School, Goregaon, had come under the government scanner for not letting a few parents from the weaker section enter its premises. The school claimed that they were a minority insti-



FEW TOE RTE LINE

MP Khalsa School, Goregaon, and St Mary's School at Mazgaon appear to be the exception to the rule. While most city schools are blaming the shortage of applications for not implementing the 25% quota for weaker section students this academic year, these two have accepted applications from eligible students

MP Khalsa School has accepted applications from 10 such students, while St Mary's School (SSC section) has got applications from 14

tution, but an NGO, Desh Seva Samiti, came up with documents which showed that the school was not registered as a minority educational institute in the state. The parents and the NGO couldn't feel vindicated for long, though. The education department found during an inquiry that the school had acquired a Parsee minority certificate from outside the state.

Officials have found that such a case wasn't restricted to a school. PR Pawar, education

inspector, western zone, says, "We found some schools that had minority certificates from the National Minorities Commission. We are still trying to work out whether such certificates will be valid in the state. Schools are going to these non-state institutes since the state has become strict while issuing such certificates."

A senior official from the education department says many schools claiming to be an institution for minorities do not have more than 5% of minority students. "They are misusing the minority status just to get away from implementing the 25% quota clause." -pp

We had received thousands of applications seeking a minority status. That's why we have become strict -Arif Naseem Khan, minister for minorities

D.N.A, June 12, P.3

Short dresses get a thumbs down

HT Correspondent

■ letters@hindustantimes.com

IMPHAL: An organisation comprising six student bodies — the Joint Students' Coordination Committee (JSCC) — has banned school and college students in Manipur from wearing dresses that end above the knees.

In a statement issued here on Monday, the committee said female students should wear the phanek — the traditional ankle-length Manipuri dress worn by women from the Meitei community that dominates the plains of Manipur.

"Under no circumstances will dresses ending above

the knee be tolerated," said JSCC committee member A. Thoithi.

Apart from demanding "decency" in school and college premises, the committee has banned the use of mobile phones by students during school and college hours. It said such gadgets "pollute the academic atmosphere".

The committee includes All Manipur Students Union, Democratic Students Alliance of Manipur and Manipur Students Federation.

Reacting to the ban, the government said necessary steps would be taken if such diktats were implemented by force. "School and college authorities anyway have the prerogative to take

decisions on the kind of uniform students should wear," a government spokesperson said.

Surprisingly, student organisation in the state has so far opposed the JSCC order. The police have not commented on the diktat either.



ILLUSTRATION: ABHIMANYU SINHA

Hindustan Times, June 7, P. 8

प्राथमिक शिक्षा में बड़ी लड़कियों की उपस्थिति

नई दिल्ली | मदन जैड़ा

प्राथमिक शिक्षा में प्रवेश संबंधी नए आंकड़े बेहद उम्मीद जगाने वाले हैं। केंद्रीय मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय की ताजा रिपोर्ट बताती है कि महिलाओं की आबादी के हिसाब से प्राथमिक शिक्षा में उनकी उपस्थिति दिखने लगी है। प्राथमिक शिक्षा में प्रवेश लेने वाली लड़कियों का प्रतिशत 48.41 तक पहुंच गया है। कुल आबादी में महिलाओं की हिस्सेदारी भी करीब-करीब इतनी ही है। हाल के वर्षों में इसमें करीब आधा फीसदी की वृद्धि दर्ज की गई है।

मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय इन उत्साहजनक आंकड़ों को मंगलवार को राज्यों के शिक्षा मंत्रियों

के सम्मेलन में भी रखेगा। हालांकि इसके पीछे मकसद यह है कि पांचवीं की शिक्षा के बाद लड़कियों के स्कूल छोड़ने की दर को कम करने के लिए राज्य कदम उठाएं।

रिपोर्ट के अनुसार 2006-07 में 6.34 करोड़ लड़कियों ने प्राथमिक शिक्षा में प्रवेश लिया, जबकि इस दौरान प्रवेश लेने वाले लड़कों की संख्या 6.84 करोड़ रही।

मंत्रालय के अनुसार सर्व शिक्षा अभियान में तेजी और शिक्षा का अधिकार कानून के क्रियान्वयन शुरू होने के बाद स्कूल जाने वाले बच्चों की संख्या में खासा इजाफा हुआ है। इसका बड़ा हिस्सा लड़कियां हैं। यदि 2010-11 के ताजा आंकड़ों को देखा जाए तो

खूब पढ़ो, खूब बढ़ो

- प्राथमिक शिक्षा में प्रवेश लेने वाली लड़कियों का प्रतिशत 48.41 हुआ
- सर्व शिक्षा अभियान में तेजी और शिक्षा का अधिकार कानून का असर

6.55 करोड़ लड़कियों और 6.98 करोड़ लड़कों ने प्राथमिक शिक्षा में प्रवेश लिया।

पिछले तीन वर्षों में स्कूल जाने वाले बच्चों की संख्या में 33 लाख की वृद्धि दर्ज की गई। इनमें 21 लाख लड़कियां और 13 लाख लड़के जुड़े।

रिपोर्ट के अनुसार प्राथमिक शिक्षा में प्रवेश लेने वाली लड़कियों की हिस्सेदारी अब 48 फीसदी से बढ़कर

48.41 फीसदी हो गई है। जबकि अपर प्राइमरी में यह 46.5 से बढ़कर 48.38 फीसदी तक पहुंच गई है। लेकिन प्राइमरी की शिक्षा पूरी करने के बाद बड़े पैमाने पर हो रहा ड्रॉप आउट चिंता की बात है।

रिपोर्ट के अनुसार 2010-11 के दौरान 13.52 करोड़ बच्चों ने प्राइमरी में दाखिला लिया, लेकिन अपर प्राइमरी में एडमिशन लेने वाले बच्चों की संख्या सिर्फ 5.78 करोड़ है। इसमें 2.99 लड़के और 2.80 लड़कियां हैं। यदि पहली से आठवीं तक के कुल आंकड़ों पर नजर डालें तो 19.31 करोड़ बच्चों में लड़कों की संख्या 9.96 तथा लड़कियों की 9.34 करोड़ है। लड़कियों की कुल हिस्सेदारी 48 फीसदी से अधिक है।

Hindustan, June 5, 17

Basic hygiene is key to beating the rain to school

The onset of the monsoon makes children most vulnerable to ailments and as a result, many kids end up missing the first few days of school. City paediatricians say they are already witnessing a high number of children suffering from waterborne illnesses. There is at least a 40% rise in children suffering from viral fever and waterborne diseases during the monsoon, doctors said.

As part of DNA's Back to School campaign, the paper spoke to prominent doctors in the city to find out the causes for illnesses during the monsoon and the preventive measures children should adopt to ensure they

don't miss out on school.

"Monsoon ailments can be prevented if people take the right measures and maintain good levels of hygiene. Every year, kids miss out on school because of waterborne diseases or mosquito-related illnesses like malaria and dengue. Every year, we see children missing out on school because of these preventable diseases," said Dr Nitin Shah, consultant paediatrician at PD Hinduja hospital.

"Almost 80% of cases that I saw were of kids suffering from waterborne illnesses. Simple things like avoiding drinking water and food from outside and washing one's hands before eating can help cut down on such diseases. People must maintain hygiene to prevent such illnesses," said Dr Anita Jain, paediatrician at SL Raheja hospital.

Dr Mukesh Sanklecha, consulting paediatrician at Bombay Hospital, said the most common monsoon ailments that children suffer from are acute gastroenteritis, hepatitis A and E and typhoid. "We are seeing 15-20 cases of stomach ailments every day. Though no child has been hospitalised, they miss out on school due to the weakness," he said.

Many general physicians confirmed getting many viral fever cases combined with cough lasting for over a month. Common cold is an acute viral infection of the upper respiratory tract affecting the nose, throat, sinuses, larynx and sometimes the lungs, doctors said.

"Early diagnosis helps. If a child has fever for over a day, he should be rushed to the doctor. Also, parents should avoid self-medicating their children on the basis of symptoms as this can be dangerous for the child," Dr Sanklecha said.

मिशन एजुकेशन : इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर लैब और फैकल्टी जरूर देखें

दिल्ली। छात्रों को एडमिशन संबंधी दुविधाओं से बचाने और सही संस्थान का चयन करने में मदद करने के लिए अमर उजाला का मिशन एजुकेशन जारी है।

इस मिशन के तहत विशेषज्ञों द्वारा छात्रों को परामर्श दिया जा रहा है और अंतरराष्ट्रीय रिसर्च एजेंसी आईएमआरबी इंटरनेशनल की मदद से उत्तर प्रदेश और उत्तराखंड में सर्वे करके संस्थानों की रैंकिंग की जा रही है ताकि छात्र सही संस्थान का चुनाव कर सकें। इसी मिलजुल में मेडिकल संस्थानों में दाखिले के मुद्दे पर

बिख्यात कैरियर काउंसलर परवीन मल्होत्रा ने बताया कि एलोपैथी, होमियोपैथी, आयुर्वेद आदि चिकित्सा को चाहे जो भी पढ़ाति



हो, संबंधित कॉलेज के इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर से ही उस संस्थान के बेहतर होने का अनुमान लगाया जा सकता है। सबसे जरूरी

है लेबोरेट्री को बेहतर सुविधा, जो मेडिकल स्टडी को रोक होती है। इसके बाद फैकल्टी की बारी आती है।

कैंपस, क्लामरूम, रिसर्च फैसिलिटी, हॉस्टल आदि के अलावा फ्लेसमेंट को भी एडमिशन का आधार बनाया जाना चाहिए। निजी इंस्टीट्यूट्स में एडमिशन लेना ही, तो अन्य बातों के अलावा फीस के स्वरूप पर भी नजर रखें। विषय और संस्थान के चयन को लेकर यदि कोई दुविधा हो तो अमर उजाला के कैरियर काउंसलर्स के सुझावों से मदद मिल सकती है।

Amar Ujala, June 27, 12

Unsafe schools yet to be vacated

Maria Akram | TNN

New Delhi: Hundreds of children are putting themselves at great risk every day as they attend classes in municipal schools with creaky infrastructure. From deep cracks in classroom walls, broken tin roofs, to weakening foundations, the corporations have much to answer for. Though a one-and-a-half-year-old survey by MCD declared buildings of 13 of its schools "dangerous," some are yet to be vacated.

They might be crumbling, but some of the school buildings are still in use. One such school in the Walled City has more than 90 kids. So far, no one has been injured, but the collapse of a portion of a municipal school at Pitampura on Friday should serve as a wake-up call. The collapse was said to have been caused by waterlogging in the adjoining plot.

Danger lurks at municipal school at Chitla Gate in Jama Masjid area. "After the municipal school in Dariba Kalan in Old Delhi was declared 'dangerous', MCD had shifted 50-odd students to a building in Chitla Gate,

which turned out to be equally dangerous. It is shocking to see such mindless planning. The rooftop is cracked, the foundation weak and the building is in need of immediate repair. But the corporation has turned a blind eye to the safety of these students. The issue has been flagged up in meeting, but to no avail," says Mehmood Zia, former councillor of the area.

He feels the officials will shape up only after something serious happens.

North Delhi Municipal Corporation officials say the "dangerous" buildings were supposed to be demolished and replaced by new structures. This, however, couldn't happen as there was a delay in the floating of tenders for the construction of new structures.

Further, it took time to identify the buildings where the children could be shifted to. "If some of the 'unsafe' buildings are still in use, immediate action will be taken. However, the buildings were vacated and are nothing but uninhabited structures. Since the 'dangerous'

schools are scattered through the city, the three corporations will have to coordinate to address the issue. Students' safety is our priority," said Rekha Gupta, chairman, education committee, North Delhi Municipal Corporation.

Some of the other dangerous buildings are located in Punjabi Basti (west Delhi), Cheh Tooti and Gali Pahiyee Wall (Sadar Paharganj zone), Sat Nagar (Karol Bagh zone), two schools in Farsh Bazar and Circular Road (Shahdara south zone).

maria.akram@timesgroup.com

Times of India, June 11, P.5

One lakh schools constructed before 08 to get toilets

New Delhi: The Centre has directed its focus on sanitation in schools, with an inter-ministerial panel deciding to construct toilets in one lakh schools that lack the facility.

The schools to be targeted by sanitation drive were constructed before 2008. The toilet facility be-

came a compulsory part of educational institutions over the last few years. A coordination committee, comprising ministries of rural development, HRD, panchayati raj, social justice, women and child development and health, has decided to pump in new funds to achieve the target.

The focus on schools, aimed at providing hygienic environment

to children, would also seek to construct toilets in one lakh anganwadi centres. Since these educational and childcare bodies fall under the ambit of states, the Centre plans to coordinate with local governments.

Besides schools, the Centre has set an ambitious target of ending the use of 'dry latrines' that leads to the dehumanizing prac-

tice of manual scavenging. The latest Census has found 15 lakh dry latrines are still in use. A meeting of the coordination committee on Tuesday decided to convert all these into "proper toilets".

While the RD ministry is running a Total Sanitation Campaign, the fresh targeting of schools and dry latrines would require an additional Rs 1,000 crore.

RD minister Jairam Ramesh said, "The ministry would divert funds from its existing schemes."

The urgency comes in the wake of social justice ministry drafting a new law against manual scavenging that plans to set a target of nine months to citizens to stop use of dry latrines. The Bill is likely to be tabled in the monsoon session of Parliament.

Times of India, June 13, P16

33 schools have no playgrounds, delay in getting free textbooks

HT Correspondent

■ htreporters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: More than 23 per cent government schools in the Capital do not have playgrounds, the report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India has observed.

An audit of the directorate of education has revealed that there were delays in construction of school buildings, resulting in cost overrun apart from depriving schools of adequate infrastructure. "Playgrounds were not available in 33 of the 143 test checked schools," the report revealed.

The report also said that there was delay in allocation of budget for plan schemes such as uniform subsidy and supply of free text books to students. The directorate of education suffered from shortages of manpower in every cadre.

"Funds for 2010-11 were allocated only in February-March 2011. These schemes were intended to financially assist poor children so that their studies were not affected due to economic hardships. Delay in releasing of funds defeated the very purpose of the schemes as students require books, uni-



■ The student teacher ratio at government schools varied from 10 to 276. The ideal is 40.

VIRENDRA SINGH GOSAIN /HT FILE

forms and stationery items at the beginning of the academic year," observes the CAG.

The audit also found that the pupil teacher ratio in government schools varied from 10 to 276 whereas in terms of provi-

These schemes were intended to financially assist poor children so that their studies were not affected due to economic hardships.

CAG REPORT

sions of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, this should not be more than 40. Further, 106 schools were upgraded without allocating qualified additional manpower.

Bills for supply of mid-day meals were not always accompanied by test certificates issued by authorised labs. Test check of 415 bills aggregating ₹112.53 lakh revealed that only 66 bills were supported by test certificates. Of these, 66 certificates, 42 involving ₹15.16 lakh indicated supply of substandard meals.

There was also shortage of classrooms in 61 out of 143 test checked schools. Though it is mandatory to inspect every school once a year, only 2-3 per cent unaided schools were being inspected. Aided schools weren't inspected at all, the audit found.

Hindustan Times, June 7, P. 2

City govt to ascertain number of students still out of school

HT Correspondent

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NEW DELHI: To find out how many children with special needs are still out of school, the education department, in a meeting on Thursday, decided to carry out a survey.

"There are a number of children who are not able to go to school. We are planning to carry out a survey to identify such children. We will take help of an NGO which will train these children for at least a year and will help them to get admission to schools in the city," said a senior Delhi government official.

In addition to this, the Delhi government has also decided to hire 3,536 permanent teachers to tide over the problem of shortage of teachers in its schools. There are approximately 15 lakh students enrolled in government schools and 1.70 lakh

We will take help of an NGO which will train these children for at least a year and will help them to get admission to schools in the city.

DELHI GOVT OFFICIAL

in government-aided schools.

Ahead of the Assembly elections to be held in 2013, the Delhi government has also decided to hire Urdu teachers. A new Urdu school will also come up in Seelampur.

"There are 262 Urdu teachers and we will be hiring 100 more for our schools. In 130 of our schools, Urdu is taught as a special language. A new Urdu medium school will be opened in east Delhi's Seelampur too," the official added.

Unhappy with the function-

ing of the schools run by the three corporations, the Delhi government has also sanctioned 2,500 posts of assistant teachers, who will be posted in schools run by the corporation.

"The posts are being created by us and we will pay the salaries. This will help improve the level of education in the corporation-run schools," said a Delhi government official.

Even as the schools are facing shortage of teachers and have decided to hire 13,890 guest teachers, the number of students taking admission in the government-run schools has been increasing every year. Figures provided by the education department reveals that on an average, four lakh students have been added to government schools in the past three years.

However, last year, only 11 new schools were constructed, some of which will be full functional only by next year.

Hindustan Times, June 22, P.7

RTE: 32,000 schools to be put on notice

Around 32,000 schools in the state will be slapped with notices for not following the rule of giving 25% of their seats to students from weaker socio-economic sections under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education 2009 (RTE) Act this academic year.

Another notice will also be issued to schools that haven't started the process for obtaining a certificate of registration which has become mandatory for all schools under the new Act. Schools that are unable to show cause stand to lose their recognition.

As per preliminary data, not more than 20 students have been admitted into the schools under the 25% quota. The education department will now seek an explanation from every school, including 20,460 government-aided schools and 12,144 private unaided schools on why they did not admit at least 25% of poor students. Sanjay Deshmukh, nodal officer for RTE and special project director, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan (SSA) said, "It appears that the schools have not received many applications for these seats. But many school authorities did not even display the total number of seats and dates for application on their notice boards. Big schools in Nagpur have implemented the 25% reservation, then why haven't city schools done the same?"

Also, none of the schools in the city have applied for registration under the new rule that stipulates that no school can be established without obtaining a certificate of registration from



ADMISSION LOTTERY FROM 2013

The state government has declared that from next year, all schools must conduct a lottery for entry-level admissions to maintain transparency. Schools will have to follow the schedule

prescribed by the state to conduct admissions. The schedule will prescribe the dates for admissions. The schools will also have to declare their timetable.

the state government. This certificate will be given only to schools that meet RTE norms of infrastructure and teacher qualifications. The schools have to acquire this certificate within three years from the commencement of the Act i.e. before March 31, 2013. But since the certificate can only be issued after an inspection of the school premises, the education authorities had asked schools to submit information two years ago.

"So far, not a single school has applied. We had asked for early applications because these provisions are time-consuming. For primary school teachers who do not have grad-

uate degrees, we give a five-year period for teachers to pursue higher qualifications. But if schools do not apply sooner, they will miss the March 31 deadline," said Deshmukh.

However, schools say that they did not receive the notifications till last year. Najma Kazi, principal of Anjuman Islam's Saif Tyabji Girls' High School, Byculla, says that they received the notification for the self-application in October 2011. "The government was late in sending out the notifications. We are compiling the data and all the schools under our management will submit the data by June 30," she added.

D.N.A., June 13, P2

Schools in no mood to implement RTE

A week after schools reopened, children of the poor, such as Jahnvi Sonawani, are still waiting at the gate

• **UTTARA RAMASWAMY**
Mumbai

Jyoti Sonawane has a dream. She wants her daughter Jhanvi (6) to study in a good school and lead a successful life. "I am illiterate. But I want my daughter to study well and not suffer like I did," says the domestic help and mother of four.

So, when activist Avisha Kulkarni of the Desh Seva Samiti offered to help admit her daughter to Goregaon's Bangur Nagar Vidyalaya using the Right to Education (RTE) Act, she jumped at the chance.

Their hopes rest on the notification that the State government sent to all schools last month stating that 25 per cent seats in their institutions should be reserved for the SC/ST and economically backward classes.



It's been a week since schools across the city reopened and she's still waiting—now in desperation. Meanwhile, she has admitted her daughter to a 'halwadi', a government-run preschool.

Jhanvi is one of the 100-odd children who Avisha

Kulkarni's organization is seeking to admit to schools across the city. She has to wait because despite the government's notification, most schools are yet to implement the Act. "Schools told us they have no vacan-

which has been given the job to implement the RTE, then intervened. His prompt action made the process a little smoother," she says.

But Desh Seva Samiti ran into another hurdle. The schools insisted that they would consider kids only for the Junior KG classes. "The Act lays down that the entry level for children is Junior KG. Some kids that the Desh Seva Samiti seek to admit are above five years old," said a principal, who did not want to be named. The schools are also insisting on the 'income proof' documents of the parents.

Kulkarni however says that the children she is rooting for belong to the appropriate age criteria. Getting the income certificates will take a week, she says. "We are still in the process of getting them. Hopefully, these kids would be admitted after that," says Kulkarni.

Until then, children like Jahnvi Sonawane will have to wait. "My daughter's fate is yet unknown. All I wanted is for my child to study. Am I asking for too much?" say her mother, Jyoti.

cies. We had to cross check with the authorities," said Kulkarni.

When Desh Seva Samiti realized that the schools had no shortage of seats, they complained to the education department. "Sanjay Deshmukh, the head of the State's Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan,

Free Press, June 19, P-7

Certificates for RTE quota: Touts take parents for a ride

Middlemen make a fast buck in the rush to meet deadline for admissions

Shruthi H M

BANGALORE: Securing seats under the 25 per cent reservation provision of the Right to Education (RTE) Act comes at a price - not by way of fees, but in obtaining caste and income certificates.

Parents spend anywhere between Rs 500 and Rs 3,000 on touts and middlemen for obtaining the certificates required for sending their wards to reputed schools. A majority of these parents are illiterate and unaware of the procedure to procure the certificates.

A case in point is that of Devi, who sought admission for her daughter, Nikita, in Raghavendra High School near Pipeline Road. Devi and her husband were eager to complete the admission process before the deadline set by the government.

At the tahsildar's office, they were asked to pay Rs 2,000 for the certificates and were assured that it would be ready the next day.

"The person even gave us his cellphone number, which we discovered was not valid when we tried calling the next morning. We lost the money and did not get the certificates," Devi told *Deccan Herald*.

With the help of the cluster resource person and the school principal, Devi managed to get provisional admission for her daughter in the school on the



STAKEHOLDERS: Parents with their children admitted to a school in Bangalore under the RTE quota. DH PHOTO

condition that she would submit the certificates as soon as possible. She and her husband are tailors, who would not have been able to afford the child's education in a private school, without the RTE advantage.

Pramila, another parent, said she spent Rs 600 for the application, had to give Rs 1,000 to an "official" and Rs 700 for the acknowledgement slip. She was unaware that the procedure would not cost her that much and that touts had taken advantage of her situa-

tion. "My only interest was to get all the certificates before the deadline for admission and I paid the amount they asked for," she says.

K S Prabhakar, Commissioner of the Department of Public Instruction, said he would issue instructions again to all school principals to actively engage themselves in helping parents in admissions under RTE.

"Parents can also approach the BEO office for help," he said.

Despite the glitches, the

reservation provision has proved to be a boon for many children.

"People in my family wanted me to send my daughter to a school in our village as we cannot afford the fee in private schools. The reservation has helped us a great deal. I studied only till class 10, but I want my daughter to go for higher education and learn to operate computers," says Devi.

"The RTE provision has taken away so much pressure on families that want to educate

their children, but face a financial crunch," says Hemavati, whose daughter Spoorti has got admission in the same school. Hemavati is a single mother working as a tailor, who has big dreams for her daughter.

"Paying for books and uniform is not a problem. We are not greedy. We are happy that the burden of huge fees is not on us any more. I will now save money to buy my daughter a laptop," she said.

DH News Service

Deccan Herald, June 20, P. 4

'Minority Schools Not Under RTE Act'

Express News Service

Chennai: Unaided minority institutions cannot be insisted to provide 25 per cent seats for poor children under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, the Madras High Court has observed.

Justice K Chandru made the observation while dismissing a writ petition from S Gnanavel of Mudapalli village in Virudhachalam taluk,

Cuddalore district, who sought admission for his daughter in LKG in St Joseph Cluny Matriculation Higher Secondary School in Neyveli, for 2012-13.

The judge said that the constitutional validity of the 2009 Act came to be challenged in the Supreme Court, which had held recently that Sections 12(1)(c) and 18(3) had infringed the fundamental freedom guaranteed to unaided minority schools

under Article 30(1) of the Constitution. The act should not be applied to such schools, it had held.

The ratio laid down by the Supreme Court could be applied in the instant case also, the judge said.

Since the St Joseph school was an unaided minority one and the provisions of the Act

UNAIDED MINORITY SCHOOLS CANNOT BE ASKED TO PROVIDE 25

PER CENT SEATS FOR POOR STUDENTS, THE JUDGE OBSERVED

were held to be unconstitutional and inapplicable to such schools by the Supreme Court, the claim of the petitioner invoking the provisions of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act need not be gone into, the judge said and dismissed the petition.

New Indian Express, June 29, P. 3

'2 yrs on, only 5% schools follow RTE guidelines'

New Delhi: There's less than a year to go and a lot of ground to cover. To take stock of the progress made in implementation of RTE and to plan the way ahead, an alliance of over 10,000 grassroots organizations working across the country, the RTE Forum, held a national meeting of "people's organizations". Apart from the 200 representatives working on RTE implementation in 20 states, members of the RTE National Advisory Council (NAC) and National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPDR) were present.

"In 2013, we would have completed three years of RTE. The national commission is interested in collection of data and information on compliance of RTE," said Shantha Sinha, chairperson, NCPDR. "We asked if

the forum could include that in their projects." A major part of RTE forum's functions will be to bring "ground realities" to the fore. They intend to standardize the format for this study on implementation over the next month and gather information—qualitative and quantitative—that can be used both at the state and national level for advocacy. The forum will take into account the issues of specific states—the naxal problems, the anti-dam movement—and work with other youth, women, dalit and tribal rights' or-

ganizations. With the deadline looming, the RTE Forum feels it also needs to get its own ranks in order. Forum members formulated a structure for their own organization, proposing to set up

an advisory body, a national council and state-level forums, and also define their own role and responsibilities in the process.

This gathering of forces is to "put pressure on the government such that changes are made before the general elections in 2014," said RTE Forum national convener, Ambarish Rai. "Even with only nine months to go," he continued, "about 95% of the schools don't comply with the act. For instance, there aren't enough teachers. But the purpose is also to address the limitations of this act. The provisions for grievance redressal, for instance,

are very poor." Mass mobilization is also "the responsibility for quality for attendance, for everything, but

there's a shortage of about 10 lakh primary school teachers. The teacher-student ratio as per the act should be one for every 30 students. In some states, the ratio is one for every 60," said Ram Pal Singh, president, All India Primary Teachers' Federation. Mukut Sharma from Assam Child Rights Forum threw light on the plight of teachers in single-teacher schools in his state. Singh also pointed out there are seven lakh "para-teachers"—untrained teachers—currently working in schools and no proper plan in place to train them. "There are two sets of teachers belonging to two pay grades teaching in the same school. I don't see how they can be trained by 2015."

Times of India, June 30, P. 6

RTE just on paper; only 100 poor kids get admission

Puja Pednekar ■ MUMBAI

Four-year-old Shubham Pal did not shed a tear on his first day to school. He was too busy admiring the surroundings, examining other children wearing the same uniform and polished shoes and carrying attractive water bottles. His maternal uncle, however, had misty eyes. "I never imagined that my nephew would study in an English-medium school," he told DNA.

Shubham secured admission in Vidya Bhavan school, Goregaon, under the 25% quota for the economically backward students as per the Right to Education (RTE) Act. "Shubham's father is a truck driver. We do not have a steady family income and we cannot afford to pay school fees. We thought it would not be possible to send him to school. But we were wrong. It is a happy moment for us. We only hope that he will not be discriminated against in school," his uncle said.

However, not everyone is as lucky as

DNA BACK School

Poor response

There are 2,200 schools in Mumbai, but only 100 students have secured admission under the mandatory 25% quota under the Right to Education Act. Schools said they received fewer applications, but NGOs allege that the students were turned away. The education department has extended the deadline to admit students under RTE to June 30.

Shubham. DNA found that most private schools in Mumbai have been unable to fill quota seats despite RTE guidelines. The city has over 2,200 schools, but barely 100 students have secured admission under the 25% mandatory quota.

Unhappy with the response, the education department has extended the deadline for schools to admit children under the RTE quota to June 30.

D.N.A., June 28, P.1

The education department will then conduct another check and demand an explanation from schools which have failed to admit students under the reserved category.

"Private schools in the city have not been following RTE norms. In comparison, other cities such as Nagpur have shown a better enrolment rate through this quota," said Sanjay Deshmukh, nodal officer of RTE and special project director of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

Schools said one of the reasons for seats under the RTE quota to remain vacant is that they have not received applications from students from the economically weaker sections. NGOs, however, allege that the schools are turning away such students who approach them.

Some schools said they received an overwhelming response and had to resort to the lottery system to admit students under the quota. Bhavan's AH Wadia high school, Andheri, received 39 applications and admitted around 20 poor students after conducting 'lottery admissions' on June 20.

"We had kept aside seats for poor students as is mandatory under the RTE. We also gave details of our admission schedule and number of seats on June 4. We are happy with the response and will provide equal opportunities to these students," said Nonika Bareja, school principal. Vidya Bhavan school also admitted seven students under the RTE quota.

One simple step to increase our GDP

In America 12% of its population is counted as disabled, the percentage in England is 18, and Germany 9. In India, the official government statistics claim it is 2%. Mr. Javed Abidi, of National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People, has a very poignant question with regard to the above statistics. What is so amazing about the Indian environment or climate or gene pool, that we have 1/10 or 1/5 the number of persons with disabilities as compared to other countries? Or is it that there is something wrong with our counting? Until the year 2000, which is 53 years after Independence, the census report of India did not record a single disabled person! In other words, in the minds of people making policy, taking decisions, allocating funds etc. the disabled did not exist. And if they did not

exist, obviously we did not do much for them. So in the first 53 years of Independence, while we were building the infrastructure of our country, we have done little or nothing to include them in our thoughts and in our actions. Therefore, a bulk of our infrastructure is not disabled friendly, leaving them further marginalized, and disabling them further.

How we behave with the disabled amongst us, tells us what kind of a people we are. Mr. Ketan Kothari, another expert on our show, explained to us that by and large we have two kinds of reaction to our disabled. One, they must have done something wrong in their previous birth, because of which they are born disabled and therefore deserve what they have got. And two, let us use them as a ticket to heaven. Give some donation to an organization doing work for the disabled, or give some money to some disabled person asking for alms, and score some brownie points with God. If this is how a bulk of us, behave with our disabled, then it is a sorry picture we see of ourselves in the mirror.

Time to change guys. So where and how should this change begin?

Education.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Right

to Education say that every child in India is guaranteed Education.

Despite that, most regular schools in India deny admissions to children with disabilities. They site reasons of lack of infrastructure and lack of trained special educators. They are probably right. But what has stopped so many schools across India to be inclusive and disabled friendly? Who was putting a gun to their heads, not allowing them to do this? I'm afraid it was our own lack of thought, and application of mind, and maybe heart. So lets change that. If we start today, individually each school (if it really wants to) can become a truly integrated school within a period of two at the most three years. Let each school make this their target.

Currently an alarmingly low percentage of children with disabilities are educated. Without the foundation of a strong education, no child can reach his or her potential in life. By denying to children with disabilities admission in regular schools, we are denying them their right to education and therefore their right to make their lives productive.

By denying admission to children with disabilities in regular schools, we are also denying regular children the right to intermingle with, learn from, and grow up with their friends with disabilities and vice versa. With education for our persons with disabilities, we can lay the foundation for them to be productive, look after themselves, and their families.

The government says 2% of our population is disabled. Various experts and NGOs say it is 6%. I think it is safe to assume that the number of persons with disabilities in our country would be anywhere between 6-10%. Lets say 8%. 8% of 1.2 Billion is 96 million. That is more than the population of England (51 Million), France (65 million) and Germany (80 million). As Mr Javed Abidi put it, what we as a society need to decide is, do we want 96 million of our population to be uneducated, unemployed, unproductive and left with no choice but to be a weight that the rest of us carry?

Or do we want this huge section of our society to be educated, employed, productive, able to look after themselves and their families, contributing

to the growth and wealth of our nation? If we want the latter then we simply cannot achieve that without including them in our mainstream education system.

That's the bottom line.

Jai Hind. Satyamev Jayate.

Hindustan Times, June 11/13

AP shrugs off RTE liability

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 22

The state government has put the onus on the Centre for the implementation of 25 per cent quota for economically disadvantaged students in private schools under the Right to Education Act (RTE) from this academic year 2012-13, saying that it has no funds to reimburse fees for students.

The government, which has already diluted the RTE quota by exempting elite schools which offer the CBSE, ICSE, IB curriculum and collect huge fees for admissions by citing a "funding crunch", is now running away from implementing the quota even in schools affiliated to the state board.

The government estimates that nearly ₹90 crore is needed to admit 25 per cent RTE quota students in

RTE burden to be ₹800cr in 8 years

- ₹90 crore is needed to admit 25 per cent RTE quota students in Class I in private schools this year, which will increase by ₹100 crore every year in the next eight years.
- The state fears the financial burden will increase to ₹800 crore per annum in the next eight years.
- The state government spends ₹3,500 crore every year on the fee reimbursement scheme

Class I in private schools this year, which will increase by ₹100 crore every year in the next eight years, as the RTE promises free education till Class VIII.

Crucially, the state government spends ₹3,500 crore every year on the fee reimbursement scheme to enable students from socially and economically weaker sections to pursue higher education and professional courses. Against this backdrop, RTE

activists attacked the government's claim that it cannot bear ₹90 crore to implement the RTE quota.

The government is concerned that the financial burden will increase to ₹800 crore per annum in the next eight years. The department of school education has prepared a detailed report on the "financial burden" the state government will face in the implementation of the RTE quota in private schools.

A senior official said: "Though the financial burden appears to be less in the first year of RTE quota implementation, it will increase significantly over the next eight years. The government has to spend nearly ₹90 crore this year to admit 25 per cent quota students in Class I in private schools this year. Unless the Centre extends financial help, it is not possible for the state to implement RTE quota."

The department has referred the issue to the state government to take a final decision on the RTE quota. The issue was scheduled to be discussed during a review meeting convened by Chief Minister N. Kiran Kumar Reddy on Friday. However, the meeting was called off, as Mr Reddy had rushed to New Delhi following "political developments" at the Centre and in the state.

No RTE in AP elite schools

L. VENKAT RAM
REDDY | DC
HYDERABAD, JUNE 2

It seems that the state government is trying to exclude reputed and posh schools which offer international, CBSE and ICSE syllabus from the purview of the RTE Act on the pretext that many of them are located on the city's outskirts and suburbs and are not in neighbourhoods where people fr-

om deprived sections stay.

The panel appointed by the state to finalise the norms for implementing the Act and to identify "neighbourhood schools" for the purpose may exempt the elite schools from setting aside 25 per cent seats for the poor under the Act. The report is expected to be submitted to the government any time next week.

The panel was constituted in May after the Supreme

Court upheld the constitutional validity of 25 per cent quota for the poor in private schools in April this year. However, the state will make an announcement on implementing the Act and release the list of schools to come under the purview of Act only after the June 12 bypolls due to the "model code of conduct".

*Deccan Chronicle
June 23,
P. 3*

*Deccan Chronicle,
June 3, P. 1*

Governor rolls RTE rath for parents' benefit

DNA Correspondent

Many city schools say they have not yet received a single application from parents seeking admission for their children under the 25% RTE reservation for weaker sections. This is because people from this section of society are unaware of the provision.

To create awareness among such parents, Governor K Sankaranarayan launched NGO Desh Seva Samiti's Right to Education (RTE) Rath on Friday. The rath will travel through several slums to educate people about the RTE Act

and unaided. Only genuinely minority schools are exempted," said Avisha Kulkarni, director, DSS.

Though it has been made mandatory for schools to reserve 25% of their seats to children from weaker sections free of cost from KG/Class I to 8, it was found that parents were either unaware of it or felt too intimidated to approach big private schools.

"We are going to slums and telling people that those with an annual income less than Rs 1 lakh have a right to admit their children, aged 6 to 14, in neighbourhood private schools, both aided

and unaided. Only genuinely minority schools are exempted," said Avisha Kulkarni, director, DSS.

NGOs and activists have received complaints from parents that many big schools in Mumbai, Thane and Navi Mumbai refuse them application forms. Last week, DSS had protested outside Vibgyor School in Goregaon as it did not let parents from weaker sections enter the school premises.

In light of such incidents,

the DSS has also started a helpline in Goregaon and parents can call on 022-28781043 to seek guidance.

"The RTE was an important legislation passed by the Parliament and upheld by the Supreme Court. It is obligatory for the schools covered by the act to implement it from the current academic year," said the governor.

He said there might be teething problems in implementing this act, but they will have to be overcome quickly.

It is obligatory for schools covered by the Act to implement it from the current academic year - Governor K Sankaranarayan

D.N.A., June 2, P. 4

RTE seats find no takers

Schools to keep admissions open for these seats beyond June 10 deadline

Puja Pednekar

With tomorrow being the last day for schools to complete admission of 25% weaker section students under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, many schools are saddled with vacant seats under the provision.

Schools that played by government orders and reserved 25% of their seats for underprivileged students were shocked that they did not receive any applications from such students. Many of these schools have now decided to keep admission for these seats open even after the June 10 deadline, with some deciding to postpone the reopening of their schools until the seats are filled.

Najma Kazi, principal of Anjuman-ul-Islam Saif Tyabji Girls' High School, Byculla, said that her school had kept 60 seats vacant for these students out of which none had been occupied. "Hoping that the seats get filled, we have extended the date to June 20. The school will reopen only on June 28, nearly 10 days later than every year," Kazi said.

Schools will incur losses because of the vacant seats as they had been specifically reserved for free admissions and cannot be assigned to other students. "We had reserved 25% of our 180 seats but were shocked to not get any application for those. We will not close admission on June 10; we will keep it open till these seats are filled," said KR Shirsat, principal of Shandashram Vidyamandir, Dadar.

Experts said that the poor response is an eye opener to the fact that the sections that could have benefited from the provision are still unaware about it. Usha Rane of Pratham, an NGO, added that another reason could be that parents are intimidated to approach big schools on their own.



In spite of many schools reserving 25 per cent of their seats for underprivileged students as per the RTE Act, experts say that the weaker sections that could benefit from these seats are still unaware of the provision.

LACK OF AWARENESS

The schools that did reserve 25 per cent of their seats for underprivileged students were shocked to see that they hardly received any applications for them.

These schools will now incur losses as the seats that they had reserved were meant only for free admissions and cannot be allotted for any other students.

Hoping for applications, these schools have decided to extend the admissions beyond the set deadline of June 10 and are also pushing their reopening dates till they get filled.

A reason for the poor response to the seats reserved for underprivileged students could be that parents are scared of approaching big schools

— Usha Rane of Pratham, an NGO

Free education? Huh. Schools frown upon differently-abled students

DNA Correspondent

Fifteen-year-old Ganesh Gaikwad has attended school only once in his life. Disabled due to polio, Gaikwad was forced to quit school as no school in the vicinity was ready to admit him, and travelling to a school further away was costly for his family.

"We live in Wadala, but the nearest school that was willing to admit my son was in Parel. It cost nearly Rs150 to just send him to school every day. I could not afford it so he dropped out of school," said his father Ramesh, who is a painter for the municipality.

This is despite the fact that the RTE states that no child can be denied admission, and that schools should offer free education to disabled students and even pay for trans-

ACT OF DISCRIMINATION



The RTE Act states that schools should offer free education to disabled students and even pay for their transportation. Yet a lot of them are discriminated against.

Experts say that inclusive education under the Act is being practiced only on paper.

portation. But like Ganesh, there are several students who face such problems.

Reetkumari P was forced to quit school as her teachers did not know how to teach someone with faulty eyesight. "Her teachers would discriminate against her and complain about her constantly. The doctor had advised that she go to school so her eyesight improves by read-

ing," said her mother, who sells garlands for a living.

Inclusive education under the RTE Act is only being practiced on paper, said experts at the CRY inclusive education seminar. Schools still deny admission to differently-abled students, forcing them to quit midway.

Usha Mahajan, head of Janarth, an NGO, said that

schools are under the misconception that a lot of changes are required to be made for disabled students.

"In reality, understanding and a few adjustments are all that is needed. Teachers should be sensitive enough," she said. She added that the RTE provision of allowing disabled students to be home-schooled has actually acted against them as schools now have another reason to excuse these students. "Such students need mainstream schooling to learn social skills from their classmates," she said.

"The essence of inclusion is in making appropriate provision to meet each pupil's needs so as to enable every pupil to access his right to education with all its entitlements," said Puja Marwaha, CEO, CRY.

D.N.A., June 9, P.3

Campaign for Right to Education begins

BANGALORE: The State Departments of Education and Labour, in association with Bachpan Bachao Andolan and other NGOs, launched the "Bangalore March for Right to Education-2012" (RTE) on Thursday, to create awareness about the right to free and compulsory education.

A mobile awareness campaign on the march, 'Shikshana Janajagruti Bandi,' with tour all the Assembly constituencies. Besides, the campaign will call for the eradication of child labour.

Legislators will also speak on the importance of sending children to school and eradicating child labour in their respective constituencies. The programme will culminate on June 12, on the occasion of World Anti-Labour Day, at Freedom Park in Bangalore.

But critics question the movement's timing as many schools have already closed admissions for the year. Vani Kantli, an organiser from Bachpan Bachao Andolan, downplayed the late start.

"Enrolment for the current academic year is still on in places," Kantli explained. "This is the time when parents face hurdles from school administrators."

1,000 enrolments

One of the campaign's objectives is to have 1,000 underprivileged students enrolled in schools and to track their

progress there after. Campaigners also advocate a 25 per cent reservation for students from under-privileged backgrounds in aided and unaided schools.

Detailed information about the campaign's objectives would be released during the march, Kantli said.

Freedom Fighter H S Doreswamy, who recently spoke on the issue, said that many parents do not willingly send their children to work. "Poverty is a killer, which is leading to such problems," Doreswamy said.

As money is the central factor in private schooling, edu-

cation is seriously hurt, Doreswamy added.

"How can you accept people, who oppose 25 percent reservation for underprivileged children, as educationists? How can anybody get sleep when children are suffering as labourers?"

Department of Primary and

Secondary Secretary G Kumar Naik said on Thursday that the Education Department would ask private schools to furnish a list of admissions under the 25 per cent reservation for underprivileged children, as per the RTE.

Notice to schools

"We will go through the list and if the schools do not comply

with RTE rules, notices will be issued to them," he said.

"This will be done within seven to ten days," he added.

When questioned about the timing of the awareness campaign, Naik said that it was the right time as schools have just begun. The drive will ensure enrolment of children to schools as per RTE provisions.

DH News Service

Children who fought their way out

Bhagyavathi, an eighth standard student from a city school, dreams of becoming a CBI officer. "I want to nab culprits involved in illegal activities," she said.

But as she related her story at an RTE event on Thursday, it quickly became clear that she faced an uphill task.

Bhagyavathi is a child labourer who worked at a quarry in Tamil Nadu.

The family moved to Bangalore in search of a better life but Bhagyavathi continued to work. Although an encounter with volunteers from Sparsha NGO convinced her mother, Bhagya, to send her to school, her father expressed skepticism about her achievement in school, saying that her first priority should be to learn housework.

But with her mother's support, Bhagyavathi was enrolled in school and hopes to finish her education.

For another child, Darshan the transition from worker to student was harder.

The 13 year-old boy used to beat drums at village festivals and was forced to escape from his village in order to school. Once in Bangalore, however, Darshan was forced to join a hotel as a cleaner.

"People used to scold me if I spilled even a drop of tea from the glass while serving," he said.

"Later, when I was employed as a construction worker, a weight fell on me while I was lifting sacks of cement. There were many days when I fainted because of dehydration. Now I am in school with the help of an NGO. My aim is to take as many children as possible out of child labour," he added.

Deccan Herald, June 8, P 4

Post-RTE, mad rush for minority tag

Puja Pednekar

Schools scrambled to get minority status after the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act was framed, say education officials.

Records show that after the RTE was implemented in 2009, around 930 schools across the state got minority status from January 2009 to June 4, 2012.

Under the Act, all schools except minority unaided schools will have to admit 25% students belonging to eco-

nomically weaker sections of society.

Experts said schools applied for minority status so that they would not have to keep aside 25% seats for poor students.

Even as the June 10 deadline for completing admissions under the RTE quota has worried most schools, big schools seem to be relaxed as their unaided minority status exempts them from the rule.

However, a recent circular of the state government's minority department said that around 930 schools from the state, including 287 schools from Mumbai, Thane and Navi Mumbai, got the minority status after the RTE Act was put in place.

"Right from the time the RTE bill was discussed, minority educational institu-

tions were opposed to some provisions saying that it was an infringement of their constitutional rights. Schools had started applying for minority status hoping that by the time the Act is enforced, they would escape its provision," said a senior education official.

cial.

Minorities minister Arif Naseem Khan said that in the past two to three months, especially after the Supreme Court decision to exempt private unaided minority schools from implementing the 25% reservation, they received

thousands of applications from schools seeking minority status.

"There is a mad rush of schools applying for minority status after the RTE Act was enforced. Thousands of applications are pending with us for the last two to three

months. Seeing the rush, we have now become strict in granting status. We have increased the number of checks and inspections so that only genuine minority schools can benefit from it," he said.

Even those schools which have the minority tag have less than 50% minority students.

"Though any institution claiming to be minority needs

to admit 50% minority students, most of the schools do not abide by these rules. Most of their students are non-minority. Why should such schools be exempted from the RTE Act?" asked Jayant Jain, president of Forum for Fairness in Education, a parents teachers organisation. He added that the government should check the rolls of such schools.

D.N.A., June 7, P4

RTE & its teething problem

The Right to Education Act (RTE) is not a non-starter. It is a bad starter. In Maharashtra, the government doesn't know whether it is coming or going and whether private schools will implement it tamely or demur.

In fact, there has been a huge operational setback for most states implementing the Act. Apart from grappling with infrastructural and logistical hurdles, they are trying to get private schools to toe the line and failing. The Act empowers the state to act against truant schools but that option is suspect, given the political clout of many schools. There seems to be a survival problem with RTE.

While many issues have been highlighted, one hasn't got its fair share of media attention. Private schools are keen to junk the Act because it puts the burden of paying the fees for the 25% poor students. Now, no school is gallant enough to take the blow on its chin. The schools will simply transfer the financial burden of this lot to the 75% fee-paying students.

All those sending their children to private schools are not necessarily rolling in wealth. Barring a Bombay Scottish here or a Dhirubhai Ambani there, most of them are middle-class parents struggling to give their child a decent education. These people are being told to pay



for their child's classmates too. Out of every four school-going children, three pairs of parents will pay for the fourth. This doesn't mean a one-third burden of the child, as the state will chip in with some money but still, the amount is considerable for a middle-class family. The state will only pay the cost it incurs on a child in a public school.

So, if the annual fee for a child in a primary school is Rs1 lakh/year and the state pays Rs10,000 for the economically weaker child, the staggering difference will have to be borne by other parents. Though it is not explicitly spelt out, it stands to reason that the schools will not pay out of their pocket.

There is no doubt each one of us has a social liability towards the poor. This fact cannot be over-emphasised. But this liability is universal and shouldn't be imposed on one section just because it

has school-going children. It is one thing for fee-paying parents to want to shoulder this responsibility and quite another to force them to.

Ideally, the state should pay the full cost for the weaker section students in a private school. If it does, the burden automatically gets transferred to the taxpayer. This seems fair as we pay taxes in proportion to our income and expenditure. However, this option gets complex and controversial because of the vastly varying fee structures of schools. Clearly, the answer is not simple but somewhere out there.

The law is a visionary's delight but far from a panacea. In its reformatory fervour, it pole-vaults to the other side of the spectrum in one sweep, instead of going step-by-cautious-step. Nor, while fixing the form, does it address the content of our education system, which is self-serving and destructively competitive. The ideological grooves that circumscribe our educational format leave no room for the vital factors of social, cultural and community responsibility. It pits everyone against each other in an atmosphere that creates conflicts at the individual, class and societal level.

There is more to reform than good intentions. One hopes the Act does not create more problems than it seeks to resolve.

D.N.A., June 5, P.9

Teachers of today

TEACHING is a challenging profession. Regretfully, however, most teachers are not aware of Mahatma Gandhi's thoughts on an ideal teacher. Second, Gandhi's unparalleled experiments and approach to teaching have unfortunately been relegated. Third, the mindset of most teachers is different from Gandhi's thoughts on education and aesthetics. Fourth, there is a lack of finer sensibilities. An obsession with computers has led to a compromise with quality. The Mahatma's philosophy of teaching is not nurtured either in theory or in practice.

That philosophy envisages the study of the body, mind and soul harmoniously blended and translated into action to achieve total fulfilment. The teacher ought to be a learner in the sense that he must be able to gauge the student's strong points and deficiencies. If this aspect of learning is addressed, the quality of education can largely be ensured.

The teacher ought to have a vibrant mindset. He must emphasise such values as self-dependence, self-activity, self-belief and self-enrichment. In a word, he has to serve as a role model. Tolerance is the key to success in teaching. If this can be ensured, the teaching-learning climate either in the classroom or elsewhere undergoes a radical transformation. The message of true teaching must guarantee the cultivation of humane sensibilities and elimination of narrowness of vision in life and work.

The teachings of *sarir-sram, brahmacharya* and austerity, as Gandhi advocated, should be accorded priority in education. This will enable the students to hone their physical, moral and intellectual qualities.

Gandhi's anxiety for right teaching and right education must prompt an appraisal of education in general and teacher-education in particular. If he is to abide by the Gandhian philosophy, a teacher in the 21st century cannot but be reflective, creative, critical, probing, innovative and analytical in thought and action. He/she takes recourse to cohesive control and discipline in letter and spirit to arrive at a certain point in terms of vision and action. This is not an easy task. It calls for sustained self-training. The teacher, going by Gandhi's *Nat Tuleem*, ought to be intellectually alert in order to create an ideal ambience for 'learning to be' in association with 'learning to live together'.

Let our new education policy for better teaching welcome the essence of Gandhian strategies for teaching along with the suggestions of dedicated and devoted teachers. This envisages a remodelled curriculum in which teachers are active practitioners of enlightened education.

The primary role of the teacher is to expand the learner's outlook and mental horizon. The lesson of the spinning wheel is the detachment

from extravagance and affluence, greed and pride, anger and unhappiness, to mention a few of the problems that plague the matter-of-fact, stereotyped, and mechanical system of education. If the teacher fails to stimulate his learners to become *amritasya putrab*, education will not be fruitful.

Another major aspect is the role of the teacher in explaining the Gandhian philosophy of non-violence. Education in the 21st century runs counter to the principles that influenced the *satyagraha* which propagates absolute acceptance of and respect for Truth. It would be useful to

quote Gandhi's invaluable words: "The still small voice within you must always be the final arbiter when there is a conflict of duty". (*Bung India*, 4 August 1928).

The teacher in the 21st century ought to reorient strategies for teaching in order to translate the Gandhian philosophy of Truth and non-violence. "Sacrifice everything except truth and non-violence"

Satyagraha should act as the hallmark for teaching. "Love those that use you. It is easy for

you to love your friends. But I say unto you, love your enemies". (*Harijan*, 14 May 1938).

Gandhi wants the teacher to provide his learners with the opportunity to unfold the inner spirit of *satyagraha*. "It is never the intention of a *satyagrahi* to embarrass a wrongdoer. The appeal is never to his fear. It is, must be, always to his heart. The *satyagrahi*'s object is to convert, not to coerce, the wrongdoer. He should avoid artificiality in all his doings. He acts naturally and from inward conviction". (*Harijan*, 25 March 1939).

Gandhi's prescription for realising and accentuating socialistic humanism is important for the teacher because of three reasons. One, true socialism stands for the emancipation of man who combines reality with socialism. It is life-centric, value-centric and reason-centric. It cares for turning the narrow 'I' to the all-embracing 'We'. Second, to embrace true socialism is to broaden the world of humanity with love, compassion and sympathy.

Gandhi considers the teaching of humane

Contd...

Statesman, June 30, p.8

altruism as essential in order to avert social ostracism and other problems from which education now suffers. Three, the Gandhian philosophy of education is perhaps the only antidote to apathy and ignorance.

Gandhi's vision of education calls for reflection. The teacher should explain the Gandhian philosophy of human rights in theory and practice under a new curriculum that will make it spontaneous, vibrant and effective. "He must be completely free from anger and lust, greed and

attachment, pride and fear. He must reduce himself to zero and have perfect control over all his senses — beginning with the palate or tongue. Tongue is the organ of speech as well as of taste. It is with the tongue that we indulge in exagger-

ation, untruth and speech that hurts. The craving for taste makes us slaves to the palate so that like animals we live to eat. But with proper discipline, we can make ourselves into being only 'a little below the angels'. He who has mastered his senses is first and foremost among men. All virtues reside in him. God manifests Himself through him. Such is the power of self-discipline". (Pyarelal, *Mahatma Gandhi: The Last Phase*, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1958, Vol II p. 233).

Mahatma Gandhi is an eternal role model to improve the quality of teaching and education generally. When shall we faithfully follow in his footsteps?

दिल्ली के स्कूलों में बीस हजार शिक्षकों की होगी भर्ती

नई दिल्ली (एसएनबी)। राजधानी के प्रतिष्ठित अस्पानों के लिए सुशुद्ध है, जल्द ही उन्हें दिल्ली के स्कूलों में शिक्षण का अवसर प्राप्त होगा। शिक्षामंत्री अरविन्दर सिंह लखौ के अनुसार सरकार ने सरकारी स्कूलों में 20 हजार शिक्षकों की भर्ती करने का निर्णय लिया है। इनमें 13890 गेस्ट टीचर होंगे, जो कान्ट्रैक्ट पर होंगे तथा इनकी भर्ती 15 जुलाई तक हो जाएगी। इसके

अलावा 3536 नियमित शिक्षकों की नियुक्ति दिल्ली अधीनस्थ सेवा बोर्ड द्वारा होने वाली है। उन्होंने बताया कि सीलमपुर में एक उर्दू स्कूल खोलने के अलावा विभिन्न स्कूलों में 100 उर्दू टीचर भी नियुक्त किए जाएंगे।

शिक्षामंत्री अरविन्दर सिंह लखौ ने बृहस्पतिवार को शिक्षा विभाग के आला अधिकारियों के साथ स्कूलों में शिक्षकों की आवश्यकता को लेकर चर्चा की तथा शिक्षक छात्र अनुपात की समीक्षा की। बैठक में शिक्षा सचिव टैक्लन चन्द व शिक्षा निदेशक अमित सिन्हा के अलावा सर्वशिक्षा अभियान से जुड़े अधिकारी उपस्थित थे। बैठक के बाद उन्होंने बताया कि उर्दू माध्यम से शिक्षा पूरी करने को इच्छा रखने वाले छात्रों की सुविधा के लिए

दिल्ली सरकार ने यह फैसला किया है कि पूर्वी दिल्ली के सीलमपुर में एक उर्दू स्कूल खोला जाए। शिक्षा निदेशालय द्वारा दिल्ली में करीब 21 उर्दू माध्यम के स्कूल संचालित किए जा रहे हैं। सीलमपुर में उर्दू स्कूल के प्रारम्भ हो जाने के बाद इनकी संख्या 22 हो जाएगी।

इनके अलावा 130 स्कूल ऐसे हैं, जहां पर उर्दू भाषा की शिक्षा की व्यवस्था है। इन 130 स्कूलों में उर्दू की शिक्षा एक अतिरिक्त भाषा के रूप में दी जाती है। उन्होंने बताया कि दिल्ली के स्कूलों में लगभग 100 उर्दू शिक्षकों की नियुक्ति की जाएगी। नियुक्ति से संबंधित ज्ञापन अतिरिक्त जारी कर नियुक्ति प्रक्रिया पूरी कर ली जाएगी।

उर्दू शिक्षकों की नियुक्ति अब उर्दू अकादमी द्वारा नहीं, बल्कि दिल्ली सरकार के शिक्षा निदेशालय के माध्यम से की जाएगी।

शिक्षा मंत्री ने बताया कि दिल्ली में विभिन्न क्षेत्रों के तात लगभग 20 हजार शिक्षकों की नियुक्ति प्रक्रिया शीघ्र पूरा करने का आदेश दिया गया है। शिक्षकों को नियुक्तियों का खोरा देते हुए उन्होंने कहा कि 13890 गेस्ट टीचर की नियुक्ति

प्रक्रिया प्रारम्भ कर दी गई है तथा जुलाई के पहले सप्ताह से नियुक्तियां की जाएंगी।

यह फैसला दिल्ली के सरकारी स्कूलों में छात्र शिक्षक अनुपात राष्ट्रीय मानक के अनुसार आदर्श स्तर पर बनाए रखने के उद्देश्य से किया गया है।

इसके अलावा सर्व शिक्षा अभियान के तहत 3536 नियमित शिक्षकों की नियुक्ति प्रक्रिया दिल्ली अधीनस्थ सेवा चयन बोर्ड द्वारा आखिरी चरण में है और अगले दो महीने में भर्ती प्रक्रिया पूरी कर हो जाएगी। उन्होंने बताया कि दिल्ली नगर निगम के स्कूलों में सहायक शिक्षकों के लगभग 2500 पदों पर भर्ती के तिनदे आवश्यक दिशा-निर्देश जारी किये

जा चुके हैं। उन्होंने दिल्ली के लोगों से अपील की है कि शारीरिक रूप से अक्षम बच्चों को स्कूलों में शिक्षा प्रदान करने के विशेष अभियान में सरकार एवं शिक्षा निदेशालय को सहयोग दें।

उन्होंने कहा कि सर्व शिक्षा अभियान के तहत शिक्षा निदेशालय ने शारीरिक रूप से अक्षम बच्चों को स्कूलों में शिक्षा प्रदान करने के लिये व्यापक कार्य योजना तैयार कर इसपर अमल शुरू कर दिया गया है। इस कार्य योजना के तहत ऐसे बच्चों की पहचान कर उनको स्कूलों में शिक्षा प्राप्त करने के योग्य बनाया जाय। इसके बाद उनकी उपर और निवेक के अलावा पर स्कूलों में दाखिला दिया जायेगा।



► 15 जुलाई तक कान्ट्रैक्ट पर रखे जाएंगे 13890 गेस्ट टीचर
► सीलमपुर में खुलेगा उर्दू स्कूल, विभिन्न स्कूलों में 100 उर्दू टीचर होंगे नियुक्त

Rashtriya
Sahara
June 22, P.3

Govt to appoint 20,000 teachers, says Lovely

Of these, 13,890 to be appointed on contractual basis

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government's Education Department has ordered to appoint 20,000 teachers for Government-run schools in the national Capital to enhance the educational facilities for effective implementation of the Right to Education (RTE) Act. Of these, 13,890 teachers would be appointed on contractual basis by July 15. This was announced by Education Minister Arvinder Singh Lovely on Thursday, that the academic year 2012-13 would be dedicated to the appointment of teachers to the State Government schools to reduce the teacher-students ratio from 1:40 to 1:35 under RTE.

Currently, the total strength of teachers in Government-run schools is approximately 53,000. There are 962 Government-run schools and 250 aided schools. A total of 14 lakh students are enrolled in the schools, while eight lakh students are enrolled in the schools run by Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD).

According to Lovely, besides this, 3,536 teachers would be recruited under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in the next two months while the Government has also directed Municipal Corporation of Delhi to start process of

appointing 2,500 teachers in its schools. The Government has also ordered to recruit 100 teachers for Urdu languages as there is acute shortage of teachers. Lovely claimed that Delhi is the only State which has surplus teachers and is the only State which has implemented RTE Act.

It would be pertinent to mention that the Delhi Cabinet had earlier approved a proposal to recruit 9,000 teachers last year but the approval could not be materialised after finance department objection saying that the Government should regularise the ad hoc teachers before appointing new recruitments. This has delayed the process of at least one year and finally the

Government has ordered to recruit these teachers on contractual basis. Earlier this year, Delhi High Court has directed the State Government to fill the vacancy of teachers in Government-run schools.

It is learnt that there are a large number of teachers' post are lying vacant in Government run schools but the Minister has claimed that there is no shortage of teachers. He admitted that there are some vacancies which have not been approved by UPSC. "For instance, over 500 posts of school principals are vacant in Delhi but this does not mean that there are vacancies. The Government had already appointed principals on ad hoc basis. The proposal has been sent to UPSC or DSSSB for recruitment of principals but it is yet to be cleared," Lovely added.

"At present, 14 lakh students are studying in Delhi Government schools and Government has decided to further enhance the infrastructure to ensure effective implementation of RTE Act," Lovely said.



More teachers for govt schools

New Delhi: To fill in the acute shortfall of teachers in government schools, the education department on Thursday decided to fill up 3,536 vacancies of permanent teachers and hire another 13,890 guest teachers in the next six months.

Ahead of the 2013 assembly elections, the Delhi government has also decided to hire Urdu teachers and open a new Urdu school in Seelampur. "There are 262

Urdu teachers so far and we will hire 100 more for our schools. We have 130 odd schools where Urdu is taught as a special language. A new Urdu-medium school will be opened in east Delhi's Seelampur, too," said a senior official. Unhappy with the functioning of schools run by the three corporations, the government has sanctioned 2,500 posts of assistant teachers for corporation-run schools.

*Pioneer
June 22,
P.2*

*Times of India
June 22, P.5*

-RIGHT OF TEENAGE GIRL

बालिग लड़की को अपनी मर्जी से रहने का अधिकार : हाईकोर्ट

नई दिल्ली (एसएनबी)। अपने माता पिता के खिलाफ झारखंड की रहने वाली एक 19 साल की लड़की ने सुरक्षा की गुहार लगाई थी। इस मामले में हाईकोर्ट ने कहा है कि वह अपनी मर्जी से कहीं भी रह सकती है और उसे कानून इसकी इजाजत देता है। लड़की का आरोप था कि उसके माता-पिता उसे अग्रे की पढ़ाई नहीं करने दे रहे और वे उस पर शादी करने का दबाव डाल रहे हैं। वह 12वीं की पास करने के बाद अग्रे पढ़कर अपना कैरियर बनाना चाहती है।

न्यायमूर्ति विपिन सांधी ने यह पृष्ठों के लिए दिल्ली में रहने वाले लड़की के बड़े भाई को समन जारी किया कि अपने माता पिता की मर्जी के बगैर कैसे वह माई 2011 से शहर में अकेली रह रही है। लड़की की तरफ से एडवोकेट केके मन्ग ने अपनी निवेदन में कहा कि उनकी मुकदमा बरहती कक्षा पूरी करने के बाद अग्रे की पढ़ाई करना चाहती है लेकिन उसके माता पिता संबंधियों के दबाव पर उसे शर्तों का दबाव डाल रहे हैं। पीट को बताया गया कि अग्रे की पढ़ाई करने के लिए लड़की ने पिछले साल माई में अपना घर छोड़ दिया था। हालांकि उसके माता पिता ने झारखंड के पाराना भांगे में लक्ष्मण सिपोर्ट दर्ज कराई। पीट को अग्रे बताया गया कि रामगढ़ जिले में रहने वाली लड़की मुखर्जी नगर में पेटिंग गेट के ठीक पर रहकर बैंकिंग परीक्षाओं की तैयारी कर रही है। बताया गया कि माता-पिता और उसके रिश्तेदारों के सक्रिय सहयोग से पुलिस ने उसे परेशान किया और उसको माता-पिता से सुरक्षित रखने के लिए पुलिस ने कोई कदम नहीं उठाया यहाँ तक कि झारखंड में रहने वाले उसके बहनोई जो उसको वित्तीय सहायता दे रहे हैं, उनके खिलाफ उसके माता-पिता ने अपराध की मामला दर्ज करा दिया।

► **यादिका दावर कर लड़की ने आरोप लगाया कि उसके माता-पिता अग्रे की पढ़ाई न करने के लिए बना रहे हैं दबाव**

► **दिल्ली में रहने वाले भाई को समन**

लड़की ने आरोप लगाया कि उसके माता-पिता अग्रे की पढ़ाई न करने के लिए बना रहे हैं दबाव

Rashtriya Sahara June 7, P-8

-CHILD LABOUR PROHIBITION AND REGULATION (CLPR) ACT

Dhoble effect: Govt to reexamine laws



(L) ACP Vasant Dhoble and (R) The kids rescued from Dagar and Shirin Chawl

Mumbai
Amid the criticism faced by the Mumbai police for their "moral policing" through raids on pubs and night clubs in the city, Maharashtra government on Thursday said it was considering to "relook" at the laws to protect rights of the citizens, PTI reports.
"Government is consider-

ing to relook into the law to protect rights of the citizens," Minister of State for Home, Satej Patil said.
Patil said he recently spoke with Police Commissioner Arup Patnaik on the issue and told him that police should avoid harassing innocent citizens.
"State government is upset over the random raids by police on pubs and

restaurants," Patil added.
Under-fire cop rescues 108 kids

In a joint operation by the Social Service Branch (S.S. Branch) and the Nagpada police led by ACP Vasant Dhoble, 108 kids working as labourers were rescued from the Dagar Chawl and Shirin Chawl in south

Mumbai while their employers were arrested.
A police force comprising of 150 policemen and officers on Thursday afternoon raided around 25 manufacturing units of footwear, bags, zari and nearby tea stalls in the area.
"These kids are aged between seven and 14 years. They were made to work under inhuman conditions. We have arrested their employers under relevant sections of the Juvenile Justice Act, Child Labour Act and the Indian Penal Code. The rescued children will be reformed," Deputy Commissioner of Police, enforcement, B.G. Shekhar.
The police were receiving several complaints from NGOs and their local network about the inhuman conditions in which the boys were made to work. Majority of these boys are from Bihar while some of them are from Nepal and Bangladesh.

Free Press, June 15, P-7

Price of lost childhood



DEADLY GRIND: CLPR Act only prohibits certain 'hazardous' employment among children and regulates others, while the APSE Act prohibits all employment among children. PHOTO: M.GOVARTHAN

Despite the rigorous CLPR Act, authorities have prosecuted majority offenders under the feeble APSE Act which stipulates a meagre Rs 100 as penalty for employing a child

Pavithra S. Rangan

A hundred rupees is all it takes for an employer to go scot-free after putting a child through wretched work conditions in Andhra Pradesh. That is the cost of one lost childhood, nowadays.

A penalty not exceeding Rs.100 has been the only 'punishment' imposed on nearly 12,000 employers of child labour across the State over the past 16 years.

Despite the presence of a rigorous 'Child Labour Prohibition and Regulation' (CLPR) Act, authorities have prosecuted majority offenders under the feeble 'A.P.

Shops and Establishments' (APSE) Act which stipulates a pittance as penalty.

While CLPR Act imposes a fine of Rs.10,000 along with a month-long imprisonment on violators, APSE Act imposes a fine of merely Rs.100 for first-time employers of child labour. Those are caught a second time are fined between Rs.250 and Rs.500 under the APSE Act.

Yet 15,054 employers have been booked under the APSE Act as against a meagre 2,659 under CLPR Act.

Even as CLPR only prohibits certain 'hazardous' employment among children and regulates others, the

punishment imposed on violators of the stringent regulations is far higher than that under APSE Act which prohibits all employment among children.

Hence, of the 11,447 employers convicted from 1996 to 2010, a penalty of only Rs.12 lakh has been collected.

Moreover, despite the APSE Act stipulating a three-month imprisonment for employers of child labour who have been caught a third time, few have been sent to imprisonment in over a decade. "Only a handful of nearly 12,000 convicted employers have been imprisoned so far as there is no proper track of

repeat offenders," confess officials.

When contacted, officials admitted that cases could have been booked under the CLPR Act which stipulates stringent punishment as against a fine of Rs.100 which is barely a deterrent to employing child labour. The cases, however, had been booked under APSE as it completely prohibits employment rather than only regulating it, they added.

"To overcome the huge lacuna in APSE Act we are punishing offenders under the Minimum Wages Act which imposes heavy penalty," they said.

Hindu, June 28, P-8

बाल मजदूरी कानून में

संशोधन की

सिफारिशों पर विचार कर रही है सरकार

नई दिल्ली, 12 जून (भाषा)। केंद्रीय महिला व बाल विकास मंत्रालय ने कहा है कि बाल मजदूरी रोकथाम एवं नियमन अधिनियम - 1986 में शिक्षा के अधिकार कानून एवं बाल न्याय कानून के मद्देनजर जल्दी संशोधनों से जुड़ी सिफारिशों पर गंभीरता से गौर किया जा रहा है। मंत्रालय की सचिव नीला गंगाधरन ने 'वैश्विक बाल मजदूरी विरोधी दिवस' के मौके पर राष्ट्रीय बाल अधिकार संरक्षण आयोग की ओर से आयोजित कार्यक्रम में कहा - बाल मजदूरी की समस्या जटिल है, लेकिन हमें इससे निपटना होगा। इसको लेकर सरकारी और गैर सरकारी स्तर पर प्रयास किए जा रहे हैं। मेरा मानना है कि समाज के हर तबके को इसमें योगदान देना होगा।

गंगाधरन ने कहा - बाल आयोग की ओर से बाल मजदूरी अधिनियम में संशोधन की सिफारिशें की गई हैं। आयोग व कुछ और लोगों की ओर से की गई सिफारिशों पर सरकार गंभीरता से विचार कर रही है। उम्मीद है कि

इसमें जल्द ही जल्दी सुधार हो जाएगा।

श्रम मंत्रालय और महिला एवं विकास मंत्रालय की ओर से पिछले कुछ साल से इसमें जल्दी संशोधनों की बात की जा रही है। बाल आयोग और कुछ अन्य गैर सरकारी संगठनों की मांग रही है कि बाल मजदूरी के संदर्भ में तब आयु 14 साल को बढ़ाकर 18 साल किया जाए। इसके अलावा शिक्षा के अधिकार कानून एवं बाल न्याय कानून के कुछ आवश्यक प्रावधानों को भी बाल मजदूरी कानून के साथ जोड़ने की सिफारिश की गई है।

बाल आयोग ने यूनीसेफ और अंतरराष्ट्रीय श्रम संगठन के साथ मिलकर मंगलवार को बच्चों के लिए ईसाफ नामक कार्यक्रम आयोजित किया था। इसमें तीनों संगठनों की ओर से संयुक्त बयान जारी कर बाज़र मजदूरी विरोधी कानून को सख्त बनाने और शिक्षा पर सकल घरेलू उत्पाद का कुल छह फीसद शिक्षा पर खर्च करने की मांग की गई। आयोग की अध्यक्ष शांता सिन्हा ने कहा - हम उम्मीद

करते हैं कि सरकार जल्द ही बाल मजदूरी विरोधी कानून में जल्दी संशोधन करेगी और इसमें शिक्षा के अधिकार कानून की आत्मा और हर तरह के बाल श्रम को खत्म करने का प्रावधान होगा। बाल मजदूरी की स्थिति यह है कि 10 से 12 साल के बच्चे बड़ी संख्या में मजदूरी करने को विवश हैं। इसमें ज्यादा तादाद अनुसूचित जाति, पिछड़े वर्ग और अल्पसंख्यक समुदायों के बच्चों की है।

इस मौके पर गैर सरकारी संगठन 'चेतना' की ओर से बच्चों ने 'उजाले की ओर' एक नाटक पेश किया, जिसमें बाल मजदूरी की समस्या को दर्शाया गया था। बाल मजदूरी के दलदल से बाहर निकल चुके कुछ बच्चों ने अपनी आपबीती भी सुनाई। कार्यक्रम में नीला गंगाधरन, शांता सिन्हा के अलावा बाल आयोग के सदस्य डॉक्टर योगेश दुबे, विनोद कुमार टिक्कू और डॉक्टर दिनेश लारोइया और देशी-विदेशी गैर सरकारी संगठनों के प्रतिनिधि मौजूद थे।

Jansatta, June 13, P-7

Islamic law does not sanction child marriage

A. Faizur Rahman

The recent Delhi High Court judgment upholding – on the basis of the “Mohammedan Law” – the right of a Muslim girl to contract marriage at the age of 15 may have shocked many. But it would be unfair to fault the judges. They could not have gone beyond existing laws to arrive at their verdict which is in effect based on Sec. 2(vii) of the Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act, 1939 (DMMA). It says the marriage of a Muslim girl will stand dissolved when “she having been given in marriage by her father or other guardian before she attained the age of 15 years, repudiated the marriage before attaining the age of 18 years, provided that the marriage has not been consummated.”

In other words, this outdated law presumes that Muslim girls on reaching the age of 15 become legally informed and competent to enter into marital alliances on their own. And Islam is invoked to give legitimacy to such an indefensible supposition as can be seen from the manner in which the All India Muslim Personal Law Board welcomed the aforementioned ruling. Even the Delhi HC, to buttress its decree, cited judgments that have relied on Mulla’s Principles of Mohammedan Law and Tyabji’s Muslim Law. This brings us to the fundamental question: does Islam sanction child marriage?

Traditions cited by jurists

It is well known that insofar as its legality is concerned, marriage in Islam

is a written covenant between two individuals and as such both have to be adults to understand the responsibilities and intricacies of such an agreement. This precept, that strikes at the root of the concept of child marriage, is supported by verse 4:6 of the Quran which equates the age of marriage (*balaghan nikah*) with the age of intellectual maturity (*rushd*), a stage that comes after the age of puberty. Yet traditions are cited by the jurists to justify child marriage as if to suggest the Prophet allowed what the Koran clearly did not encourage. For instance, Sunni law, without any Koranic or Prophetic basis, empowers the father, granting him the status of *wali* (guardian), to impose marriage on his minor children in their “best interests.”

In fact, Sec. 2(vii) of the DMMA itself appears to be based on an archaic, sectarian law which states that the marriage contracted on behalf of a minor by any guardian other than the father and paternal grandfather can be revoked by the minor on attaining the age of puberty. This doctrine, which also finds a mention in the Delhi HC ruling, is known as *khayar al bulugh* or, option of puberty. It is based on a report in Abu Dawood’s *hadess* collection, wherein the Prophet is supposed to have given a minor girl the option to repudiate her marriage when she informed him that her father had married her off against her will. But a reading of this *hadess* shows that the girl in question was not a minor because the word used to describe her

is *bakran* which means a grown-up, virgin. Also, there is no mention of puberty in the report and hence, the Prophet could not have advised her to wait until puberty to exercise her right to divorce.

Even if it is hypothetically assumed that *bakran* refers to a minor, the wordings of the Abu Dawood *hadess* clearly indicate that the Prophet had the marriage annulled immediately on knowing from the girl that her consent was not obtained. In a similar narrative mentioned in Sahih Bukhari, the Prophet annulled the marriage of Khansa’a bint-e-Khizaam when she complained to him that her father had forced her into a marriage which was not to her liking. The only inference that could be drawn from these reports is that child or forced marriage has no legal validity in Islam. This conclusion is supported by another *hadess*, found in both Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, in which the Prophet is quoted as saying, “An *ayyim* (a widow or divorcee) shall not be married till she gives her consent, and nor a *bikr* (a virgin) be married till her consent is sought.” Therefore, the concept of *khayar-al bulugh* is had in law as it is based on an erroneous premise.

Child marriage in Islam is also justified on the basis of a *hadess* which claims that the Prophet married Hazrat Aisha when she was just six and consummated the marriage when she was nine. The authenticity of this report is doubtful for several reasons. First, the Prophet could not have gone against the Koran to marry a physically

and intellectually immature child. Second, the age of Hazrat Aisha can be easily calculated from the age of her sister Hazrat Asma who was 10 years older than Hazrat Aisha. The author of the *hadess* collection, Mishkath, in his biography of narrators (*Asma or Bjaab*), writes that Hazrat Asma died in the year 73 Hijri at the age of 100, 10 or 12 days after the martyrdom of her son, Abdullah ibn Zubair. It is common knowledge that the Islamic calendar starts from the year of the Hijrah or the Prophet’s migration from Mecca to Medina.

By deducting 73, the year of Hazrat Asma’s death, from 100, her age at that time, we can easily conclude that she was 27 years old during Hijra. This puts the age of Hazrat Aisha at 17 during the same period. As all biographers of the Prophet agree that he consummated his marriage with Hazrat Aisha in 2 Hijri it can be conclusively said that she was 19 at that time and not nine.

The foregoing scriptural evidence shows that there exists a strong case to delegitimise child marriages and fix 18 as the age of marriage for Muslim girls, thereby bringing Muslim personal law in conformity with the Koran and the teachings of the Prophet. This would prevent right-wing parties from exploiting controversial court judgments to time and again threaten the Muslims with a Uniform Civil Code.

(A. Faizur Rahman is the secretary general of the Islamic Forum for the promotion of Moderate Thought. He may be reached at faiz2@rocketmail.com)

Hindu, June 13, P13

Not child's play

ON 30 December, 2000, the ministry of law constituted The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000 "to consolidate and amend the law relating to juveniles in conflict with law and children in need of care and protection, by providing for proper care, protection and treatment by catering to their development needs, and by adopting a child-friendly approach in the adjudication and disposition of matters in the best interest of children and for their ultimate rehabilitation through various institutions established under this enactment."

Eleven years hence, on 21 April, 2012, *The Statesman* carried a report titled *Bengal's shame: 50 children in jail*. The report exposed the lacuna in the implementation of the juvenile justice system in Bengal as "children in conflict with law" continue being remanded in adult correctional homes. A public interest litigation filed by Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) in Calcutta High Court revealed that as many as 50 juveniles ~ aged 12 to 18 ~ are currently held in adult correctional homes in West Bengal. A Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Mr JN Parel and Mr Justice Sambuddha Chakraborty of Calcutta High Court has since ordered the release of the juveniles from the adult correctional homes and their production before the Juvenile Justice Board.

However, such instances will be a thing of the past if the safety network knitted by the provisions of the Juvenile Justice Act, and various judgments of the Supreme Court and Delhi High Court are implemented in letter and spirit. This safety network consists of three sieves which are meant to ensure that the accused, if proven to be a juvenile, is produced before the Juvenile Justice Board and kept in safe custody, usually an observation home meant for children, if necessary. The Juvenile Justice Act has laid down comprehensive procedures to help determine whether the age of the accused falls in the 7-18 year bracket at the time of committing the offence, which would entitle the purported offender to juvenile status.

Being the first point of contact when any arrest is made, the first of the three sieves is police and the investigating officer (I-O). After an arrest has been made, it is the duty of the I-O to verify by all

means ~ matriculation or equivalent certificate; birth certificate issued by a corporation, municipal authority or panchayat; date of marriage of parents ~ the age of the person apprehended. In the absence of the aforementioned documents, medical opinion is sought and the juvenility of the accused is determined through an ossification test. Any prior record of offence with a claim of juvenility is also to be kept on record by the I-O, whose findings form a part of the investigation report.

However, when a juvenile is apprehended along with an adult, the I-O might find the task of creating two separate records and producing the two in two different courts arduous. Also, if the apprehended person does not have any relevant documents to prove his/her juvenility, police might simply bypass the procedure to produce the person before the Juvenile Justice Board for an ossification test. In both cases, it would be much simpler for the I-O to declare the child to be an adult and produce him/her before an adult court ~ an act that would rudely nullify the tenets of the juvenile justice system.

Both the Supreme Court and Delhi High Court have taken steps to kill this problem at its root. The SC has directed police authorities to introduce an age memo along with the arrest memo that would automatically ensure that an effort has been made to ascertain the age of the person apprehended along with other details. This information is to be pro-

duced through a mechanism that Delhi High Court had ordered the special juvenile police unit (SJPU) to put in order. The SJPU was also directed to prepare an advisory/circular/standing order outlining the modus operandi to be followed by an I-O for age inquiry and cases of transfer from adult courts to the Juvenile Justice Board, and vice versa. The I-O is accountable to the deputy commissioner of police who might undertake an inquiry to ensure there is no deliberate lapse in case a juvenile is produced in an adult court.

Ironic as it may seem, to every solution the juvenile justice system puts forth, there is a problem, as far as the "state" of Bengal is concerned. Of the 18 districts in the state, none have an exclusive functioning SJPU working within the juvenile justice system. In the few districts that are blessed with such a unit, SJPU responsibilities are simply added to others shouldered by various

police departments, thus undermining the ideals of the juvenile justice system.

The first sieve having proven ineffective, the onus now lies on the magistrate of the adult court to determine the age of the accused person. The magistrate concerned is to undertake this exercise in all such cases wherein the accused appears to be below 18 years of age, when the age mentioned in the arrest memo is between 18 and 21 years, or when there is a claim of juvenility. Regardless, if the magistrate is of the opinion that the person produced in the adult court is a child, he/she should record his/her opinion by making appropriate inquiry and taking the necessary evidence and forward the child to the Juvenile Justice Board without

delay. However, among the many constraints, inadequate number of police personnel and infrastructure of courts more often than not prevent the underage purported offender from being produced before the magistrate in an adult court.

Two sieves having failed him and after being sent to an adult correctional home, the juvenile's final glimmer of hope comes in the form of the superintendent of the prison concerned. The superintendent can plug this major lapse in the juvenile justice system by writing to the inspector-general (IG) of prisons and apprising the latter of the situation, who in turn should write to the court concerned for necessary action. But is the IG (prisons) even aware of children languishing in adult correctional homes? If yes, is he taking any remedial action by way of writing to the court concerned and ensuring that juveniles are produced only before the Juvenile Justice Board?

Every time a child is denied bail and sent to an adult correctional home, the basic fundamentals on which the juvenile justice system rests are ridiculed. It is but obvious that living amongst adult convicts would be detrimental to the wellbeing of any child. In contrast, an observation home, established for the temporary reception of children up to the age of 18, provides various services for the rehabilitation and social integration of the juvenile. In this regard, Delhi High Court's contention that a juvenile spending even a single day in an adult correctional home is tantamount to denial of his/her fundamental right and

*Statesman
June 6, 19*

Contd...

right to liberty, could not have been better placed.

The purpose of framing a progressive juvenile justice system was to create a cushion for children in conflict with law and shelter them from a relatively-harsher adult justice system. The drawing room-like atmosphere of the Juvenile Justice Board that has done away with the platforms and witness boxes that one can see in adult courts, is meant to put at ease a child who is already under stress after interacting with police and is anxious about his fate.

It is necessary to revamp the juvenile justice delivery system that has been corrupted by singular complacency. Speedy disposal of cases by the Juvenile Justice Board and rehabilitation of juveniles into the mainstream through individual care plans framed by the state is the need of the day. The tendency to condemn the wrong and pass the buck must be shunned. The shame of Bengal is ours alone and so is the responsibility to make amends.

The writer is member, Juvenile Justice Board, Kolkata district

-PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL OFFENCES BILL

'Consensual sex: Raising age to be undemocratic'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The proposed law of raising the age of consensual sex from 16 years to 18 would be an 'undemocratic' and 'backward' step, a city court has said, adding that the law would become a 'tool' for the police to harass teenagers. Additional Sessions Judge Virender Bhat made the observation while acquitting Sandeep Paswan, a native of Uttar Pradesh, charged with kidnapping and raping a minor girl, who had eloped with him and married at Arya Samaj Mandir in Lucknow.

The court also pointed out the need to impart sex education to modern day children in a proper manner so that their curious minds become informed. ASJ Bhat said that imparting sex education to children in a dignified manner would refrain them from indulging in wrong activities and runaway marriages. "In my opinion, the raise in age limit for sex by consent to 18 years would not only be undemocratic and regressive, but also a step in the backward direction. Such a move would open the floodgates for prosecution of the boys for offence of rape, on the basis of complaints by the parents of the girl, no matter the girl would have been the consenting party and the offer to have sexual intercourse may have come from her side," the judge said.

It's more than once in recent past that a city court has voiced concern over the Government's move to raise the age limit for giving consent to have sex. The order has come on the heels of another judge,



Additional Session Judge Kamini Lau raising similar concerns repeatedly. ASJ Bhat, however, said it was not in favour of sex among teenagers and shared the concern of the parents of young children and the Government, aimed at keeping them away from sexual activities.

"Raising the age limit, however, is not the solution to the problem and would serve no purpose except giving a tool to the police to harass the minor children," it said. According to the police, the 15-year-old girl had gone missing from her house at Kapashera here in January 2011. Her parents searched for her, but could not get any clue. Her father then reported the matter to the police on February 17, 2011 and an FIR was registered.

The girl was recovered in August 2011 from a village in Uttar Pradesh where she was residing with accused the

Sandeep as his wife after their marriage. The court while letting off Sandeep said that it was clear from the girl's testimony that she eloped with him as they loved each other. The court said that boys often become victims in such cases as they do not understand the consequences of their act. "Such cases should work as eye openers for the worthy law-makers of our country, who, I understand, are contemplating of raising the age limit for consensual sex between the two individuals from 16 to 18 years. Gone are the days when a child of 16 or 17 years of age was immensely immature and ignorant about sex and desire for having sex," the judge said.

The judge added that he himself has experienced that with the advent of cable television, Internet and rapid changes in biological factors, children get exposed to knowledge about sex and marital relations at an early age.

"As a result, cupid strikes them at an early age, before they attain majority and they dream of tying the nuptial knot with the person of the opposite sex. Since parents are always opposed to such an alliance, may be rightly so, the loving couple elope and solemnise runaway marriage without the consent of their parents," the court said, adding after which the parents lodge a missing report about their child with the police. The judge also directed the copy of the order to be sent to the Secretary of Department of Law and Chairman of National Law Commission for their information and as a suggestion from the court.

*Baner,
June 1, P3*

Regressive Laws Alone Can't Protect Teenagers

A Delhi court this week dubbed the latest government legislation, raising the age of consent for sex from 16 to 18, as "regressive and undemocratic" and acquitted a teenager charged with the offence of raping a 17 year-old girl he had married against wishes of her parents. Two months back, another Delhi court had made similar observations in another case. The court observed: "The legal system cannot be used to punish youngsters in love who are on the verge of attaining majority, and this court cannot ruin their lives by taking a hyper-technical view, especially so when the age-gap between these youngsters is within acceptable limits and does not reflect an exploitative coercive situation".

There is no doubt that Parliament passed The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Bill with the noble intention of protecting children from sexual assault and harassment. However, as the two recent court judgments indicate, it has become a tool in the hands of parents with

a *khap* mentality to hound and harass youngsters marrying against their wishes. While not all cases of elopement are motivated by love, it is also undeniable, as the judge pointed out, that youngsters these days are exposed to realities much before attaining maturity in this age of Internet and television.

Children cannot be protected merely by tinkering with the age of consent and criminalising teenage sex. Instead of relying on a coercive law, greater attention should be paid to inculcating moral values among adolescents. Parents should be more sensitive towards the unhappy consequences of forcing children to act against their will. Teachers should impart a wholesome attitude towards sex and marriage among them. A sensitive and science-based sex education programme for children — in or out of school — would help 16-year-olds from taking risks, and caution them against sexual exploitation by adults.

Age of consent to be fixed at 18 yrs

Nagendar Sharma

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NEW DELHI: The conflict between laws on the age of consent for sex will end soon with the government set to make changes in the criminal law to raise it from 16 to 18 years.

The controversy arose after Parliament last month passed a bill for the protection of children from sexual offences, which states that sex with a teenager below the age of 18, even if consensual, is a crime.

However, section 375 of the Indian Penal Code states: "A man is said to commit rape with a woman if he has sexual intercourse... with or without her consent, when she is under 16 years of age."

WHAT THE LAWS SAY

- **IPC section 375** fixes age of consent for sex at 16 yrs
- **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Bill** criminalises consensual sex with those below 18 yrs
- **Juvenile Justice Act** states age of consent is 18 yrs
- **UN convention** for child rights supports age limit of 18 yrs
- Average age limit across world varies from 13 to 18

Following criticism over contradictory provisions, the law ministry has examined relevant laws and expedited the process to bring uniformity in them.

"It is a fact that, currently, there is a difference in relevant laws on the age for legal sex in India. The government is in the process of putting an end to all confusion," said a top ministry official.

He said a committee headed by former home secretary GK Pillai, with legislative affairs and law secretaries as members, had in its recommendations on rape laws already recommended that the age of consent be raised to 18 years.

The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Bill, introduced by the women and child development ministry in Parliament in May, initially kept

the age limit at 16 years, but raised it by two years following the recommendation of a parliamentary panel that examined the bill.

The panel had cited the United Nations Convention on Rights of Children and a number of Indian laws in favour of its argument.

"The committee notes that other laws such as the Indian Majority Act, the Indian Contract Act and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act define a child as one who has not completed 18 years of age," stated the parliamentary standing committee on human resource development.

*New Indian
Express
June 2, P-8*

*Hindustan Times
June 9, P-1*

32,000 Maharashtra schools yet to comply with RTE Act

STAFF REPORTER

Mumbai

Three years after the enactment of the 'Right to Education Act,' 32,000 schools across Maharashtra are yet to comply with the provisions of the Act. The act makes it mandatory for both government-aided and unaided schools to tell the state government that they have the specified number of teachers, good sanitation facilities, a minimum number of teaching hours per week, among other accomplish-

ments. The state government will then certify their compliance with the Act. But 32,604 aided and unaided schools across the state are yet to apply for the certification, said Sanjay Deshmukh, Project director of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Maharashtra. "The act provides a three-year period for compliance. The three years are almost up, and yet most schools have not applied. We will issue notices to schools in a day or two."

The notice provides until 31st March 2012 for compli-

ance, failing which the schools will be asked to close. "A school not given the 'certificate of recognition' will be asked to shut down. If a school, however, still runs without being issued the certificate, we will levy a fine - Rs 1 lakh in addition to Rs 10,000 for each day's contravention," he said. Meanwhile, school admissions process will change next year, when the government will strictly implement the 'no screening of parents and children for admissions' rule, among others.

*Free Press,
June 13,
P. 7*

-RIGHT OF CHILDREN TO FREE AND COMPULSORY

EDUCATION

School Blues

This refers to 'Getting the Poor into Private Schools' (ET, June 7). That the Supreme Court has now upheld the constitutional validity of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, is good news. But at the same time, only 10 states have so far notified the rules with respect to the RTE Act. The other bitter truth is that there is a shortfall of around 14 lakh teachers in the country. Private players should be encouraged on a larger scale in the country's educational system, and the public sector should be given a new lease of life because it provides affordable education to many students in the country. It is also important to ensure a fair fee structure in the Indian educational system.

*Economic times,
June 8, P. 16*

GOVT CRACKS WHIP, SEALS 11 ULTRASOUND MACHINES

NEW DELHI: The Delhi government has sealed four ultrasound machines at Diwan Chand Diagnostic Centre on Thursday.

A team of state programme officials for the Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques (PNDT) Act in Delhi government's directorate of health and family welfare, subdivisional magistrates of various districts, legal representatives and state medical council members have been raiding diagnostic centres across the city and have sealed 11 machines in the past one week.

"The centres need to follow all the rules and regulations that are there for running ultrasound machines under the Act — from registration of machines to maintaining records, among others. Our officials will act, wherever there's any discrepancy and the raids will continue," said Dr AK Walia, state health minister.

The health department team has been conducting raids at diagnostic centres in various parts of the city and have raided several centres, including the ones in posh south Delhi colonies of Hauz Khas and Green Park. The department has sealed machines and rooms and suspended certificates wherever they have found any inconsistency in the data. A couple of centres have also received show-cause notices.

"The most recent centre where machines were sealed was Diwan Chand on Thursday morning. We spent more than two hours scanning the records and found discrepancy in the forms that are mandatory to be filled before an ultrasound is conducted," said Dr Shelley Kamra, state programme officer for PNDT Act.

According to the PNDT Act 1994, sex determination, selection of an unborn child is a punishable offence.

The child sex ratio in the Capital has dipped in the past decade with 914 girls per 1,000 boys. The aim of the government behind cracking a whip on the diagnostic centres is to improve the skewed ratio.

*Hindustan Times,
June 9, p.3*

Kids Decide What They Want for Next 5 Years

Express News Service

Chennai: A group of children, most of them hailing from marginalised sections of society, have presented the State Planning Commission with a document on various child-friendly measures that need to be included in the proposed 12th Five Year Plan.

Over 50 children representing Federation of Children Movements for Rights to Participation from all districts held a state-level consultations from May 6 to 8 at Thirukalukundram and discussed various issues pertaining to them. These children hailed from various marginalised sections of the community like the dalits, fisherman, tribal, refu-

'LITTLE' HELP

HERE'S A LOOK AT SOME MAJOR SUGGESTIONS CHILDREN MADE TO THE STATE PLANNING COMMISSION

- Effective implementation of RTI Act
- Free and compulsory education
- Children's councils in schools
- Education loans for refugee children
- Model for child participation

gees, street dwellers, disabled, HIV affected and migrants whose rights as children were largely ignored. This initiative by the children is in response to a call made by Vice-Chairperson of the state Planning Commission Santha Sheela

Nair on the occasion of the release of UNICEF Annual Report on the state of Urban Children in March.

Major suggestions of the children include effective implementation of the Right to Education Act, free and compulsory education, setting up of children's councils in schools, education loan facilities for refugee children and also proposed a model for child participation right from the grass root level.

"This is a huge mile stone of us. We are hopeful the commission, will look into it and will accomodate the suggestions made by the children," Virgil D Samy, who had been in the fore front of Children Participation movement in TN said.

*New Indian Express
June 9, p.2*

Illegal schools face action from Monday

The school education department is set to launch a special drive against unrecognised schools in Hyderabad from Monday.

The move follows a large number of complaints against unrecognised schools that have given admissions in the new academic year without necessary approval from the government. Unlike in the past, the officials will visit these

unauthorised branches, even though they got permission for a single school at a particular location.

While the drive is in the

offing, it is alleged that officials have turned a blind eye even as admissions begun way back in March. The government teachers' unions allege that the department is not serious about addressing the issue of unrecognised schools, and that special drives taken up before the start of each session are only an eyewash aimed to collect bribes from the managements.

The Hyderabad district administration identified

231 unrecognised schools in the city in December 2011, but the teachers' unions put the number at over 700.

Apart from uploading the details of unrecognised schools on www.deohyderabad.com, the department has failed to check the offenders from making fresh admissions, it said.

The RTE Act makes it mandatory for schools to get approval from the government. The school managements are liable to a penalty of ₹1 lakh if they fail to secure approval in three years. If they still continue without recognition, the penalty is ₹10,000 per

seek recognition within three years. Despite reminders, unrecognised schools have failed to apply for recognition. This is the final academic year (2012-13) to seek recognition."

*Deccan Chronicle
June 9, p.3*

day under the RTE norms. But with officials of the Education department turning a blind eye in most cases, RTE rules have remained mostly on paper.

Mr Susheendra Rao, in-charge DEO, Hyderabad, said: "Under RTE Act, all schools have to mandatorily

schools and give the authorities the "closure notices". Such notices were earlier sent by post, and the schools allegedly "managed" the postal staff to ensure that they were returned to the department citing "wrong address", it is learnt.

Several big schools, many of them backed by corporate bodies, have set up

Vaiko protests against cartoon in textbook

Chennai: MDMK leader Vaiko on Friday protested against a "deplorable depiction" of anti-Hindi agitation in Tamil Nadu in the 1960s. This comes close on the heels of the row over the "Ambedkar cartoon" by the renowned cartoonist Shankar.

"A cartoon appears in Page No 153 in the chapter 'Politics in India since Independence' in

the political science book for 12th standard released by the NCERT," which depicts the students who participated in the anti-Hindi agitation as "ignoram and (who) indulged in violence," Vaiko said in a letter to Union HRD Minister Kapil Sibal, urging him to withdraw it immediately.

Tracing the anti-Hindi stir's history in the state as early as the 1930s by Tamil scholars

and others who feared that Hindi imposition would result in non-Hindi speaking people

in the country reduced to second-class citizens, Vaiko pointed out that despite former Prime Minister Pandit Nehru's assurance later, Hindi was still thrust as the "official language" in 1965.

This had triggered another wave of the anti-Hindi agitation under the leadership of DMK founder C N Annadurai. Even Rajaji who advocated Hindi in the 1930s, turned against the language being imposed on non-Hindi speaking people in the mid-1960s, Vaiko pointed out.

Students in Tamil Nadu then

participated in large numbers in the anti-Hindi agitation, "braving brutal oppression by the police and the Army," he said.

Stressing that such a "glorious chapter in the political history of Tamil Nadu" should not be belittled, Vaiko said the cartoon depicted in the NCERT textbook was a total distortion of history, hurt the sentiments

of the people of Tamil Nadu and maligned the Dravidian Movement.

"I would, therefore, request you to take steps to remove this cartoon from the textbook and

honour the emotions of the people of Tamil Nadu," Vaiko said in his letter to Sibal, copy of which was released to the media here. The MDMK leader also sent a similar letter to Prof Sinclair, NCERT chief.

Senior leaders of other political parties, including DMK Deputy General Secretary and former State PWD Minister Durai Murugan, joined issue with NCERT and said such cartoons offending the sentiments of the Tamil Nadu people was totally unacceptable and should be removed.

DH News Service

*Deccan Herald,
June 9, P12*

HC ruling on marriage age of Muslim girl disturbing: activists

HT Correspondent

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NEW DELHI: Women organisations have expressed concern over a Delhi High Court upholding the marriage of a 15-year-old Muslim girl, quoting Mohammedan law on marriage.

The court has held the marriage of a minor girl valid, while ruling that a Muslim girl could marry a person of her choice at the age of 15 years if she has attained puberty.

Citing concerns, general secretary of the National Fede-

ration of Indian Women Annie Raja said: "This is very disturbing because one of the reasons for India's high maternal mortality is early marriage. This will also prevent the girls from enjoying their Constitutional rights like Right to Education."

While strongly arguing for one's right to choose one's life partner, Raja said the existing law on marriage age should be universally applied.

Sudha Sundararaman, the general secretary of All India Democratic Women's Asso-

ciation echoed this view. "When it is a question of rights of minor, we are for equal law and equal rights across the board."

The All India Muslim Personal Law Board welcomed the decision. Hyderabad-based functionary of the law board, AR Qureshi, said Islamic laws prohibit child marriage and deem a girl who has attained puberty to be fit for marital life.

"This is a correct interpretation of Muslim personal law. However, since social realities have changed, most Muslim girls marry at a much later age."

Hindustan times, June 7, P13

NDMC to outsource maintenance of schools

Rajat Arora

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NEW DELHI In order to increase the hygiene standards of its schools and to give a push to the girl student ratio, the North Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) is planning to outsource the basic maintenance and cleanliness of its schools to private agencies.

Through this, the NDMC is planning a makeover of its schools that lag behind the government schools when it comes

to maintenance and cleanliness. "The maintenance of toilets and water booths may sound a small thing but to keep the school atmosphere healthy, these things play an important role. In case of girl students, clean toilets are very necessary," said a senior NDMC official.

There are around 650 schools under NDMC with around four lakh students. "Currently, toilets of our schools are not being maintained properly. Giving the cleanliness work to private agencies is the only solution through which we can improve our stan-

Currently, the toilets of our schools are not being maintained properly.

SENIOR NDMC OFFICIAL

dards," he added.

Most schools under the municipal corporation lack basic amenities such as clean toilets and drinking water and Trifurcation, which lead to shortage of manpower, has made it impossible for the corporation to provide healthy atmosphere with

limited resources.

"Half of our students are girls and we if further want to improve the number, we have to provide clean toilets. There's shortage of the non-academic staff in the schools," the officer said.

The ambitious plan could take time to see the light of the day as the NDMC is yet to float tenders. "The plan has to go through a tedious procedure and has to be passed by the standing committee and the house before it can be implemented," said a NDMC councillor.

*Hindustan Times
June 7, P. 5*

From womb to doom

Women and the various kinds of ill treatment meted out to them is a well exploited theme in Indian films. Every year the film industry churns out many women-oriented movies. Many of them go on to win awards but do they really help women face the world with no fear? The answer might be a 'no' but such films at least bring their issues to the surface.

"Me and My Sister", a film on female foeticide, is among the most recent ones of this kind to hit screens. The film produced by Nipon Dholua is set in Assam. Contrary to popular perception, female foeticide is not just a grave situation in States like Punjab and Haryana. The unethical act is raising its ugly head even in States like Assam. "People from different parts and cultures come and reside in Assam today. So certain positive and negative developments are bound to emerge when there is inter mingling of cultures. Though the issue is not a prevalent phenomenon in the State that doesn't mean we can afford to close our eyes to the issue. The film is not only about Assam. It is about women who face ha-

arrassment in many forms, be it in any part of the country," explains Nipon.

The film, directed by Rajesh Bhiyan, will be released

in Bengali, Hindi, Marathi, Bhojpuri, Rajasthani and English boasts an all Assamese cast. Popular actors of the Assamese film industry Prastuti Parashar, Barsharani Bishaya, Samar Hazarika, Gyanendra Pallab and child artistes Dishan Dholua and Birina form the cast of the film.

"Me and My Sister" is about two families forming an important part of the film's narrative. It shows the contrast between these two families: One family has an abusive husband and the other consists of a lovely couple. It is also a story of two women who are friends and fight for justice for each other.

According to the film's director, "The film is a take on the modern woman and the turmoil faced by her. One of the characters is a modern educated woman but she suffers at the hands of her husband. As a result of the mental and physical torture, she delivers a blind girl. I

want to portray that crime against women or female foeticide has nothing to do with education or money."

Rajesh explains that poor people are not fully aware of sex selection. People who have money to shell out go for such acts. Though most of the clinics carry billboards that clearly mention that checking the gender of the foetus is strictly prohibited,

what goes on inside is anybody's guess. People are ready to spend from Rs.10000 to 15000 to even 3 lakhs to determine the sex of the baby but they are rarely caught.

Handling such a strong issue in his very first film — was it a conscious decision? The producer says, "I wanted a good story to tell. If the story has the potential to bring a difference to the society it is bound to be noticed. We didn't choose a commercial subject because in Assam, Bollywood already sells. The idea was not to give something to the people that they watch time and again."

Rajesh Bhiyan and Nipon Dholua sign off with a prom-

ise of returning with another hard-hitting subject. The team of "Me and My Sister" and an NGO named Jankalyan Morcha have also requested the Government of India to increase the amount of Rs.25000 to one lakh given to families on the birth of girl child under the Indira Gandhi Child Welfare Scheme. The film is slated to release on July 13.

SURYA S. PILLAI

Child plans – do they fit the bill?

Securing your child's future and his financial requirements is no doubt a priority. For insurance companies, this spells an opportunity that they just can't let go of. The question, however, is what works best for the child – an insurance cover or a wealth creation plan.

Is it worth the money?

There are two avatars for child insurance plans at present – a child Ulip (unit-linked investment plan) and a traditional child plan. It's usually the latter most insurers keep in their portfolio. The guiding principle of a child insurance is simple: it promises to take care of your child's needs if you are not around. This means that in case of the death of a policyholder, all future premiums are waived off and investments continue on behalf of the policyholder.

However, most financial planners feel these plans don't quite measure up. A term plan that covers your insurance requirements and comes at half the cost can definitely be a better option.

"Going for a child plan is a costly affair for parents because of various reasons. The ones offered under the Ulips umbrella are like any other unit-linked plans. And there are a lot of hidden charges like policy administration, premium allocation and so on. Even traditional child plans are a costly option. This is because traditional ones only yield a return of 4-4.5%. Also, parents will have to shell out more in terms of sum assured to get a decent return," says Suresh Sadagopan who runs Ladder 7 Financial Advisories.

The right option

Insurance companies, however, have a different spin, saying these plans can come in handy in case the policy holder dies early as there is a double benefit because future premi-

ums are dropped while investment goes on.

But when it comes to the cost factor, other products have a distinct edge. A pure term plan comes dirt cheap – which can be as less as one tenth of costs of other plans. Take, for instance, a term plan of ₹50 lakh, where the premium you need to pay will be somewhere between ₹8,000 and ₹10,000. On the other hand, the premium for a child Ulip could set you back by as much as ₹1-1.50 lakh.

Instead of shelling out ₹1,40,000 for a Ulip, the same money if parked in a fixed deposit or a public provident fund (PPF) every year for your child's education would get you better returns. But some argue that a Ulip invests in equities, which therefore may yield more in the long run. But even this argument doesn't really wash simply because you can opt for equity investments via mutual funds, and not necessarily through a Ulip route.

Flawed idea?

In fact, most planners think the whole premise of child insurance is flawed. The idea of a life insurance cover is to take care of your dependants after your demise. And in case the child dies, he will not be left with any financial dependants. "A child plan is not recommended because a child does not need insurance as insurance policies are meant to replace income source by a corpus. The emotional aspect of investing for your child is how agents try to pass on these plans to ignorant investors. Parents should look at other options like systematic investment plans (SIP), MFs and so to finance their children's needs," says Jayanth Vidwans from Society of Financial Planners.

The moral of the story is you are better off even if you give a child plan a miss.

HANDLE WITH CARE

To start with, child insurance promises to take care of your child's future financial needs. This comes in two forms - traditional and Unit linked investment plans (Ulip)

But financial planners are not too enthusiastic about them. These are costly investment options, they say. Returns too are another turn-off.

A better alternative touted is a term cover that sizes up well from a cost perspective as well as returns they fetch.

If you are interested in equities, you can invest through mutual funds, and not necessarily through a Ulip route.

D.N
June
P.13

TN to axe teachers guilty of sexual misconduct

CHENNAI: Teachers of government and aided schools in Tamil Nadu will either be dismissed or face compulsory retirement if found guilty of sexually abusing children. The State School Education Department (SED) has issued a government order (GO) to this effect, sources said.

The decision to take punitive action against the teachers comes amid a surge in number of such instances recently. Earlier, disciplinary actions against teachers guilty of such violations was restricted to suspension, sources said.

At present, the 55,567 government, aided and primary schools in Tamil Nadu has

around 1.35 crore students and employ around 5.50 lakh teachers.

"There has been a huge increase in the number of schools in the state recently. This is one of the factors for more complaints of sexual abuse of children in schools coming to the public domain through the media," the sources said explaining why the government accepted SED's recommendation to crack down on the erring teachers. According to the GO,

the service conduct rules for state government employees, including school teachers, already has provisions for strict punitive action for sexual offences. The government will also revoke the teachers training certificate of the offenders,

sources said.

The GOP has also directed the authorities concerned to sensitise the students on how to ward off sexual advances from the teachers and defend themselves. "A small section of

the teachers with a propensity for sexual misconduct with their class children should be given psychological counseling," the GO has directed.

The Directorate of School Education will also help to organise mobile counseling centers at schools, with qualified psychologists on board, to raise awareness on the painful consequences faced by the victims and thereby help to avert such incidents in future.

DH News Service

Deccan Herald, June 7, 18

देश में चार करोड़ बच्चे अधिकारों से वंचित

नई दिल्ली, 31 मई (भाषा)। देश में बच्चों की सुरक्षा को लेकर भले ही राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर कानून और संबंधित संस्थाएं हों, इसके बावजूद अधिकांश राज्यों या जिलों में कानून में खामियां और संबंधित संस्थाओं की अनुपस्थिति मासूमों के हितों के आड़े आ रही है।

देश में लाखों बच्चों को यौन अपराध, कुपोषण, हिंसा और बुनियादी सुविधाओं के अभाव जैसी परेशानियों से रोजाना दो चार होना पड़ता है। कुछ गैर सरकारी संगठनों की मानें तो देश में करीब चार करोड़ बच्चों को उनका हक नहीं मिल रहा है और हजारों की संख्या में बाल अधिकारों

के हनन के मामले अनसुने रह जाते हैं।

बाल अधिकारों को लेकर काम करने वाली संस्था 'चेतना' के वरिष्ठ पदाधिकारी संजय गुप्ता का कहना है कि मौजूदा कानूनों में कुछ खामियां और कानूनों का सही से पालन नहीं होना भी बाल अधिकारों के हनन की बड़ी वजहें हैं। गुप्ता ने कहा, 'बाल न्याय कानून के तहत देश के हर जिले में बाल कल्याण समिति होनी चाहिए, लेकिन ऐसा नहीं है। हमारे पास उपलब्ध जानकारी के मुताबिक करीब 600 जिलों में ही ऐसी समिति अथवा संस्थाएं काम कर रही हैं। देश की राजधानी में 11 बाल कल्याण समितियां होनी चाहिए, लेकिन सिर्फ छह बनी हैं। जब दिल्ली में यह स्थिति है तो

पूरे देश के बारे में हम क्या कह सकते हैं।'

बाल सुरक्षा और अधिकारों को सुनिश्चित करने के लिए भारत सरकार की ओर से स्थापित संस्था राष्ट्रीय बाल अधिकार संरक्षण आयोग (एनसीपीसीआर) भी कई बार लाचार नजर आती है। उसकी मानें तो राज्य स्तर पर पूरी मदद नहीं मिलने से कई बार बाल अधिकारों के हनन के मामलों में कार्रवाई कर पाना मुश्किल होता है।

आयोग के सदस्य विनोद कुमार टिक्कू ने कहा, 'देश में फिलहाल 15 राज्यों में बाल आयोग बने हैं। शेष राज्यों को हम इसके और जिला स्तर पर बाल कल्याण समितियां गठित करने के बारे में कई बार लिख चुके हैं, लेकिन अब भी कई राज्यों ने कोई कदम नहीं उठाया है।'

टिक्कू ने कहा, 'कानून से मिली शक्तियों के मुताबिक हम अपनी ओर से बाल अधिकारों को सुनिश्चित करने के लिए पूरा प्रयास करते हैं। राज्य और स्थानीय प्रशासन से पूरा सहयोग मिल पाने के बाद ही पूरी कामयाबी मिल पाएगी।'

बीती 25 और 26 मई को 'चेतना' की ओर से दिल्ली के इंडिया इंटरनेशनल सेंटर में बाल न्याय को लेकर एक सम्मेलन का आयोजन किया गया था। इस भौके पर एनसीपीसीआर की अध्यक्ष शांता सिन्हा ने कहा, 'सड़कों पर रहने को विवश बच्चों को समाज भी निष्कासित कर रहा है। बच्चों के अधिकारों लेकर आवाज हर मंच से उठानी होगी।'

Jansatta, June 1, P. 18

Kids online, parents beware

Matt Richtel

In the 1990s, the term "digital divide" emerged to describe technology's haves and have-nots. It inspired many efforts to get the latest computing tools into the hands of all Americans, particularly low-income families.

But as access to devices has spread, children in poorer families are spending more time than children from more well-off families using their gadgets to watch videos, play games and connect on social networking sites, studies show.

This growing time-wasting gap, researchers say, is more a reflection of the ability of parents to monitor and limit how children use technology than of access to it.

"I'm not anti-technology at home, but it's not a saviour," said Laura Robell, the principal at a public middle school in East Oakland, California, who has long doubted the value of putting a computer in every home without proper oversight. "So often we have parents come up to us and say, 'I have no idea how to monitor Facebook,'" she said.

The new divide is such a cause of concern for the Federal Communications Commission that it is considering a proposal to spend \$200 million to create a digital literacy corps. This group of thousands of trainers would fan out to schools and libraries to teach productive uses of computers for parents and students.

"Digital literacy is so important," said Julius Genachowski, chairman of the commission, adding that bridging the digital divide now also means "giving parents and students the tools and know-how to use technology for education and job-skills training."

FCC officials say they still want to get computing devices into the hands of every American. But "access is not a panacea," said Danah Boyd, a senior researcher at Microsoft. "Not only does it not solve problems, it mirrors and magnifies existing problems we've been ignoring."

Like other researchers, Boyd said the

initial push to close the digital divide did not anticipate how computers would be used for entertainment. "We failed to account for this ahead of the curve," she said.

A study published in 2010 by the Kaiser Family Foundation found that children and teenagers whose parents do not have a college degree spent 90 minutes more per day exposed to media than children from higher socioeconomic families. In 1999, the difference was just 16 minutes.

The study found that children of parents who do not have a college degree spend 11.5 hours each day exposed to media from a variety of sources, including television, computer and other gadgets. That is an increase of 4 hours and 40 minutes per day since 1999.

Children of more educated parents, generally understood as a proxy for higher socioeconomic status, also largely use their devices for entertainment. In families in which a parent has a college education or an advanced degree, Kaiser found, children use 10 hours of multime-

dia a day, a 3.5-hour jump since 1999.

"Despite the educational potential of computers, the reality is that their use for education or meaningful content creation is minuscule compared to their use for pure entertainment," said Vicky Rideout, author of the decade-long Kaiser study.

Policymakers and researchers say the challenges are heightened for parents and children with fewer resources - the very people who were supposed to be helped by closing the digital divide.

The concerns are brought to life in families like those of Markiy Cook, a thoughtful 12-year-old in Oakland who loves technology.

At home, where money is tight, his family has two laptops, an Xbox 360 and a Nintendo Wii, and he has his own phone. He uses them mostly for Facebook, YouTube, texting and playing games. "I stay up all night, until like 7 in the morning," he said, laughing sheepishly. His grades are suffering. His grade-point average is barely over 1.0, putting him at the bottom of his class.

Many lower-income families take great pains to manage how their children use their devices. In Boston, Amy and Randolph Ross, neither of them a college graduate, recently bought their twin 15-year-old girls laptop computers as a reward for good grades. The parents make sure the computers are used mostly for homework or for the girls to explore their interest as budding musicians.

"If you just buy the computer and don't guide them on the computer, of course it's going to be misused," Amy Ross said.

NYT

*Deccan Herald,
June 6, P.15*

A classroom on the phone

India in the study

Shaping the future – realising the potential of informal learning through mobile, explores mobile technology's potential to improve access to education for young people in developing countries. The study looks at Ghana, Morocco, Uganda and Maharashtra, in India, identifying young people's aspirations and priorities, exploring the education and employment challenges they face, and scrutinising their mobile phone use.

The endgame is to establish how the mobile industry and international development community can pool their expertise to create m-learning services that improve teaching and learning, and therefore promote long-term development.

"It's a big step in the right direction in terms of putting the possibilities in front of the GSMA's members and raising awareness of the commercial and business opportunities education represents in the developing world," says John

Traxler, professor of m-learning at the University of Wolverhampton in the U.K. "Clearly it's a small sample, covering only four countries, so it's indicative rather than representative. But if the networks get the message, it's a valuable piece of work. Networks don't need to hear it's virtuous, they need to hear it's profitable – just enough to encourage them to get out there and do something." Mobile phones are increasingly ubiquitous in poor countries, which now account for four in every five connections worldwide. As Elsie Kanza, of the World Economic Forum, recently said: "Regardless of social class, almost everyone [in Africa] has a mobile phone, or two or three. Even in remote villages, mobile phones have replaced the bicycle or radio as prized assets." An obvious caveat is that voice-calls far outstrip data use in poor countries, which remain an emerging market for smartphones and other data-enabled devices. One reason is cost. A quarter of the young people surveyed – and almost half of those from Ghana – said a shortage of money was the biggest

obstacle to accessing educational resources. Even so, the rapid spread of mobile technology offers clear possibilities for learning. Of the young people participating in the study who had accessed the internet, half had done so on a mobile device.

One female student from rural India told the GSMA researchers: "In class, I sometimes record the lectures on my phone so I can listen to them later in case I forget or don't understand. I can use the calculator to help me with my maths. My favourite subjects are maths, science, history and economics. If you could get these on your mobile it would be good." Enthusiasm for learning was a common thread in the feedback. Only family and health were felt to be of greater importance by the study's participants, 30 per cent of whom said having a good career ranked higher among their priorities than marriage or home ownership.

Despite this aspirational outlook, however, only a quarter said the classroom was their principal source of information and education. Friends and

family were identified as more important by 41 per cent, while 43 per cent gleaned most of their knowledge from TV programmes.

So can m-learning help? Yes, say the report's authors, who suggest that, by using the study's findings to tap into common interests among young mobile users, the reach and impact of educational material can be increased. Many of those surveyed used their devices to access music and sports content (49 per cent and 24 per cent respectively across the four areas studied); by bundling learning material with, say, football updates, the GSMA researchers believe technology can make a significant difference.

Others, however, are sceptical. Some experts say there is little demonstrable evidence of m-learning's impact, suggesting it threatens to undermine traditional teaching methods and – by leaving those without access to devices at a disadvantage – reinforces inequality.

Traxler believes such arguments are misguided. "You don't have to pay for

mobile technology, and it reaches the people you want to reach," he argues. "Computers, books, television sets and college buildings may be infinitely more respected, but people already have mobile phones – they buy them, pay for them, and carry them. So let's look at how the technology is representative of our society, and how we can use it, rather than worrying about the niceties of education." The report preaches a message Traxler has long championed, one he hopes will now trickle down not only to mobile networks and their commercial departments, but also to governments. "That's where the action needs to happen," he says. "We've had 10 years of relatively small-scale, short-term projects, and by their very nature I'm not sure how much they would really have told us, or how rigorous they were."

"The case that needs to be made is about sustainability, scale, return on investment and impacting on government policies. If the GSMA can do a better job than the rest of us have done in the past 10 years, then good luck to them – and I think they probably will." – © Guardian Newspapers Limited, 2012

Hindu, June 1, 2012

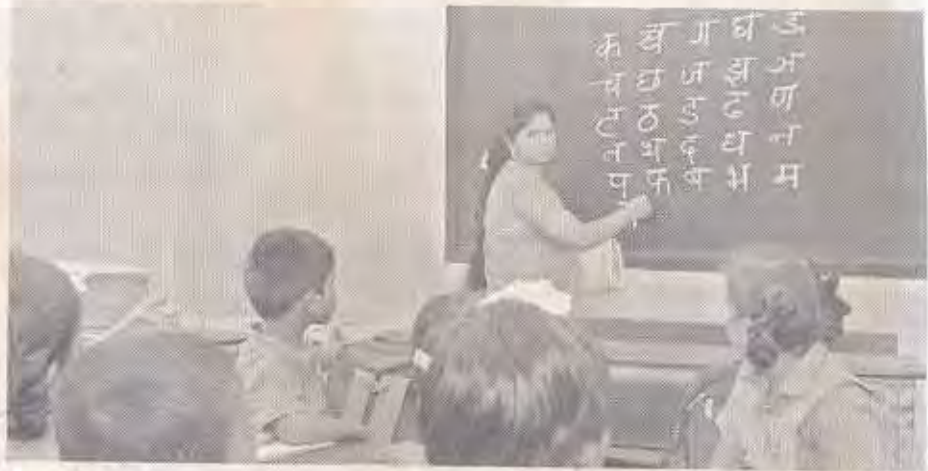
Now, Tamil Students Want Hindi

Call it a generational shift or the compulsion of changing times, more students whose mother tongue is Tamil are now learning Hindi as their second language in schools in Coimbatore.

School teachers too feel that learning Hindi in addition to one's mother tongue gives students an edge when it comes to relocating outside Tamil Nadu in later years.

Some parents like Tamil-selvan Nachimuthu, a bank employee, are enrolling their children in private Hindi tuition centres. "If my daughter learns to speak Hindi, she would not have to be tonguetied when I am transferred to a north Indian State," says Nachimuthu whose father was a staunch supporter of the anti-Hindi movement.

"In our school we provide Hindi and Tamil as additional languages for students who do not have these languages as their mother tongue. Even though this was optional, we find that most Tamil students now opt to learn Hindi," says a principal of a leading school in R S Puram. "We start teaching them alphabets from class



III and slowly move on to grammar as the language is not spoken in their homes," he adds. Teachers also give imposition to students in Hindi so that they pick up the language fast.

"Learning Hindi or any other language is a matter of choice and no one can be forced to learn or shun a language. Today, with students reaching out and making their mark at the national and international arenas, it is an important advantage to know the language.

However, if they willingly choose to turn away from it, that choice should also be

respected," says K Sathyanarayanan, principal of Mani Higher Secondary School.

Teachers also say that some parents are forcing their children to study Hindi as they feel it would help them be at home when they go for higher education in other States.

"We do have some students who are reluctant learners of the language. But we have also seen cases where a reluctant learner grasps the language fast and begins to hum Hindi melodies," says a Hindi teacher of a school in Vada Koval.

Interestingly, in a reverse trend, some Hindi-speaking students have started learning Tamil in schools. Champa, a class VI student of a school in R S Puram, who hails from Delhi, says she can read Tamil name boards.

"I took up to learning Tamil as an additional language from class III. Initially it was difficult, as we do not speak Tamil at home. But our teachers are patient and I am gradually picking up Tamil. Now I actually like it, when I learn new Tamil words," she says.

New Indian Express, June 18, '16

महिला कैदियों के बच्चे बोर्डिंग स्कूल में संवार रहे भविष्य तिहाड़ जेल प्रशासन गैर सरकारी संस्था के माध्यम से कराता है बच्चों का दाखिला

राजिआ सिंह, नई दिल्ली



हर अभिभावक का सपना होता है कि अपने बच्चे को अच्छे से अच्छे पब्लिक स्कूल में पढ़ाएँ। कोई इच्छा से बच्चे को सरकारी स्कूलों में पढ़ाना नहीं चाहता। बदकिस्मती से तिहाड़ जेल में ऐसे बच्चे हैं, जिनकी कोई अपराध नहीं किया, पर अपनी माँ के आनर्धिक वरदात में मलिन होने के कारण उन्हें जेल में रहना पड़ा।

लेकिन वह अभिभावक भी उनके लिए वरदान साबित हो रहा है। तिहाड़ प्रशासन के प्रयास से महिला कैदियों के 107 बच्चे बोर्डिंग पब्लिक स्कूलों में अपना भविष्य संवार रहे हैं। तिहाड़ प्रशासन ने एक गैर सरकारी संस्था की मदद से इन बच्चों का स्कूलों में दाखिला कराया है।

तिहाड़ प्रशासन के इन कदम से महिला कैदियों को बच्चों को विद्यार्थी रेशन होती नजर आ रही है। तिहाड़ के कानून

- 107 बच्चे अलग-अलग स्कूलों के होस्टल में रहकर कर रहे पढ़ाई
- पाँच सालों में 188 बच्चों का हाँ चुका है दाखिला, 77 बच्चों ठर चुके हैं दसवीं पास



आते हैं। ऐसे बच्चों से कैदियों की तरह व्यवहार नहीं किया जाता। बच्चों को मुफ्त में कपड़े, बिस्तर, स्वास्थ्य व शिक्षा सुविधा उपलब्ध कराई जा रही है। ताकि उनकी माँ के जेल में होने के कारण वे अच्छी शिक्षा से वंचित न रहें। छह साल तक के करीब 45 बच्चे कैच में हैं, जिनमें जेल में प्राथमिक शिक्षा दी जा रही है। इससे अधिक उम्र वाले बच्चों का उनके अभिभावक की इच्छा से बोर्डिंग स्कूल में दाखिला करवा जाता है। फिलहाल 107 बच्चे दिल्ली-एनसीआर के अलग अलग बोर्डिंग पब्लिक स्कूलों (सभी मिशनरी स्कूल) में शिक्ष ले रहे हैं। इनमें 44 लड़के व 63 लड़कियाँ हैं। प्रमुख स्कूलों में गेट मिशन स्कूल नोएडा व सेंट एंथोनी स्कूल महाइमज शामिल हैं। इन स्कूलों में तिहाड़ प्रशासन ने ईडिपन विजन फाउंडेशन के सहयोग से बच्चों का नामांकन कराया है। बच्चों से कोई शुल्क नहीं लिया जाता। सुनील गुप्ता ने बताया कि पाँच सालों में अब कुल 188 बच्चों का दाखिला करवा जा चुका है। 77 बच्चे दसवीं पास कर चुके हैं।

अधिकारी सुनील गुप्ता ने बताया कि जेल में करीब 525 महिला कैदी हैं। कई के साथ छह वर्ष से कम उम्र के बच्चे भी जेल

Dainik Jagaran, June 1, P4

Scholarship for poor students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

DIBRUGARH, June 17 - The Brahmputra Hospital Educational Welfare Society here has announced scholarships for meritorious but economically backward HSLC-passed students of Dibrugarh, Tinsukia and Sivasagar districts. The scholarships will be offered to 30 students who have secured 65 per cent or more marks this year.

Applications may be sent to the Welfare Society at Shahid Nyash Bhaban, Chowkinghee, for further details. Tinsukia district students can submit their applications at Tinsukia Anchalik Chatra Santha, those from Sivasagar district at Sivasagar Anchalik Chatra Sanstha, Kendriya Shahid Udyan, Boarding Road, a release said.

Assam Tribune, June 18, P8

Speed up Bank Loans for Vocational Education

It is heartening that the long-felt need for a worthy vocational education loan scheme has been duly addressed by the Indian Banks' Association. Significantly, not only will there be no requirement for any collateral security under the scheme approved by IBA recently but there will also be no age bar for availing of the loan. In a country in which skill providers perpetually face the problem of low enrolment due to financial reasons there was no way the country's target of 500 million people endowed with vocational skills by 2022 under the prime minister's skill mission could have been met without such liberalisation. To the extent that this target is met it would hopefully improve the efficiency of the work force and thereby give a fillip to the economy. It is a hard reality that the skill quotient of Indian workers is rather low and that accounts for the low productivity of the work force in various sectors. That this needs to be enhanced is without question.

The loan scheme provides that the interest rate to be charged will be linked to the base rate of banks as decided by the individual banks. The key, however, would be the speed with which the loan applications are approved. In the past the risky nature of educational loans has made banks wary of approving them. With the banks being worried about defaults only 3 per cent of Indian students pursuing higher education have availed education loans. That the government has decided to set up a corpus of ₹5,000 crore over a period of time to compensate banks for such defaults is an encouraging development.

All in all, the IBA has done well to come up with such a scheme, but the proof of the pudding is in the eating. Many a scheme has fallen by the wayside due to poor implementation, misgovernance and corruption. The Prime Minister's National Council on Skill Development, the apex body overseeing the skills target, will need to ensure that the banks do not stray from their avowed path.

New Indian Express, June 13, P10

Policy guidelines for protection of underprivileged children stressed

CORRESPONDENT

KOKRAJHAR, June 18 – In a day-long programme on BTC-level consultation on Child Protection and Child Rights, the urgent necessity for a road map towards policy guidelines was underlined.

The consultation discussed several aspects related to meeting the crisis in child protection scenario and as a matter of concern a coordinated effort was chalked out on the gravity of the situation particularly in the vulnerable pockets in Kokrajhar district.

It was resolved that on a regular monthly basis meetings across interdepartmental level will be held to generate data of different possibilities and the factual state of child abuse will be taken into ac-

count. In this regard specific functions of officials at each and every level is to be ensured while a functioning task force is to be monitored apart from addressing every requirement through a 24-hour helpline service. It was also pointed out that the short stay child home that so far exists should be made really functional as long as permanent homes for victimised children are not set up in all the districts of BTAD.

It may be mentioned here that the two NGOs namely, Nedan Foundation and NERSWN of Kokrajhar in a recent survey had forwarded some data on the vulnerable state of children from some rural areas of Kokrajhar. As per the data NERSWN identified 64 school dropouts, 56 children who had never enrolled, 36

migrated children and 32 child labourers out of a total of 420 households surveyed. Similarly in the report of Nedan, 96 children were found to be drop outs and 28 children migrated to other states, however Nedan has managed to enrolled nine children in special schools and three children in the Lower Primary section under SSA over a total 342 households surveyed in Kokrajhar district.

It may be mentioned that it is a matter of concern that a solid database on the state of the abused children or their families including the cases relating to the rescue, relief and rehabilitation of ill-fated children has not been found nor is there any concrete measure for a systematic mechanism to deal with such cases. As such the consultation

strongly emphasised on a positive and proactive role of the civil and police administration of Kokrajhar district to control the situation.

The day-long programme was attended by Vedprakash Gautam, Child Protection Officer, UNICEF, Assam, Rajeswar Sharma, Member, Assam State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, Dinesh Boró, Joint Secretary, Social Welfare, BTC, NGO members from Nedan, NERSWN, Bal Bandhu among others participants from the civil society and government departments, MK Sahu, IAS, Principal Secretary, BTC chaired the consultation programme. The programme was organised by the BTC administration at BTC Secretariat conference hall on June 11.

Assam Tribune, June 20, '18

CM's vision document for child, women uplift

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, June 12 – Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi today launched Chief Minister's Vision for Women & Children 2016 highlighting 16 goals, including bringing down of infant and maternal mortality rates, at a function held at Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakshetra auditorium here today.

Launching the vision document, Gogoi said that it aims to improve the living condition of poor women and children and to provide the rights to the deprived segments who constitute the twin pillars of society. "If the womenfolk and children lag

behind, no state or society can march ahead. We can build a prosperous Assam only if the condition of our poor women and children improve by leaps and bounds," he added.

The Chief Minister said that the vision document would focus on health related issues like Infant mortality rate (IMR), maternal mortality rate (MMR), anaemia, malnutrition, underweight children, besides key issues like female literacy, trafficking of women and children, witch hunting, child labour, child sex ratio and reduction of girl marriage before 18, said an official release.

Gogoi said though IMR and

MMR percentage has gone down in the past five years, the State has to step up its efforts to bring it down below the national average. "IMR and MMR were issues that did not get much importance in the past. But now these issues

have become matters of serious concern and steps are being taken in right earnest to trim down the percentage of IMR and MMR through a slew of measures," he said.

The Chief Minister said the government's focus is on the backward and far-flung areas of

the State. "Most of the health and socio-economic problems exist in areas like tea gardens, riverine (*char*) and tribal areas. We want to develop these areas so that the people enjoy the fruits of development," he added.

Gogoi said the State government would bring about a legislation to prevent employment of minor children below 18 years by public servants and public representatives. "Punishment will be meted out if anyone employs a minor child for household chores," he added. Contd...

Assam Tribune, June 13, '18

The Chief Minister also launched a web portal of the vision document on the occasion. The inaugural ceremonial function was addressed, among others, by Minister for Panchayat & Rural Development Rockybul Hussain, Minister for Health & Education Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma, Minister for Social Welfare Akon Bora, Minister for Public Health Engineering Gautam Roy, Minister for Planning & Development Tanka Bahadur Rai, Minister for Labour & Employment Prithibi Majhi and Principal Secretary, Planning & Development Department, Kumar Sanjay Krishna.

Make-shift School After Dalits Raise Fear of Threats



A file picture of the Panchayat Union Primary School, Thattankuttai, in Namakkal district

by R Shivakumar

Namakkal: Days after a group of Dalit residents from Pulavarpalayam near here stopped sending their children to school to protest the fact that the local panchayat school was located far away from their village, which forced the children to travel a risky route to reach the school, the authorities have finally woken up to their plight.

On Wednesday, officials of the education department

swung into action and established a make-shift school in Pulavarpalayam Village itself. "As per the orders of the District Collector, a spacious building that housed an anganwadi was converted into a make-shift school in Pulavarpalayam," District Elementary Educational Officer (DEEO) A Arulmozhidevi told *Express*.

The parents and teachers were consulted before doing so, the DEEO said, adding that all the students attended class on Wednesday. The

Dalit residents of Pulavarpalayam stopped sending their children to the Panchayat Union Primary School, Thattankuttai, since Friday.

According to parents, the children had to travel through expansive agricultural lands, that posed many risks, to reach the school. And, on June 4, after their children were chased away by some miscreants while on their way to school, they were forced to take another route that was even more circuitous, they claimed.

New Indian Express, June 14, P.6

बच्चों में भेदभाव का जहर न बोड़ए

खबर है कि विश्वविद्यालय अनुदान आयोग (यूजीसी) ने आरक्षण के तहत दाखिला पाने वाले दलित, आदिवासी एवं अन्य पिछड़ी जातियों के छात्रों को भेदभाव, उत्पीड़न व परेशान किए जाने की घटनाओं से महफूज रखने के लिए नए नियम बनाए हैं और सरकार उन्हें जल्दी ही अधिसूचित करने वाली है। इनके तहत ऐसी शिकायत व उनके निवारण की व्यवस्था दुरुस्त करने पर जोर है। विभिन्न अध्ययन इस बात की पुष्टि करते हैं कि शिक्षण संस्थाओं में जातिवादी भेदभाव के चलते छात्र न सिर्फ हीन भावना के शिकार हो रहे हैं, बल्कि अपमान के चलते पढ़ाई छोड़ देते हैं। प्राथमिक शिक्षा से लेकर उच्च शिक्षा तक में यह स्थिति व्याप्त है।

यूनीसेफ के सहयोग से दलित आर्थिक आंदोलन यनेशनल कैम्पेन ऑन दलित ह्यूमन राइट्स ने एक अध्ययन किया था और इसकी रिपोर्ट में यह इंगित था कि स्कूली बच्चों के साथ भेदभाव के चलते कई दलित बच्चे आगे की पढ़ाई नहीं कर पाते हैं। बीते दशकों में भारत में दलित समाज को लेकर कई लोकतांत्रिक प्रतिबद्धताएं दिखीं, जिसकी एक कड़ी यूजीसी की यह स्वागत योग्य पहल है। पर क्या ज्ञान के केंद्रों में ऊंच-नीच का भेदभाव सहजता से खत्म हो पाएगा? गांवों से शहरों की ओर प्रवास करने वाले दलित युवाओं ने कभी यह कल्पना नहीं की होगी कि जिस पीड़ा को उनके पूर्वजों ने झेला है, उसके दश आधुनिक कहे जाने वाले शिक्षण संस्थानों में चुभेगी।

भारतीय संस्कृति में 'जातिवाद' की जड़ें इस कदर गहरी पैठी हैं कि बच्चे जाने-अनजाने ही इस भेदभाव को आत्मसात करते चले जाते हैं। तभी तो तथ्यांकित सवर्ण जातियों से संबंधित बच्चे दलित छात्रों से दूरी बनाते हैं।

आज तेजी से एक ऐसा तबका जन्म ले रहा है, जो 'आरक्षित श्रेणी' में होने के बावजूद आरक्षण नहीं चाहता, क्योंकि वह उस वेदना को जोना नहीं चाहता जो उसकी पहचान सामने आते ही उसकी झोली में स्वतः आ जाती है। शहरों में कई दलित अपने बच्चों की पहचान छिपाने के लिए उन्हें नए 'उपनाम' दे देते हैं। यह पीढ़ी अपने अस्तित्व को नकारने के लिए विवश है, क्योंकि वह उस जिल्लत से बचना चाहती है, जो उसकी प्रतिभा पर हवी होती है। अपमान व तिरस्कार दलित युवाओं को कुंठित कर रहा है, जिससे वे न केवल सामाजिक, बल्कि आर्थिक तौर पर पिछड़े रहे हैं। हमें नहीं भूलना चाहिए कि हजारों साल पहले जो जातिवादी विभेदीकरण हुआ था, उसका आधार समाज में श्रम का समुचित और यथोचित विभाजन करना था, न कि श्रेष्ठता या कमतरी का निर्धारण करना। अपने बच्चों में सवर्ण होने का गर्व भरने वाले अभिभावक दरअसल एक ऐसी विध्वंसक रेखा खींच रहे हैं, जिसके शिकार उनके बच्चे भी होंगे, क्योंकि सामाजिक और आर्थिक उन्नति तो तभी संभव है, जब समाज में भेदभाव का कोई रूप न हो।

(ये लेखिका के अपने विचार हैं)

*Hindus Jan
June 15, P.12*

Schools reopen parents' problems

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 10

Students, parents and schools are now geared up for the new academic year 2012-13. While some city schools will reopen on Monday, most schools are opening on Tuesday after the two-month summer vacation.

Almost all schools have increased fees in the new academic year. Transport charges, prices of textbooks, uniforms and stationery have also increased by as much as 50 per cent in some cases.

A shortage of textbooks in the market means that

Pinch-in-the-pocket

■ The increase in petrol and auto LPG prices means that autowallahs have increased fares by around ₹300 per month compared to last year.

■ All private schools irrespective of the board, have hiked fees by 20 to 50 per cent.

many students have to go without them. The shortage is due to a delay in printing.

For those relying on school buses, the charges have gone up by to ₹1,000

per month with schools charging ₹12,000 per year.

All private schools irrespective of the board they are affiliated to have hiked tuition fees by 20 to 50 per cent. School managements cite the increase in property tax and electricity and water charges by the state government as the reason for the hike.

Though the norms clearly stipulate that the managements implement the revised fee only after securing approval from the Parent-Teacher Association and the Hyderabad district administration, none of the schools have bothered to do so.

*Deccan
Chronicle
June 11, P.3*

Merger of schools: HC directs transport for students

BANGALORE, DHNS: The High Court of Karnataka on Wednesday directed the State government to provide transport facilities to those students who will be forced to travel extra distance if the government goes ahead in and close down the schools with less than five students.

"The Additional Advocate General has filed an undertaking that free transport will be made available to the students. We accept the undertaking. If it is brought to the notice of the Court that government schools are merged without providing transport, it will invite a judicial action," the Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Vikramjit Sen and Justice B V Nagarathna observed, while disposing of a petition challenging the gazette notification dated September 24, 2011 on closing down schools with less than five students.

Rashtrakavi G S Shivarudrappa, Jnanapith award winning litterateurs Girish Karnad, Chandrashekar Kambar and U R Ananthmurthy had sought squashing of the gazette notification.

Senior counsel Ravi Varma Kumar, who appeared on behalf of the petitioners, termed the notification arbitrary and violative of rights of children guaranteed under Articles 14, 15, 21 and 21A of the Constitution. He submitted that the RTE Act (Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009) provides that there should be schools in a radius of one-kilometre vicinity for the students Class I to Class V, and for the students of Classes VI to VIII, it is three kilometres.

Economic interest

The Additional Advocate general contended that the decision of the government to merge the schools involves economic interest as well as welfare of the children.

However, Ravi Varma Kumar said that a huge infrastructure was not necessary to maintain government schools and education can be imparted by one teacher. The Bench observed, "Students fare better when they compete with others."

The State government had proposed to close down 590 lower primary schools and 27 higher primary schools in February 2012.

Details sought

The High Court has directed the government to furnish details on enforcing Juvenile Justice Act in the State.

At a hearing of a suo motu petition, Neena Nayak, chairperson of the Child Rights Commission, brought to the notice of the court, several instances of violation of the Act. She said juvenile offenders were being housed in prisons while adults had been detained at detention centres.

The Court suggested the government to conduct a workshop to sensitise officials concerned.

Adjourned

The High Court has adjourned the hearing of anticipatory bail plea of former chief minister B S Yeddyurappa to Thursday. Justice Subhash Adi had scheduled the matter for dictating orders on Wednesday.

Yeddyurappa has moved the High Court after the CBI court rejected his advance bail plea.

Kids prefer Web over family time

REENU BAHL

THE ASIAN AGE

✓ You think you are the only parent dealing with a difficult kid, who prefers the Internet and mobile to family and cousins? Take heart, you're not alone. A study shows that children, especially teenagers, across cities spend 35 hours every week surfing the Internet, mainly social networking sites, or keep busy with their mobile phones. However, child counsellors say their social skills are not exactly improving and so parents are gearing up to deal with new concerns.

Make-up expert Meenakshi Dutt says her son Kartiky, 18, barely spends time with the family. "He is always occupied with his mobile phone or laptop. He goes out with his friends and if I make a plan for us to go out, it's a struggle. At times, I have to request him to leave his phone behind and have dinner with us," she shares.

Psychologist Dr Geetanjali Kumar is facing a similar equation. Though an expert, she finds it difficult to deal with son Aakar, 18. "Today's generation is living in a virtual world. Their communication skills are not

improving. They are getting so bad with their conversation skills that they don't know how to even converse," she says.

Meenakshi further adds, "The biggest problem is that children no longer read. Though they have a good IQ they are dependent on the Internet for everything. If you keep them away from the phone or laptop even for a day, they will collapse."

Though parents are concerned, teens have no qualms in saying that they are delivering what is expected of them. Tanish Gupta, 17, student of engineering, says, "As long as I score well in my exams, my parents should not complain."

"They should be happy that I spend more time at home. My computer and phone is enough company for me."

There is a solution to every problem in life, and Dr Kumar suggests, "Parents need to tell their children how it feels when they are ignored in place of a gadget. One day children will realise how they are losing out on the better things in life," she sums up.

As long as I score well, my parents shouldn't have any problem.

Asian Age, June 29, 2012

Deccan Herald, June 21, P. 6

More kids fall prey to cyber crime as web users get younger

Vasudha Venugopal

CHENNAI: Last week, when Neeraja, a class XII student received a call from a friend asking her why she had put up abusive messages on her social networking profile, she thought it could have been a mistake because her account was almost unused for three months. It was only later, when she logged in and searched for her name, that she found two identical profiles with her pictures and contact details.

When the case was reported to the Cyber Crime Cell of Central Crime Branch, Chennai Police, it did not take long for the officials to send an e-mail to the site reporting the abuse. "We had to find the location, and details of the machine user, among other things, but it was sorted out. Often, users of social networking sites tend to put up pictures without enabling security controls which makes it easy for others to copy them and even morph them," said M. Sudhakar, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Central Crime Branch.

This case, like many others, was not pursued legally. "In ninety per cent of cyber crime cases, the offenders are known to the victims and their family. Though we insist on legal prosecution, the families tend to sort it out by themselves," Mr. Sudhakar said.

According to the TCS GenY survey 2011-12, Chennai which had just 13 per cent of Facebook (FB) users in 2009, stands third today, among the metro cities. The survey was



HOOKED: The average time spent online by 33 per cent of children surveyed is about 60 minutes, while around six per cent say they spend more than six hours on the Internet

(IMAGE FOR REPRESENTATIONAL PURPOSE ONLY)

conducted across 12 Indian cities — Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Coimbatore, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kochi, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai and Pune — with respondents comprising over 12,329 high school students between the age group of 12 and 18. Nearly 85.12 per cent of students surveyed possess FB accounts.

The survey also says that the average time spent by 33 per cent of the children on the web is about 60 minutes, while around 6 per cent say they spend more than six hours on the Internet.

This rise in number of users has also seen a rise in cyber crime activities, particularly those targeted towards children. According to the National Crime Records Bureau, a total of 799 persons were arrested under Information

Technology Act, 2000, in 2010, and 294 persons were arrested under cyber crime-related sections of Indian Penal Code (IPC). Of these, 137 were from Bangalore and 46 from New Delhi, followed by Mumbai and Chennai.

"But people are no longer hesitant to report cases, which is a good sign," says Mr. Sudhakar. Most cyber crime activities targeted at children deal with fake profiles.

The target group is mostly children in the age group of 12-17, says sources.

R. Varadaraj, who runs Sun Detective Services, claims that the number of parents seeking professional help to find out more about their children's online activities has increased manifold in the last two years. Many parents, he says, prefer to approach detective agencies and not the police to en-

sure secrecy.

"Imposters take on the names of celebrities and common names, mostly feminine, to woo school and college students. Adding people on chats ensures their mails reach the inbox and not spam. Obscene mails and message follow which often leave students completely stressed," he says.

Students often do not know the risks attached to security on social networking sites and restricting them outright may not be the right thing to do, say counsellors. For instance, Pooja Kannan, parent of a 14-year-old student, says, "For months, I did not know my daughter was registered on Facebook. Her profile said she was a college student. Now, I insist that she doesn't go online after 10 p.m. Spying on children doesn't work because they feel let down and become more distant."

Counsellors say children should be advised against sharing personal details or pictures with anybody on the Internet. They must not divulge their contact details on online applications hosted by social networking sites that promise to deliver messages.

"We ask parents to ensure that children do not post pictures on such sites or even store their pictures on mobile phones because they often get misused and end up being posted on obscene sites, when the phones are lost or the site is hacked. Many illegal sites do not reply to requests so it is impossible to remove sensitive content," says Mr. Varadaraj.

(Names of children have been changed to protect identity.)

Hindu, June 11, P. 9

GREEN education

ENVIRONMENT is something that we encounter every day, but still we need to conceive the idea of it. In this age of science and technology we are knowingly or unknowingly ignoring the environment to such an extent that we are facing all the natural disasters. Environment nourishes us like a mother, but how many of us really think about it? Amidst illusions and fantasies we are forgetting our very backbone i.e. environment. Study of environment is an indispensable part and therefore, the basic knowledge about the environment should be inculcated at a very tender age, especially at that time when the child starts developing their own ideas.

Study of environment is a continuous process and it should be implemented in a stratified way, i.e. study materials should be placed in an orderly form from lower to higher classes in school. School curriculum is the only vehicle to carry this idea. Curriculum should be designed in such a way that there is ample scope to develop the environmental education. Basic knowledge of

environment is required in a student's life for certain reasons. Firstly, it will create a kind of awareness about the environment among the students. Secondly, today's students are the citizens of future; therefore, restoration of environment is bestowed upon them. Thirdly, it will help in sustainable use of resources. Fourthly, a student will treat the subject matter of environmental education as an integral part of their study. Fifthly, a student will develop a kind of likeliness for the environment which will help them to build a strong attitude for the conservation of the same. And lastly, if a student studies environment in a continuous basis then at the last part of their study, they will gather vast knowledge on en-

vironment which will cater to their other requirements also.

There are many advantages of imparting environmental education in schools. Through curriculum we can place the subject matter of environmental education in a hierarchical order. Moreover, we can mould the young minds without trying much. In schools we can deal with the topic both theoretically and practically. Whatever knowledge a student will acquire, they can practically experience it also. For example, through plantation drive at school premises a student can witness the positive impacts of afforestation. Schools may take

the initiative to observe certain special days like World Pollution Prevention Day, World Environment Day, etc. With the help of school authority students can take awareness initiative like organizing quiz, debate, street play, art competition on the topic 'environment' among the students of different schools. Students can also take out rallies with hoardings where messages regarding the conservation of environment will be highlighted. Schools can also invite some resource persons as experts to give more details about environmental education.

Nowadays another innovative idea in the form of 'eco-club' has been in-

troduced in many schools. It is a part of cocurricular activity and has already been adopted by many schools in Guwahati. Under the banner of eco-club many schools are doing several programmes to make students as well as parents aware about environment. In CBSE course, it is an option to choose eco-club as one of the cocurricular activities and then the particular child will take active part in all the awareness drives organized by the club. The students, who will turn up with

complete dedication, will be granted good grade in the grade point system. So, it is a kind of incentive for the student to work in the field of envi-

ronmental conservation.

In government schools, specially at lower level, the provision of environmental education is there as has been provided by SEBA. But it seems that at higher level the course content is gradually coming down and ultimately becoming out of course. If it can be introduced in primary, middle schools in a proper and specific way then lots of students will be benefited. If it is spread properly to the rural areas then it is expected that man-environment conflict will come down, which ultimately will help in conservation of bio-diversity.

Everything depends upon the syllabus that a school follows. The content of environmental education should be reviewed from time to time and latest and up-to-date information should be added with the existing ones. Content should cover both national and international issues with special reference to local situations. This will help the student to compare two different realistic situations. CBSE and ICSE courses which have already implemented the environmental studies have come up to the expectation levels also.

Thus, it is the right time to think about the issue and to take some positive steps to make our future generations well aware so that they can proudly say that "We live in a clean and green environment".

*Assam Tribune,
June 16, P.1*

PHOBIA MAKING MANY SKIP SCHOOL

The thought of going back to school stirs up a bevy of emotions in 11-year-old Swapna – from anxiety and stress to paranoia. She throws tantrums every morning before leaving home and breaks into a sweat at the mere mention of school.

Swapna's mother has tried everything – from scolding to bribing – to stop her from acting out, but nothing has worked. "Initially, we feared that she was being bullied at school. We checked it out with her friends and talked to her teachers, but we did not find any evidence of it. She is usually a quiet child. Just the mention of school makes her unhappy; she always comes back home with a frown," says the resident of Walkeshwar.

She suspects that her daughter's fear of school stems from her reclusive nature. "She does not like being the centre of attention and is extremely shy. She has difficulty making friends. But, she does not speak to us about her paranoia."

Swapna isn't alone. A parent

from Malad says she got suspicious that her 12-year-old son was "traumatised" by the thought of going to school when he missed classes for four days at a stretch last week on the pretext of a headache. "In the morning, he complained of severe headache, but by afternoon, he was back to his usual self. He would log on to the internet and play computer games. I felt that he

was avoiding school on purpose. When we raised this issue with his school, we realised that he was deliberately bunking school, as his class teacher had punished him. He didn't want to face his classmates after the humiliation."

City shrinks are alarmed by the increasing cases of school phobia among adolescents. "It is normal for toddlers to suffer from separation anxiety when they go to school for the first time. But more and more adolescents in the city are falling victim to school phobia," says psychologist Seema Hingorany.

School phobia is extreme anxiety that stems from going to school or even talking about

it. Causes range from being bullied and genetic depression to grieving for a lost pet. In many cases, academic pressure or negative experiences at school also lead to such a phobia. "Even children who are caught in a marital discord between their parents, or are exposed to an environment where the mother does not get along with the in-laws, or whose parent is too authoritative can suffer from school phobia," explains Hingorany.

Nita Mehta, clinical psychologist, New Horizons Child Development Centre, echoes her. She says school phobia often manifests itself among children in the form of sickness and insomnia during the first few weeks of school. "Some of the effects of school phobia can be psychosomatic. Children may fake illness to escape going to school, but in many cases, the phobia is so intense that the child might actually fall sick or lose sleep because of it."

The best way to deal with such a problem is to reassure the child that fear is normal, say shrinks.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Allow your child to talk about his fears, if any. Do not put words into his mouth, ask him to voice his thoughts. Try not to be judgmental about his opinions

Find out the reason behind any 'irrational' behaviour. Talk to his friends, teachers and school heads. If he is facing academic pressure, assure him that he will be able to cope with it

Motivate him to go to school by showing him the positive side. Focus on events that s/he could look forward to, like a fun event at school

Take up each issue of going to school as a goal

Watch out for these symptoms of school phobia

- Bouts of crying
- Headaches, stomachaches, insomnia before and after school begins
- Constant vomiting
- Grades dropping; low concentration
- An unwillingness to get up from bed; throwing tantrums and complaining

D.N.A., June 20, P.5

Child-adults surviving on little money and hope

By Sonia Faleiro

Meena Devi is unlike any little girl you will ever meet. In many ways, she isn't even a child. The afternoon we met, she'd cooked lunch for two of her siblings. "I made dal bhat tarkari," she said proudly, referring to a local dish of rice, lentils and seasonal vegetables. "But we are out of dal, so really, it was just bhat tarkari." Meena also washes her siblings' clothes and hustles them off to school every morning.

There are two things that make this daily routine extraordinary. First, Meena, with her bright eyes and neatly combed bob, is only 10 years old. And second, she's an orphan. Meena and her siblings - 11-year-old Sunil and 6-year-old Leela - live without any adult supervision. Their hut is pitiful even by the standards of Jhanwatola village in Bihar, a state known primarily for its impossible poverty. Entire villages in Bihar have no roads and no running water for miles, and Jhanwatola, with its cramped little mud huts, is no exception. Villagers know of electricity as an abstract concept rather than a modern-day essential.

The children have been living like this for almost three years. They have an elder brother, Anil, who lives in another state. In this time they haven't received a single visit from anyone associated with the local district, Nalanda, or the state government.

On an average day not one adult enters the hut. If they did, here's what they'd find: a fire pit, a few utensils, a handful of worn clothes, two schoolbags and a plastic jar partly filled with grain. There is nothing to sit on, there isn't a piece of cloth to lie on, and in a state in which summer temperatures average 45 degrees centigrade (113 degrees Fahrenheit), there are no windows.

Almost three years ago, on August 8, 2009, Meena's mother, Phoolmanti Devi, died of starvation. When the neighbours came for her, they found at her breast her 1-year-old son, Sarvan Majhi, also dead. Meena's father had died previously of natural causes, and her mother alone had supported Anil, Sunil, Meena, Leela and Sarvan.

Mrs Devi was a daily wage agricultural labourer, but heavy monsoon rains in the days just prior to her death had impeded fieldwork, thrusting unemployment upon her. With no money for food, Devi, recalled Meena, would walk from one end of the village to the next on her hands and knees, digging out fallen bits of grain. These she brought home to boil.

The rain escalated, and Jhanwatola, which is off the main road on downward sloping land, began to flood. Devi and her five children were trapped in their hut for three days without food and with very little water. On the third night, Devi and her youngest child died. The cause of Devi's death surprised no one in the

village. The nearly 1,000 residents of Jhanwatola are of the Dalit caste, and their difficult, marginalised lives embody the word Dalit, which means 'ground down.'

Landless labourers

A small handful of villagers own land, and some others work on land they lease for money and grain. But the majority are landless labourers who have it the worst, as they are prey to the whims of their upper caste employers, who pay them only in grain, never money. To earn cash, entire families including women and children as young as five find supplemental work in one of the district's many brick kilns. Their poverty and great numbers have kept wages low, and over the years more and more villagers have found it preferable to head off to neighbouring states, even as far north as Delhi and Haryana, to work on construction sites and kilns, fields and rice mills. Many such villagers are youngsters cursed with an adult's sense of responsibility. They go because otherwise they and their family will starve.

Since 2009, one of these children has been Meena's oldest brother, Anil, who, at the age of 14, works full time at a brick kiln in Ranchi, the capital of the neighbouring state of Jharkhand. Meena last saw Anil six months ago. He

calls on her aunt's phone, she said, and sends money whenever he can. "He sent 100 rupees last month," she said, "so I bought spices, tea and soap."

Meena's aunt, Lata Devi, lives close by, and

she'll sometimes send food over for the three children. But she has a family of four and finds it hard to make ends meet herself. It was her idea that Anil go to work. "A thekedar, labour contractor, had come to the village, as they often do," said Mrs Devi. "So we sent Anil off. He's a grown up boy after all. If he won't look after his brothers and sisters, who will?"

Meena and her siblings go to school every morning, and the free, hot midday meal they receive there helps sustain them. When they return, they wander around the village looking for ways to entertain themselves. "If there's food to cook, I cook it," said Meena. "Otherwise we play."

The story of Phoolmanti Devi's death was first reported in August 2009 in the Hindi-language press by Vijay Prakash, a full-time farmer and part-time reporter who is from one of the few better-off families in Jhanwatola. He says that the village, and in fact Nalanda district at large, is decaying from its inability to handle the problem of the 'four B's': bimar, berozgar, buddhe and bachche. (Illness, unemployment, the elderly and children).

His report caught the eye of Mokhtarul Haque, who works with the Bihar office of the nationwide children's rights nonprofit, Bachpan Bachao Andolan. Haque, who facilitates the rescue of child labourers, is raising money to send Meena and her siblings to boarding school. He estimates a monthly expense of Rs 6,000 for all four children.

If Meena isn't rescued from Jhanwatola, he said, there's really only one way this story will end.

"Thekedars already know the village and regularly hire children for hard labour," said Haque. "But it's different for girls. Sometime in the next couple of years, while she's still a child, a thekedar may masquerade as an eligible groom and trick Meena's aunt into letting him marry Meena, and once she does he'll take her to Delhi and sell her off to a brothel or to an employment agency that will hire her out as a domestic worker, and she'll be treated like a slave. But she's so vulnerable, so poor, that perhaps he won't even have to pretend. He'll just whisk her away one night, and no one will notice, and by the time they do, she'll have vanished forever."

Deccan Herald, June 27, p-11

कंप्यूटर ज्ञान डिब्बों में बंद!

रमलिन कुमार दिलकश

राजौद, 23 जून। शिक्षा विभाग की निम्न स्तर की कार्यप्रणाली के चलते हरियाणा की शिक्षा का हब बनाना अब नामुकिन-सा लग रहा है, क्योंकि सरकार द्वारा लागू की गई बहुत-सी योजनाओं का लाभ विद्यार्थियों को नहीं मिल रहा है। बेशक प्रदेश सरकार योजनाओं पर करोड़ों खर्च करके आंकड़ों के ग्राफ को बढ़ा रही हो लेकिन हकीकत इसके बिल्कुल विपरीत है। शिक्षा विभाग की नाकामी का एक और खुलासा यहाँ उस वक्त हुआ जब यहाँ के एक स्कूल में कंप्यूटर के डिब्बे में ईट निकली। पिछले एक वर्ष से जिले के 113 विद्यालयों में आए 2486 कंप्यूटर व अन्य उपकरण डिब्बों में बंद पड़े धूल चाट रहे हैं। पिछले करीब एक वर्ष से करोड़ों रुपए का यह कंप्यूटर ज्ञान डिब्बों में बंद है। बेशक सरकार ने जिले के 113 स्कूलों में कंप्यूटर, जेनरेटर, यूपीएस, प्रिंटर, कैमरे जैसी बेहतर सुविधाएँ स्कूलों में भेजकर प्रदेश को शिक्षा हब बनाने के अपने उद्देश्य की किताब में एक ओर अध्याय जोड़ा हो लेकिन स्कूलों में बिना कंप्यूटर टीचरों के भला कंप्यूटर शिक्षा की

अलख कैसे जगाई जा सकती है।

जिले के गाँव सेंगा, मुँदड़ी, तारागढ़ आदि स्कूलों में तो करीब एक वर्ष पूर्व आए ये कंप्यूटर चोरी भी हो चुके हैं और हरिपुरा के स्कूल में कंप्यूटर की जगह ईट पाई गई। हालाँकि कंप्यूटर कंपनी ने जिस डिब्बे में ईट पाई गई थी उस डिब्बे की जगह कंप्यूटर भेज दिया ताकि मामला आगे न बड़े। राज्य सरकार

ने जिले के हाई और सीनियर सेकेंडरी स्कूलों में कंप्यूटर, जेनरेटर, लैब अटेंडेंट जैसी सुविधाएँ तो उपलब्ध करा दी, लेकिन कंप्यूटर सिखाने वाले अध्यापक, कंप्यूटर चलाने वाले जेनरेटरों में तेल की व्यवस्था व कंप्यूटर रखने के लिए फर्नीचर जैसी तमाम सुविधाओं की ओर कोई ध्यान नहीं दिया है, जिसके चलते करोड़ों का कंप्यूटर ज्ञान डिब्बों में बंद विभाग को कोस

रहा है। अधिकारी उच्च अधिकारियों को कंप्यूटर सिस्टम काम में कहकर गुमराह कर रहे हैं, जबकि जिले के अधिकतर स्कूलों में कंप्यूटर डिब्बों में बंद पड़े हैं, कहीं बिना फर्नीचर के बिखरे पड़े हैं तो जेनरेटर तेल के अभाव में चल नहीं पा रहे हैं। इसके अलावा जिन 62 और स्कूलों में कंप्यूटर शिक्षा दी जा रही है वहाँ भी बच्चों को बेहतर शिक्षा नहीं मिल रही है। नाम ने छापे जाने की शर्त पर एक कंप्यूटर शिक्षक ने बताया कि उन्हें 117 रुपए प्रतिदिन के हिसाब से पैसे दिए जाते हैं और छुट्टियों के पैसे नहीं दिये जाते ऐसे में उनकी बच्चों को कंप्यूटर सिखाने में रुचि कैसे पैदा होगी।

अधिकारियों की कार्यप्रणाली संदेह के घेरे में : स्कूलों में चल रही कंप्यूटर शिक्षा के संदर्भ में उच्च अधिकारियों द्वारा जिला के शिक्षा अधिकारी को एक पत्र मिला था जिसमें जिले की कंप्यूटर शिक्षा को जाँचने के आदेश दिए गए थे, लेकिन जिला शिक्षा अधिकारी ने स्कूलों में रखे कंप्यूटरों की गिनती करके आगे रिपोर्ट दे दी। उन्होंने एक दो स्कूल में फर्नीचर न होने व

स्कूल से कंप्यूटर चोरी होने की सूचना देकर अपना पक्ष झाड़ लिया, लेकिन जिला शिक्षा अधिकारी होने के नाते कंप्यूटर शिक्षा को दुरुस्त करने के लिए कोई प्रयास नहीं किया।

इस संदर्भ में जब जिला शिक्षा अधिकारी साधुराम बरवाल से बात की गई तो उन्होंने कहा

कि 113 स्कूलों में से 51 स्कूलों में जेनरेटर में तेल डालने के लिए पैसे आ चुके हैं। बाकी में आने बाकी उनके लिए विभाग को लिखा हुआ है। स्कूलों में कंप्यूटर शिक्षक न होने की बात के संदर्भ में जिला शिक्षा अधिकारी ने कहा कि स्कूलों में ये कई तरह की स्क्रीम है। कई स्कूलों में टीचर आने लगे हैं। बरवाल ने कहा कि इस संदर्भ में विभाग को बता दिया गया है।

*Jansatta
June 24, P.6*

School buses likely to ply kids without fitness certs

Akshay Deshmane

School buses outside the city limits are most likely to carry children without having authentic fitness certificates and permits as the RTOs outside Mumbai limits have not yet received the transport department's circular directing them to issue the same.

School Bus Owners' Association (SBOA) officials alleged that Regional Transport Offices (RTOs) outside Mumbai limits have not yet received the transport commissioner circular instructing them to give temporary fitness certificates and permits to school buses. This had been done to ensure that in the beginning of the new academic year, there is no dearth of



school buses. However, the association has alleged that most buses in the state have not been certified for their fitness.

SBOA president Anil Garg said, "The transport commissioner has not sent any such circular to the RTO officials

outside Mumbai. Only RTOs in Mumbai have received them. Why is the transport department not obeying orders from the court?"

A senior official from the transport department, however, contradicted Garg's assertion. "The notification has been sent to all RTOs across the state

and its implementation has begun. We are issuing temporary permits and fitness certificates to the bus operators, which will be valid till July 31," the official said. Transport commissioner VN More remained unavailable for comment.

Additional pleader for the state government, GW Mattos, had told the high court on June 13 that the amended school bus rules would be placed before the state assembly during the monsoon session.

"The new rules will be legislated by July 31. Till then the transport commissioner shall issue fitness certificates to buses registered before March last year," he said.

The court directed the association to make a representation for issuance of certificates before the commissioner. It also directed the commissioner to decide on the representation at the earliest.

D.N.A.
June 21
P.5

Lack of teachers, sanitation keeps girls away from schools: Report

Bindu Shajan Perappadan

NEW DELHI: Non-availability of female teachers, absence of safe drinking water, poor maintenance of sanitation facilities and low awareness is what keeps the young girls in the educationally backward and Muslim-dominated Meow district of Haryana away

from schools, a recently conducted study commissioned as part of the National Women Empowerment Mission, under the aegis of the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development, has found.

The study was conducted for assessing convergence of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan with selected Central and State Govern-

ment schemes. A detailed study report will be soon sent to the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development "as many of the suggestions and findings here would apply to other districts and States across the country", noted a senior Women and Child Development Ministry official.

"Insufficient and poor maintenance of sanitation facilities in schools, non-availability of required teachers, especially female teachers due to non-recruitment of local teachers, absences of residential facilities for the teachers recruited from outside the district and absence of reservation for female teachers both in recruitment and in their residential facilities hamper retention of girls," noted the study. Further it was found that the school health programme and coun-

selling of teachers and girls were not implemented effectively due to absence or non-availability of doctors in government hospitals. Another important deterrent to the girl child accessing formal school education was the fact that the government educational institutions faced absence of safe drinking water and supply of water in toilets in schools.

"The study also showed us that schemes and incentives are not received by the beneficiaries in time due to lack of proper planning," said a senior official in the Ministry. Low awareness among the community and parents, and ineffective functioning of the school management panels at the community level also works against the girl child getting proper education at school, noted the study.

Hindu
June 11,
P.9

DOPED BABIES ON RENT FOR BEGGING

Yogesh Pawar Mumbai

Sunlight has still not reached the shanty settlement nestled near Parsik Hills, just off suburban Kalwa's railway tracks. The 350 plus hovels, however, are abuzz with a strange activity. For many of the women there, it's time to go looking for babies to hire.

Mallamma Malepu, 35, arrives at her relative Sundari Malepu's house, ready to pick up Srinu, a 10-month-old baby she rents for begging. "We have an understanding for Rs50. While others keep hiking up the rent, Sundari is family and we have kept the rate fixed for a year," she says. "I also ensure that I make at least Rs250-300 every day (which they split equally) so that her family and mine can both make enough."

The question seems only obvious. Won't the child cry without its mother? "No. He knows his *peddamma* (Telugu for mother's sister). He has been going out with me for several months now. I carry some milk and buy him a toffee if he cries too much," she says. Only when we look unconvinced and prod further, does she reveal her secret. "We give him a little opium that is sold here in the settlement. It is not harmful," she says while looking apprehensively at a vessel-scrubbing Sundari.

After Sundari's husband died last year, the responsibility of raising their three children fell on her shoulders. "I know hiring out Srinu may seem cruel to you, but where am I going to get enough money to take care of us and also send some back for my in-laws back in Anantpur?" asks Sundari.

Srinu isn't an exception. Babies from this settlement can be found at most stations along both central and western railway lines, and also at tourist haunts like Juhu beach, Chowpatty and the Gateway of India.

Rajamma Ganpati, 36, sick with fever and cough, says she has little option but to rent out her still unnamed child, less than a month old. "She keeps crying but I have to send her out for begging. I have two more children to feed," she says while quickly hiding the Rs100 she has collected from neighbour Gouramma as



Rajendra Gawankar/DNA

Mallamma and Sitamma set out with hired children from their Kalwa home

rent for her child before her husband wakes up. "Whatever little we earn, he spends on his drinking. If he sees this money, he'll fight and take it away."

In another corner of this settlement, 49-year-old Hanumanta Chellu is busy. He is renting Chinamma Ugurappa, 9, and her baby sister Laxmi for Rs125 a day. Chellu, who we are told works for the local slumlord, uses these children to beg on local trains

and streets. As they leave for work, the girls are warned to meet their day's target of Rs300. Without it, their parents will receive nothing and the girls will get a sound thrashing. "When my mother applies vermilion on my head for luck every day, she never forgets to warn us about making enough money," confirms Chinamma without batting an eye-lid.

Most of the families in this slum are from the drought hit-Rayalseema region of Andhra Pradesh, North Karnataka's Raichur-Gulbarga belt, Beed in Marathwada and Akola district in Vidarbha. They have neither ration-cards nor voter IDs. Not surprisingly, no local elected representatives or administration has ever shown interest in them. Begging with babies, then, seems to them the only way out.

At Juhu beach, Sitamma Malappa eyes a young couple paying the autorickshaw and heading to the beach. She nudges ten-year-old Bhanu to follow. From afar, one can see the couple trying to evade her and the baby she carries. Finally, though, they give in and a victorious Bhanu runs back with the baby and a 10-rupee note. She hands over both to Sitamma and joins her friends in a game of hopscotch she had left mid-way.

To read the full version of this story, log on to <http://dnai.in/a1f2>



SURVIVAL TACTIC

Most of the families are from the drought hit-Rayalseema region of AP, North Karnataka's Raichur-Gulbarga belt, Beed and Akola in Maharashtra. They have neither ration-cards nor voter IDs. Begging with babies, then, seems to them the only way out.

D.N.A.
June 17
p.3

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

CHILD HEALTH

BIHAR'S CHILDREN

BEYOND an administrative measure of cancelling leave of doctors, there is precious little that the Bihar government has done to contain encephalitis that has already killed 178 children in ten districts, including 113 in Muzaffarpur alone. The unofficial count could be higher. The state's public health policy is on test, and thus far it has failed abysmally. The victims are predominantly poor and backward class groups, confirming the perception that medical care is only for those who can afford it. Despite the directive of the National Institute of Virology, the administration in Patna has stopped short of declaring the mortal ailment as an epidemic when the spread has almost assumed endemic proportions. Bihar's children certainly deserved better; those afflicted are suffering still more acutely because of the administrative atrophy. This has hampered diagnosis, indeed the collection of brain tissues, direly essential for a state that isn't equipped with suitable diagnostic facilities. Bihar is no stranger to encephalitis; and yet no lesson has been learnt from outbreaks in the past. Has the administration been caught on the wrong foot again? Even the caveat to health ser-

vice doctors was advanced only after the toll started mounting. From education to health, this is an instance too many of adults falling the child.

The worst that could have happened in such a scenario is the putrid discourse within a thoroughly inept administration. When the State ought to have pulled out all the stops to counter-tenance the situation — worsening by the day — Chief Minister Nitish Kumar hasn't gone beyond announcing a compensation of Rs 50,000 to the bereaved families. Many or most of the lives could have been saved had the health department been more earnest and effective. While his deputy, the BJP's Sushil Modi seeks a co-relation between encephalitis and "poverty", the health minister, Ashwini Choubey's response is breathtaking in its vacuity — he has blamed the media for "creating panic". The death of 178 children must transcend the definition of panic, it is a tragedy to which a government with a massive majority hasn't responded. This is Bihar, a state that takes murders and child mortality for granted. The children may have cycled their way quicker to death than to school.

*Statesman
June 18,
p.8*

बिहार में रहस्यमय बीमारी से 74 बच्चों की मौत

पटना, 8 जून (भाषा)। बिहार में रहस्यमय बीमारी से बच्चों की मौत का मितलमिला जारी है। माई से लेकर अब तक एक्यूट इनसेफालीटिस सिंड्रोम (एईएस) के 197 प्रसूतियों में से 74 की जान जा चुकी है। राज्य सरकार ने कहा जाने वाला इस रहस्यमय बीमारी का नाम एईएस रखा है जो बिमारी बुझार से मिलते जुलते लक्षणों सहित 17 अन्य बीमारियों को मिलाकर दिया गया नाम है।

स्वास्थ्य विभाग के प्रधान सचिव अमरजीत सिन्हा ने मुकदमा की बख्ता कि पटना के पोस्टग्रेजुएट, जनसमसोएच, मुजफ्फरपुर के केजरीवाल और एनकेएमसीएच के गंगा के एनएएमसीएच में गंगा पर के विभिन्न हिस्सों में भरी हुए 74 बच्चों की अब तक एक्यूट इनसेफालीटिस सिंड्रोम (एईएस) के कारण मौत हो चुकी है। माई और जून महीने में इस रहस्यमय बीमारी के अब तक 197 मामले सामने आए हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि इस साल जापानी इनसेफलाइटिस (जापानी नरिनाक ज्वर) के दो मामलों की पुष्टि हुई है जो गंगा के एनएएमसीएच के हैं। लेकिन किसी की भी इस बीमारी से मौत नहीं हुई है। सभी मृत बच्चों एईएस से पीड़ित थे।

सिन्हा ने बताया कि एईएस में लू, संक्रमण जलैसिच, मेनिंगजाइटिस, टीबी, सेप्टिकेमाइटिस, न्यूमोनिया, एनकेएमसीएच, पाथोलॉजिक जिनिसाइटिस सहित 17 बीमारियों का बिमारी

बुझार से मिलते जुलते लक्षणों की रखा गया है। उन्होंने बताया कि राज्य के भगलपुर विभाग, जेएलएनएमसीएच और दरभंगा के पीएमसीएच में बिमारी बुझार, जापानी नरिनाक ज्वर या एईएस का अभी तक कोई भी मामला सामने नहीं आया है। मुजफ्फरपुर में एईएस के 81 मामले सामने आए, जिनमें से 30 बच्चों की मौत हो गई। सबसे ज्यादा 27 बच्चों की मौत केजरीवाल चैरिटीबल अस्पताल में हुई और एनकेएमसीएच में दो बच्चों केाल के गाल में मार गए। ये बच्चों विरहुर और नोमी प्रमंडल क्षेत्र के हैं।

उन्होंने बताया कि पटना के पीएमसीएच और एनएएमसीएच में 89 मामलों में अब तक 34 बच्चों की मौत हुई है जबकि गंगा के अनुगत मजराता सौध सैडिकल कॉलेज अस्पताल (एनएएमसीएच) में भरी हुए 27 में से भी बच्चों की मौत हो चुकी है। प्रधान सचिव ने बताया कि राज्य में एनएएमसीएच से जापानी नरिनाक ज्वर के दो मामले सामने आए हैं। वहां गंगा, औरंगाबाद, जयदा, जहानाबाद और झारखंड के चतरा के मामले आए हैं। जापानी इनसेफलाइटिस (जेई) के मामले औरंगाबाद और गंगा के इमामगंज में आए हैं। जहां टैकसकरण का अधिघात तुल कर दिया गया है।

पटना सैडिकल कॉलेज अस्पताल की शिगु रोग विभाग की अध्यापक डॉ संजाला रायचौधरी ने बताया कि उनके यहां राज्य के करीब 21 विभिन्न सैडिकल केाल का एक

मामला सामने आया है। एईएस के मामलों में बच्चों को बचाना बहुत कठिन होता है और ज्यादातर मामले गंभीर स्थिति में आते हैं।

सिन्हा ने कहा कि समय रहते बच्चों को बचाने के लिए उन्हें आईसीयू तक पहुंचाने, रोग के लक्षणों को पहचानने के तुल बाद अस्पताल पहुंचाने और रोगी में बच्चों को भुग में खोलने से मना करने के लिए जामरुकराल अधिघात चालाया जा रहा है। उन्होंने बताया कि 2011 में मुजफ्फरपुर में बच्चों की मौत के मामले में लिए गए अनुसंधान में विरहुर और कोसी के आसपास माई-जून की मीषण गर्मी को प्रमुदा कारण माना गया है। बारिश के बाद इस तरह के मामले आने कम या लगभग खत्म हो जाते हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि गंगा और झारखार के क्षेत्रों में एईएस के साथ जापानी नरिनाक ज्वर के भी कुछ मामले सामने आते हैं। इसलिए वहां सच्छरी की रोकथाम और टैकसकरण के कदम उठाए जा रहे हैं। गंगा और मुजफ्फरपुर में बच्चों के लिए आईसीयू को व्यवस्था की गई है। इसके अलावा अलास में इनसेफलाइटिस के घाई बनाए गए हैं। प्रधान सचिव ने बताया कि पिछले साल जेई के 27 मामले सामने आए थे जिनमें से 11 बच्चों की मौत हो गई थी।

लोजका तुलैमी समविलसन फालकल ने राज्य में रहस्यमय बीमारी के कारण हो रही मौतों का टैकसकरण पर फेडरल हुए कहा कि बच्चों की मौत के लिए मुकदमा भी नौदो

कुमार विमनेदार है। गंगा और मुजफ्फरपुर में बच्चों मर रहे हैं लेकिन मुकदमों को अपनी सेवा यात्रा से फुल्लत नहीं है। वे एक बार भी बच्चों को बचाने या उनका हाल चाल जानने नहीं पहुंचे। फालकल ने आरोप लगाया कि मीषण के बल्ले होने के कारण इन पर राज्य में ध्यान नहीं दिया जा रहा है।

राजद के प्रदेश अध्यापक रामचंद्र पूई के नेतृत्व में बीमारी में पीड़ित बच्चों को देखने मुजफ्फरपुर पहुंची टीम ने केजरीवाल परामों अस्पताल में सलभरी सैडिकल मेडिकल कालेज व अस्पताल (एनकेएमसीएच) का दौरा किया। पूई ने कहा कि चैरिटीबल अस्पताल अपने सीमित संरक्षकों में बच्चों की इरसंभव सेवा कर रहा है जबकि एनकेएमसीएच बच्चों के लिए 'समसात' बन गया है। कुलधरनाक के कारण लोग अपने बच्चों को वहां लेकर नहीं जाना चाहते।

राजद नेता ने कहा कि एनकेएमसीएच लोगों के बीच अपनी विषयनौयत छोड़ चुका है। जाने बच्चों की मौत के बादतुर न्यायन्य मंत्री अधिबली लीडे ने दौरा तक नहीं किया है। वे केवल बयान दे रहे हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि एनकेएमसीएच में भरी प्रसूतियों का सैकजट माया गया तो इसे देखने नहीं दिया। प्रसूतियों के घाई में सच्छरी नहीं चला रहे हैं। नैतिकता के आधार पर न्यायन्य मंत्री को अपने पद पर बने रहने का अधिकार नहीं है। राज्य इस मामले में न्यायपालन विधानसद कुदर से मिलकर इरसंभव को मांग करोगे।

Jansatta, June 9, p.8

Six lakh kids a year die of diarrhoea, pneumonia in India

press trust of india

NEW YORK, 8 JUNE: Scaling up simple interventions to control diarrhoea and pneumonia can save more than two million children in poor and developing countries, including India where over six lakh kids under five years die every year due to the two preventable diseases, a Unicef report said today.

According to the report, pneumonia and diarrhoea, the two biggest killers of children, killed about 2,197,000 children under five years of age in 2010, making up 29 per cent of all child deaths under age five worldwide.

And with 609,000 deaths India topped the list of the 75 countries with the highest mortality burden attributed to the two diseases, it said.

The report also noted that about half the world's deaths from pneumonia and diarrhoea occur in just five mostly poor and populous countries such as India, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Pakistan and Ethiopia. However, simple interventions such as introducing routine vaccination programmes could save lots of lives in the coming year, the report said. "We know what works against pneumonia and diarrhoea - the two illnesses that hit the poorest hardest," Unicef executive-director Mr Anthony Lake said in a release. "Scaling up simple interventions could overcome two of the biggest obstacles to increasing child survival, help give every child a fair chance to grow and thrive," he said.

One of the simplest, most effective ways to safeguard babies from disease is exclusive breastfeeding. "Yet fewer than 40 per cent of infants younger than six months of age in devel-



oping countries are exclusively breastfed, depriving them of this critical protection," the report reads.

Promoting hand-washing; enhancing access to safe drinking water and sanitation; and disseminating oral rehydration salts to children with diarrhoea and antibiotics to children with bacterial pneumonia are the other simple ways to combat the diseases, it noted. Water and sanitation is another key hurdle, with 783 million people globally not using an improved drinking water source, and 2.5 billion not using sanitation facilities.

"Nearly 90 per cent of deaths due to diarrhoea worldwide have been attributed to unsafe water, inadequate sanitation and poor hygiene," reads the report.

The report also noted that nearly 1.1 billion people in the world still practiced open defecation, another major driver of diarrhoea, and more than half of them lived in India. But "child deaths due to pneumonia in these countries could fall 30 per cent, and child deaths due to diarrhoea could fall 60 per cent", if interventions among poor children were raised to the level seen in the richest 20 per cent of households in the same countries. In that event, deaths of children from all causes could be reduced about 13 per cent in those 75 countries by 2015, the report predicted.

The Unicef report comes a week before a planned meeting in Washington convened by the governments of Ethiopia, India and the US on child-survival objectives. Some 700 experts from government and the private sector are expected to attend.

*States man,
June 9, P.1*

सीटी स्कैन से सुरक्षित नहीं बच्चे

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बच्चों के लिए सीटी स्कैन उनको जान का जोखिम बन सकता है। इससे निकलने वाले घातक विकिरण न सिर्फ उनमें ब्लड कैंसर (ल्यूकेमिया) के लक्षण पैदा कर सकते हैं बल्कि इससे ब्रेन कैंसर होने का खतरा तीन गुना तक बढ़ जाता है।

ब्रिटिश मेडिकल जर्नल लांसट में प्रकाशित ताजा शोध में यह जानकारी सामने आई। शोध के मुताबिक, 15 वर्ष के बच्चे जो दो या तीन बार सिर का सीटी स्कैन करा चुके हैं, उनमें विकिरण का एक्सपोजर भारी मात्रा में होता है। उन्हें इसकी 60 मिली ग्रे मात्रा झेलने पड़ती है। जिससे उन्हें भविष्य में ब्रेन कैंसर होने का खतरा तीन गुना बढ़ जाता है। दूसरी ओर, 5 से 10 सीटी स्कैन कराने

10000 में से एक को ब्रेन ट्यूमर

अध्ययन में 178604 मरीजों में से 74 को ब्लड कैंसर और 176587 में से 135 मरीजों को ब्रेन कैंसर पाया गया। शोधकर्ताओं के मुताबिक 20 वर्ष तक के प्रत्येक 10000 व्यक्तियों ने

सीटी स्कैन के माध्यम से 10 मिली ग्रे विकिरण ग्रहण किया। 10 वर्ष तक के 10000 बच्चों में से एक में सीटी स्कैन कराने के बाद ब्रेन ट्यूमर विकसित हुआ।

वाले बच्चों में भविष्य में ब्लड कैंसर होने की आशंका पैदा हो जाती है।

1.8 लाख मरीजों पर शोध

न्यूकैस्टल यूनिवर्सिटी के शोधकर्ताओं ने उन 180000 मरीजों का अध्ययन किया जिन्होंने वर्ष 1985 और 2002 के दरम्यान ब्रिटेन के अस्पतालों में सीटी स्कैन करवाए थे। इन आंकड़ों का रूक नेशनल हेल्थ

सर्विस में दर्ज कैंसर की घटनाओं और उससे होने वाली मौतों के आंकड़ों से मिलाया गया।

इससे पता चला कि सीटी स्कैन कराने वाले बच्चों में ब्लड कैंसर और ब्रेन कैंसर के कई मामलें पाए गए। ब्रेन और बोनमरो द्वारा ग्रहण की गई विकिरण की मात्रा उम्र और शारीरिक अंगों के सीटी स्कैन के आधार पर भिन्न पाई गई।

(एजेंसी)

Rajasthan
Patrika
June 8, 12

दिमागी बुखार से पीड़ित बच्चों का सरकार कराएगी इलाज

● बंगलूरु, तमिळुनाडु

दिमागी बुखार पर 'दैनिक जागरण' के अभियान को इस समय बड़ी कामयाबी मिली जब मंगलवार को विधानसभा में संसदीय कार्य मंत्री मोहम्मद आज़म खान ने सदन को बरोसा दिलाया कि जापानी इन्फेक्लाइटिस (जेई) को रोकथाम के लिए राज्य सरकार अपनी तरफ से कोई कोर कसर बाकी नहीं रखेगी। समस्या के निदान के लिए सरकार हर संभव कदम उठाएगी और दिमागी बुखार से पीड़ित किसी भी बच्चे को इलाज के अभाव में मरने नहीं दिया जाएगा।

मंगलवार को राज्य प्रहर शुरू होते ही जापान के डॉ. राधामोहन दास अस्पताल ने इस मामले को उठाते हुए सदन का साह काम रोक कर बच्चे कराने की मांग की। विधानसभा अध्यक्ष माता प्रसार पांडेय ने माना कि यह मामला संभर है। सीटी स्कैन से कि यह दोषदा इसका संज्ञान ले रहे हैं, जबकि पहले भी यह मामला उठ चुका है। डा. अग्रवाल ने विधानसभाध्यक्ष से कहा कि आप खुद उस क्षेत्र से आते हैं। बीमारी को विधायिका से परिचित है। आप खुद सदस्य के तौर पर इस मामले को सदन में उठा चुके हैं पर आज तक समाधान नहीं निकला है। उन्होंने कहा कि प्रदेश



अखिलेश सरकार ने सदन को दिलाया बरोसा, बीमारी की रोकथाम को हर संभव कदम उठाएगी सरकार

के कम से कम 35 जिलों में जेई महामारी को रूप धारण कर चुकी है। इन जिलों के करीब 140 विधायक ऐसे हैं जो रोज जनता को इस विकराल समस्या से दो-चार होते हैं। दिमागी बुखार में होने वाले मासूम बच्चों को मौतों से रोज पुर्वांचल का कोई न कोई हिस्सा दहलता है। सरकार की कारबलियन इस बात पर ही निर्भर करेगी कि वह जेई की समस्या को खत्म करने में कितनी कामयाब होती है। इस बीमारी की चपेट में आए

ये हैं बीमारी के प्रमुख कारण

- सदन में कहा गया कि निम्न उल्लेखों से जेई की रोकथाम नहीं हो पा रही है
- मानक के अनुरूप पूर्ण उम्र में स्वास्थ्य सुविधाएं न होना
- प्राथमिक स्वास्थ्य केंद्रों, सामुदायिक स्वास्थ्य केंद्रों, जिला अस्पतालों में प्रभावी इलाज न हो पाना
- जोरदारपट के बीघाटी मेडिकल कालेज को अतिरिक्त संसाधन न भूईया कताना
- इलेक्ट्रोकार्डियल और उससे जुड़ी अन्य बीमारियों की रोकथाम के लिए शोध कार्य न होना

हजारों मासूम दम दम लोड़ चुके हैं फिर भी स्वास्थ्य प्रशासन यह बता पाने में सफल नहीं हो पाया है कि इस बीमारी का मूल कारण क्या है। जिन विभागों को इस बीमारी की वजह बताई जाती है, सिर्फ वही इसके कारण हैं या मरीजों के कारण कुपोषण, माल्टी विटामिन डेफिसियेंसी या जल प्रदूषण को भी इसमें भूमिका है। अब तक इस बाबत उच्चस्तरीय शोध कार्य तक संचालित नहीं हो पाए हैं।

बच्चों के दौरान सदस्यों ने कहा कि चीन, जापान, कोरिया, इंडोनेशिया, विथतानाम, थाइलैंड आदि देशों और भारत के आन्ध्र प्रदेश, तमिलनाडु आदि राज्यों में इस बीमारी पर पूरी तरह नियंत्रण पा लिया गया। इनके अनुभवों का लाभ उठाकर

भी हम अपने प्रदेश में इस बीमारी पर नियंत्रण नहीं कर पाए। डा. अग्रवाल ने तो यह तक कहा कि टीके को दो डोज एक वर्ष के अंतराल में और तीसरी डोज उसके चार साल के बाद लगाई जानी चाहिए, पर हमारे यहां सिर्फ एक ही बार टीकाकरण कराया गया। सदस्यों ने कहा कि अगर अतिरिक्त संसाधन को व्यवस्था नहीं की गई तो सरकार चाहे जितने दावे करे, समस्या दूर नहीं होगी। सदस्यों ने एक स्वर में इसके लिए एक उच्चस्तरीय टास्क फोर्स के गठन की मांग की जिसमें सदन के सदस्य भी रहें। वह इसकी रोकथाम के लिए उठाए जाने वाले कदमों के साथ बजट में उसके लिए धन को व्यवस्था सुनिश्चित करण।

Dainik Jagaran, June 6, 14

27 children die of mysterious disease

PATNA, DHNS: With three more deaths reported on Tuesday, altogether 27 children have died so far in the last 11 days in Muzaffarpur and Gaya due to a mysterious disease. It is suspected that most of the children have succumbed to brain-fever, also called encephalitis, but the health department officials in Bihar have not confirmed the cause of the death yet.

"It is yet to be confirmed whether the deaths are due to encephalitis or any other ail-

ment," said Dr SP Singh, Director-in-chief, Health Services. Singh has sought a detailed report from the civil surgeons of the two districts.

Meanwhile, Health Commissioner Amarjit Sinha rushed to Muzaffarpur on Tuesday and took stock of the alarming situation. Altogether 19 children have died in the district due to 'brain fever'. He assured the parents that those children admitted in Muzaffarpur hospitals would be shifted to Patna for best possible treatment.

*Deccan herald,
June 6, p.9*

CT scan on kids triples risk of developing cancer

Kounteya Sinha | TNM

New Delhi: Children subjected to CT scans with high radiation doses face a three time increased risk of suffering from leukaemia and brain cancer during their lifetime.

In the most conclusive evidence till date, a study published in British medical journal Lancet on Wednesday says radiation exposure received from two to three CT scans of the head in childhood (aged under 15 years) — giving a cumulative dose of around 60 milli-Grays (mGy) can triple the risk of later developing brain cancer.

On the other hand, around 5 to 10 such scans (cumulative dose around 50 mGy) could triple the risk of developing leukemia,



RISKY PRACTICE

The authors from the Newcastle University studied around 180,000 patients who underwent a CT scan between 1985 and 2002 from 70% of the UK's hospitals.

These data were then linked to cancer incidence and mortality reports in the UK National Health Service Registry between 1985 and 2008.

From this, they calculated excess incidence of leukemia

and brain tumours. The dose of radiation received by the brain and bone marrow varied by age and body part scanned. A total of 74 from 178,604 patients were diagnosed with leukemia and 135 of 176,587 were diagnosed with brain cancer.

The authors say that, of every 10,000 people between the ages of 0-20 years receiving 10 mGy from a CT scan, there would be about one expected excess leukemia case, whereas there would be one excess case of brain cancer for every 30,000 people. Applying the dose estimates for one head CT scan before the age of 10 years, this would translate into approximately one excess case of leukemia and one excess brain tumour per 10,000 patients in the decade after the first exposure.

Times of India, June 7, p.9

-ENCEPHALITIS

Mystery disease kills 2 more kids, toll rises to 87

IN BIHAR State sends SOS to Centre, WHO; specialists to reach Patna today

Binod Dubey and Ajay Kumar

✉ letters@hindustantimes.com

PATNA/MUZAFFARPUR: A mystery disease stalking Bihar's children claimed two more lives on Sunday, taking the death toll to 87 in the last 19 days and forcing the state to seek the Centre's help for tackling the health nightmare.

The state has also sought the World Health Organisation's assistance to identify the disease and cause. Children struck by the disease are dying after bouts of high temperature and convulsions.

The disease has been dubbed "acute encephalitis syndrome", but experts have not been able to say for sure if it is encephalitis — an acute inflammation of

IS IT ENCEPHALITIS?

- A majority of the deaths have been reported in Muzaffarpur district in north Bihar and at least 10 in Gaya district in the southern part of the state.

- The disease has been dubbed 'acute encephalitis syndrome', but experts have not been able to say for sure if it is encephalitis — an acute inflammation of brain

the brain.

A majority of the deaths have been reported in Muzaffarpur district in north Bihar and at least 10 in Gaya district in the southern part of the state.

The Anugrah Narayan

- Children struck by the disease are dying after bouts of high temperature and convulsions.

- Last year, encephalitis, a mosquito-borne disease, claimed nearly 150 lives in Muzaffarpur and Gaya districts.

- Angry parents and their relatives protested in Muzaffarpur last week.

Memorial Medical College Hospital at Gaya has attributed two of the deaths to Japanese Encephalitis — an infection of the brain caused by a virus transmitted by mosquitoes.

"Responding to our request,

the Union health ministry is sending a team of specialists to Patna on June 11," Bihar health minister Ashwini Kumar Choubey said on Sunday.

According to Muzaffarpur civil surgeon Dr Gyan Bhushan, 100 cases of "acute encephalitis syndrome" have been reported from various parts of the district.

In the state capital, Dr Sanjata Rai Choudhary, head of department of paediatrics at Patna Medical College Hospital, said no child had died of the disease in the hospital. "Still, we are planning to create a special ward for encephalitis at the children's hospital here. Besides, we are not sure about the exact nature of the disease," she added.

Hindustan times, June 11, P.13

बिहार में दिमागी बुखार से अब तक 227 बच्चों की मौत

पटना, 23 जून (भाषा)। बिहार में विभिन्न जिलों में फैले दिमागी बुखार (एक्युट इंसेफलाइटिस सिंड्रोम) के कारण मरने वाले बच्चों की संख्या बढ़कर शनिवार को 227 हो गई। स्वास्थ्य विभाग के अपर सचिव आरपी ओझा ने पत्रकारों से कहा कि पिछले चौबीस घंटों के भीतर पटना जिला और मुजफ्फरपुर में एक-एक बच्चे की मौत होने से दिमागी बुखार से मरने वाले बच्चों की संख्या बढ़कर 227 हो गई है। पटना में 53, मुजफ्फरपुर में 158, गया में 11 और वैशाली में पांच बच्चों की मौत हुई।

ओझा ने बताया कि दिमागी बुखार से पीड़ित छह नए मरीज मुजफ्फरपुर में भर्ती किए गए हैं जबकि अबतक इससे कुल ग्रसित होने वाले बच्चों की संख्या 573 रही है। इसके लिए गठित टास्क फोर्स का मानना है कि प्रदेश में मानसून के आ जाने से अब राज्य में दिमागी बुखार के मरीजों में कमी आएगी। मानसून के शुरू होने पर गया जिले में बीमारी बढ़ने के पहले के अनुभव को देखते हुए आगामी 15 जुलाई तक गया जिला और उसके पड़ोसी जिलों औरंगाबाद, नवादा और झारखंड के चतरा जिला में मैलाथियॉन की सघन फॉगिंग का काम पूरा कर लिया जाएगा।

ओझा के मुताबिक 2007 व 2009 में प्रदेश के छह जिलों गया, मुजफ्फरपुर, पश्चिम

चंपारण, सीवान, गोपालगंज और नवादा जिलों में बीमारी से बचाव के लिए एक से 15 साल के बच्चों के बीच टीकाकरण किया गया था। गया जिला में दिमागी बुखार के पिछले साल भी 59 मामले सामने आए थे जिसे देखते हुए इस जिले में राज्य सरकार ने एक बार फिर से टीकाकरण के लिए तीन लाख जेई का वायल भेजने का अनुरोध किया है। लेकिन वह केंद्र से अभी तक हासिल नहीं हुआ है।

राज्य सरकार ने दस जिलों को दिमागी बुखार से प्रभावित घोषित किया है जिसमें चिकित्सकों के साथ एंबुलेंस वाली मोबाइल यूनिट तैनात की गई है जिनका काम गांव-गांव जाकर दिमागी बुखार से ग्रसित मरीजों की निशानदेही कर उनका प्राथमिक इलाज करना और जिन बच्चों की स्थिति गंभीर हो गई है उन्हें बेहतर इलाज के लिए निकटतम अस्पताल पहुंचाना है।

Jansatta, June 24, P.8

Encephalitis kills 84 children in Bihar

AMARNATH TEWARY ■ PATNA

The spectre of deadly encephalitis is still looming large on the children of Bihar as altogether 84 of them have died so far in different hospitals of the State. Over hundred children are still battling for life ringing an alarm in Government hospitals in affected districts.

The number of children died due to the Acute Encephalopathy Syndrome (AES) in the State has gone up to 84 on Friday. Altogether 197 cases are reported in different hospitals where conditions of some of the children are critical, said a Government health official.

Stating that AES comprising symptoms of 17 diseases like cerebral malaria, meningitis and TB meningitis, State health principal secretary, Amarjeet Sinha said that 34 children have died at the Patna Medical College and Hospital (PMCH) and 30 others at Sri Krishna Memorial College and Hospital (SKMCH) and private Kejriwal hospital in Muzaffarpur.

However, the unofficial records said that a total 84 children died so far at PMCH, Muzaffarpur and Gaya Government hospitals. Besides, some of the children have also breathed last in the private Kejriwal hospital in Muzaffarpur.

Meanwhile, the parents of dying children blamed the State Government for failure in checking the disease which strikes every year during the months of May-June in



Encephalitis patients at Patna Medical College Hospital on Friday

PTI

197 CASES HAVE BEEN REPORTED IN DIFFERENT HOSPITALS WHERE CONDITIONS OF SOME OF THE CHILDREN ARE CRITICAL

Muzaffarpur and Gaya district.

"Forget about controlling the spread of the disease, the State Government has not even identified the disease and there is no particular medicine for curing it", rued parents in

encephalitis patients.

"I've asked the PMCH superintendent and the head of the paediatrics ward in the hospital to open a separate ward for the encephalitis patients", said Choubey currently in Jharkhand for the prestigious Hatia Assembly bypoll campaign.

Medical infrastructure has been put in place at Government and private hospitals for treatment of AES cases and medical and paramedic personnel have also been alerted to the situation.

"It has become a routine affair for the Government...it wakes up to the deadly encephalitis when the killer disease has already claimed lives of over 50 children", charged a medical practitioner in Muzaffarpur.

According to an unofficial estimate about five thousand children have died due to encephalitis in the State since 1995 but the State Government failed to even open a separate ward for encephalitis patients in Government hospitals of Muzaffarpur and Gaya, the worst affected districts.

"The disturbing trend is that the counting of the dying children is still on...this time it (encephalitis) has struck earlier therefore the casualty figure is going up", said a doctor in PMCH.

The State Government needs to do something serious and permanent to control and check this deadly disease which makes its presence every year in summer and make the gullible children its victim, believe doctors.

Muzaffarpur and Gaya.

Earlier, both the State health secretary Amarjeet Sinha and the State Health Minister Ashwani Choubey had denied the mystery disease as encephalitis.

"It is a panic created by media, the children are not dying due to encephalitis", State Health Minister Ashwani Choubey said. The statement of the Minister created hue and cry in Bihar. However, on Friday he declared that the Government would open a separate ward from Monday in PMCH for

Pioneer, June 9, P-6

INFANT DEATHS RETURN IN MALDA: 9 DIE IN 48 HOURS

HT Correspondent

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BEHRAMPORE: Infant deaths returned yet again to haunt Malda Medical College and Hospital (MMCH), where more than 70 deaths have been reported in the last two months. In the latest incident, nine infants — four boys and five girls — have died at the facility in the last 48 hours.

Doctors, however, are yet to ascertain the cause of the deaths. MMCH had blamed low birth asphyxia and malnutrition as the main reasons behind the previous deaths.

On Monday, a three-member team from the department of health and family welfare visited the facility and collected blood samples and spinal cord fluid from some of the infants.

"We have collected samples from five deceased infants and sent them for further tests," said Asit Biswas, spokesperson of the state health department.

Sources said a number of infants from Malda, Dinajpur and Murshidabad districts had been admitted to the hospital with an unknown fever.

A senior doctor who did not want to be named said the babies were under general treatment.

But following the deaths, health officials have instructed the hospital to start specialised treatment for the other babies in that hospital.

"A doctor told me my baby had died because she couldn't bear the heat in the children's ward. Now they are telling me my baby died from an unknown fever," said Rajia Bibi, a resident of Malda-Harishchandrapur village.

Hindustan times, June 12, '18

शिशु मृत्यु को ऑनलाइन दर्ज

करने की तैयारी

चंडीगढ़, 17 जून (हरप्र)। हरियाणा स्वास्थ्य विभाग द्वारा शीघ्र ही शिशु मृत्यु व मृत प्रसव को ऑनलाइन दर्ज करने के लिए एक वेबसाइट शुरू की जाएगी, ताकि मातृत्व और शिशु मृत्यु व मृत प्रसव के पंजीकरण को केंद्रीयकृत किया जा सके। इससे माता व शिशु की मृत्यु के कारणों और सेवाओं में कमी, यदि कोई है, की पहचान भी हो सकेगी। स्वास्थ्य मंत्री राव नरेंद्र सिंह ने बताया कि राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण स्वास्थ्य मिशन ने पाया कि अधिकांश मातृत्व और शिशु मृत्यु व मृत प्रसव बिना सूचना के रह जाते हैं।

उन्होंने कहा कि विभाग को यह ऑनलाइन परियोजना सुनिश्चित करेगी कि सभी विभागों में उपलब्ध एकल ऑनलाइन सॉफ्टवेयर के माध्यम से सभी क्षेत्रों से रिपोर्टिंग सामग्री तथा शिशु-मृत्यु की रिपोर्टिंग केंद्रीयकृत हो गई है। इसका उद्देश्य मातृत्व मृत्यु दर और शिशु मृत्यु दर में कमी लाने के लिए आवश्यक प्रशासनिक शुद्धियां तथा नीतियां बनाकर रिपोर्टिंग और सेवाओं में कमियों व दुष्प्रभावों को कम करना है।

उन्होंने बताया कि ऐसी सूचना किसी भी नागरिक द्वारा दी जा सकती है। इसकी सूचना रेफरल ट्रांसपोर्ट टोल फ्री नम्बर-102 पर भी दी जा सकती है। इसके अतिरिक्त, जो व्यक्ति पहले रिपोर्ट करेगा, उसे प्रत्येक मामले की रिपोर्ट के लिए 100 रुपये का मानदेय दिया जाएगा। उन्होंने कहा कि यह पाया गया है कि

दस्तावेज एक अधिकारी से दूसरे अधिकारी तक पहुंचाने की प्रक्रिया में समय लगता है। इसलिए एक त्वरित संचार प्रणाली की आवश्यकता है। महिला एवं बाल विकास विभाग व स्वास्थ्य विभाग द्वारा निगरानी प्रणाली की रिपोर्टिंग संचालित की जा रही है। सहायक नर्सिंग मीड वाइफ (एएनएम), आंगनवाड़ी कार्यकर्ता (एडव्यूडव्यू), मातृत्व और शिशु मृत्यु व मृत प्रसव के बारे में सूचना दे सकती हैं। प्रत्येक जिले में मातृत्व और शिशु मृत्यु की समीक्षा करने के लिए सुविधा स्तर और सामुदायिक स्तर पर और अधिक ध्यान केंद्रित करने तथा इस मामले से निपटने के लिए एक कमेटी गठित की गई है।

*Dainik Tribune,
June 18, 17*

LSD patients campaign for state support

Express News Service

Chennai: Patients suffering from Lysosomal Storage Disorder (LSDs) and their families along with doctors gathered at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and appealed to Chief Minister J. Jayalithaa to seek the support of the State government to treat and manage this disease. Lysosomal Storage Disorders Support Society (LSDSS) provided this platform to the distressed families to make their voice heard.

LSDs are a group of around forty-five rare, genetic disorders that occur due to the deficiency of specific enzymes in lysosomes of the cell. LSDs occurs in about one in 5,000 live births. "A majority of LSDs are managed by means of supportive care measures that are disease specific. However, six of the LSDs can now be treated by means of Enzyme Replacement Therapies (ERTs)," said Dr M Sujatha Jagadeesh, geneticist, Medicin.

India currently has 350-400 patients who have been diagnosed with treatable LSDs. "Many people do not know that they are diagnosed with such a disease. In Tamil Nadu, close to 150 patients have been diagnosed with LSDs and are under treatment," said Dr

Sujatha.

Speaking to *City Express*, Dr Sujatha added that the State government can come forward to provide assistance to LSD patients in many ways. "We will approach the State government to provide support in any way, be it for the enzyme replacement therapies, provision for adequate transport arrangements and ensuring education for these patients," said Dr Sujatha.

An important factor in the treatment of LSDs is the cost involved in the diagnosis and cure the disease. Close to ₹1.5 crores has to be spent every year.

Dr Sujatha hoped that the State government could extend support by providing

subsidies in the cost of treatment. "₹10-15 lakh has to be spent every month for an enzyme replacement

therapy session. We hope that the State government could also take initiatives in providing subsidies," said

Dr Sujatha.

Dr S Suresh, Chief Medical Director, MD, Medicin said, "LSDs are rare geneti-

cal disorders; we requested the State government to recognise this as a special entity. Awareness amongst

masses and support from the government is critical for diagnosis and treatment of such rare genetic disorders," said Dr Suresh.

Foetal Care Research Foundation, formed in 1995 was commended for doing considerable work in diagnosing and treating LSD patients. "Pre-natal diagnosis is a must to check and prevent LSDs. We hope the State government will take necessary steps towards this

making pre-natal diagnosis mandatory as well," said B Jayashree, co-ordinator, Foetal Care Research Foundation.

"We hope that with this signed petition and the signatures of all the affected families, the State government would take basic steps in providing remedies to cure such a disease," said S Sumathi from Mayavaram, whose children are affected with LSD.

*New Indian Express
(City), June 23, P.1*

- OBESITY

NOT JUST BABY FAT

Misconceptions galore

In 2010, US first lady Michelle Obama announced a campaign to end the epidemic of childhood obesity in the US in a single generation. It may have seemed like an unusual choice for a campaign. But it was an appropriate one—childhood obesity has tripled since the 1980s and 20% of US children aged 6-11 were categorized as obese in 2007-2008, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), US.

Obesity among children has become a serious medical concern in India too. A multi-centric study published in the *Annals of Nutrition And Metabolism* in 2011, titled *The High Burden of Obesity And Abdominal Obesity in Urban Indian Schoolchildren: A Multicentric Study of 38,296 Children*, estimated that in the 8-18 age group, 4.8% of the children were obese and 14.5 % of the children were overweight. The study was carried out by Anoop Misra, director, department of diabetes and metabolic diseases, Fortis hospitals, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi, his colleagues and collaborators, from August 2006 to December 2008 in schools in New Delhi, Jaipur, Agra, Allahabad and

Mumbai. Based on the study results, the authors estimate that more than 15 million children in India are currently overweight and four million are obese.

The terms overweight and obese are clinically defined by BMI cut-offs based on growth curves—overweight is defined as BMIs that fall in the 85-94th percentile, and obese as those over the 95th percentile on the growth curve. In other words, a child is overweight when his BMI is more than that of 85% of the children his age and is considered obese when his BMI is more than 95% of the children his age.

Dr Misra and colleagues say there are several key reasons for childhood obesity in India. As was the case with the 14-year-old girl, many urban children hardly play outdoors and spend their time outside of school watching television, on the Internet or playing computer games. "Neighbourhoods are no longer as safe as they used to be for walking and outdoor activities and outdoor spaces are fewer to find in many urban communities," he says. Schools and

parents demand more from the children academically while sports and physical fitness don't get emphasis. Children have money to purchase food outside the home and fast food that is high in calories is easily available. Children get to school in buses or cars rather than by walking or biking.

Dr Misra also emphasizes that "many parents and children aren't aware of what good nutrition is and are seriously misinformed about what constitutes

healthy eating".

Archana Dayal Arya, consultant paediatric endocrinologist, department of paediatrics, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, New Delhi, agrees with Dr Misra. She finds a myth prevailing among parents of obese children who walk into her clinic. Many think their children suffer from hypothyroidism, where the thyroid gland doesn't make enough thyroid hormone and the symptoms include weight gain. In fact, she says, hypothyroidism is a very rare condition and most obese children don't have thyroid-related problems. But often they have other medical problems that are a direct result of being overweight. "Five per cent of the children who are obese have diabetes," says Dr Arya (for other health consequences of childhood obesity, see "Alarm Bells").

Managing weight

Dr Arya says that for children to lose weight, parents must be engaged, and the family supportive of the process. She finds that if the child is diagnosed with a health problem like diabetes, then motivating the parents to modify the family's diet and to get them to support the child's exercise routine is much easier. If, however, the child doesn't have health problems, as happens in 60% of the cases, the family needs behavioural counselling. She tries to emphasize to these parents that "while the child is healthy for now, if certain lifestyle interventions aren't made immediately the child is likely to

Contd...

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suffer from health issues like insulin resistance in the future". She counsels the whole family to start regular exercise, reduce TV and computer time, and stop bringing home junk and fast food, or eating it outside.

Meena Malkani, consultant paediatrician, Jaslok Hospital and Research Centre, Mumbai, says that "often parents fall into the trap of criticizing the child and that can completely backfire. Children in their teens are very sensitive to criticism and their body image is particularly vulnerable. Educating the parents is as important as educating the child.

Entire families need to be counselled on the notion of "the healthy calorie". For example, a small candy bar and a boiled egg provide the same number of calories but the boiled egg scores a 100 on nutrition while the candy bar scores a zero.

ALARM BELLS

The immediate health consequences of obesity in Indian children:

► **The metabolic syndrome:** About one in three overweight and obese children have insulin resistance, which means that insulin in the body becomes less effective at maintaining blood-sugar levels and is a risk factor for diabetes.

► **Type 2 diabetes:** An overweight Indian child is more likely to get diabetes if he or she also has a family history of diabetes.

► **High C-reactive protein (CRP) levels:** High CRP levels are a risk factor for heart disease and diabetes

in the future; 22% of overweight Indian children have high CRP levels.

► **Polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS):** Obese Indian adolescent girls often suffer from this syndrome, which includes irregular periods, excessive facial hair, acne and insulin resistance.

—Source: Review article by Swati Bhardwaj and colleagues that appeared in the 'Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition' in 2008, titled 'Childhood obesity in Asian Indians: A Burgeoning Cause of Insulin Resistance, Diabetes and Sub-clinical Inflammation.'

निमोनिया, अतिसार से हर साल छह लाख से ज्यादा बच्चों की मौत

संयुक्त राष्ट्र, 8 जून (भाषा)। संयुक्त राष्ट्र बाल कोष (यूनीसेफ) ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में कहा है कि अकेले भारत में निमोनिया और अतिसार से हर साल पांच साल से कम उम्र के छह लाख बच्चों की मौत होती है और छोटे मोटे उपाय से इतनी जानें बचाई जा सकती हैं। यूनीसेफ रिपोर्ट ने यह भी रेखांकित किया कि हर साल इन बीमारियों से दुनिया के गरीब और विकासशील देशों में पांच साल से कम उम्र के 20 लाख से ज्यादा बच्चों की मौत हो जाती है।

रिपोर्ट के अनुसार इन दोनों बीमारियों से 2010 में 21,97,000 से ज्यादा बच्चों की मौत हुईं। यह आंकड़ा पांच साल की कम उम्र के बच्चों की कुल मौतों में 29 फीसद है। ये दोनों बीमारियाँ पांच वर्ष से कम उम्र के बच्चों की मौत का सबसे बड़ा कारण हैं।

रिपोर्ट के अनुसार, भारत में हर साल करीब 6,09,000 बच्चों की मौत होती है और वह 75 देशों की सुची में सबसे ऊपर है। उसमें यह भी

कहा गया है कि दुनिया में निमोनिया और अतिसार से होने वाली मौतों में से करीब 50 फीसद मौतें दुनिया के पांच गरीब और बड़ी जनसंख्या वाले देशों भारत, नाइजीरिया, कांगो, पाकिस्तान और इथोपिया में होती हैं।

रिपोर्ट में रेखांकित किया गया है कि आत टीकाकरण जैसे बहुत ही सामान्य कदमों से कई जानें बचाई जा सकती हैं। यूनीसेफ के

कार्यकारी निदेशक एंटनी लेक ने एक विज्ञापन में कहा, 'हम जानते हैं कि निमोनिया और अतिसार से कैसे निपटा जा सकता है। ये ऐसी बीमारियाँ हैं, जो गरीबों को सबसे ज्यादा प्रभावित करती हैं।'

एंटनी लेक ने कहा कि सामान्य कदम उठा कर दो बड़ी बाधाओं से निपटा जा सकता है और इससे हर बच्चे को बढ़ने और फलने-फूलने का समान अवसर मिल सकता है।

रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है-इन बीमारियों से

बच्चों को बचाने का सबसे आसान तरीका बच्चे को माँ का दूध देना यानी स्तनपान करना है। उसमें कहा गया है, 'विकासशील देशों में अब भी छह महीने से कम उम्र के बच्चों में 40 फीसद से भी कम को विशेष रूप से स्तनपान कराया जाता है। स्तनपान के खराब प्रतिशत के कारण बच्चों में कुछ महत्वपूर्ण प्रोटीन की कमी हो जाती है।'

इसमें कहा गया है कि हाथ धोने की आदत को बढ़ावा देना, शुद्ध पेय जल मुहैया कराना, स्वच्छ वातावरण उपलब्ध कराना, अतिसार से ग्रस्त बच्चों को ओआरएस बांटना और निमोनिया से ग्रस्त बच्चों को उचित एंटीबायोटिक देना इनकी जान बचाने के कुछ अन्य सरल उपाय हैं।

पेयजल और स्वच्छता (मल-मूत्र त्यागने के संबंध में) भी बड़ी बाधाएं हैं। दुनिया में अभी भी 78.3 करोड़ लोगों को स्वच्छ

पेयजल उपलब्ध नहीं है और 2.5 अरब लोगों के पास मल-मूत्र त्याग के लिए उचित व्यवस्था नहीं है।

रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है, 'दुनिया में अतिसार से होने वाली करीब 90 फीसद मौतें अस्वच्छ जल, अपर्याप्त स्वच्छता और साफ-सफाई की खराब स्थिति के कारण होती हैं।' रिपोर्ट में यह भी कहा गया है कि दुनिया में अभी भी 1.1 अरब लोग खुले में मल-मूत्र त्याग करते हैं, जो अतिसार का सबसे बड़ा कारण है। खुले में मल त्याग करने वाले इन 1.1 अरब लोगों में आधी से ज्यादा संख्या भारत में रहने वालों की है।

उसके अनुसार, इन्हीं देशों की 20 फीसद घनी आबादी के बीच स्वच्छता का जो स्तर है, अगर वही स्तर गरीब बच्चों को भी मिले तो निमोनिया से होने वाली मौतों में 30 फीसद और अतिसार से होने वाली मौतों में 60 फीसद की कमी की जा सकती है।

Jansatta, June 9, P.5

Wash your hands for better grades

Aarti Dhar

If you thought the number of hours devoted to studies is the only factor influencing your child's academic performance, think again.

A recent study, involving 500 parents from Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata, reveals that a range of behavioural factors, most notably unhygienic practices, can also have a significant impact on a child's academic performance.

Child Health Intelligence and Performance (CHIP) study, conducted by the Indian Medical Academy, divided the students surveyed into two groups - those who scored above 80 per cent marks and had more than 80 per cent attendance (group A) and those who scored below 80 per cent and had less than 80 per cent attendance (group B). Regular attendance and good percentage of marks, it has been observed, go hand in hand.

The objective of the study was to compare and contrast the behavioural factors (including basic hygiene, physical activity, sleep duration, eating habits, regular hand washing, daily bathing and

tion, which in turn results in growth and cognitive impairments," said Dr. Sanjeev Bagai, senior paediatrician, CEO and Dean, Radiant Life Care, New Delhi and a member of Indian Medical Academy.

The study also revealed that those group B students who had an attendance of less than 80 per cent, sickness was the main reason for absence from school (in 69 per cent of the cases). In comparison, family engagement was the leading cause of absenteeism in group A students, accounting for 43 per cent of the students with an attendance above 80 per cent.

The study brought to light some other interesting facts as well. It was found that in group A, 37 per cent students ate healthy food, 88 per cent bathed daily, and 67 per cent washed their hands regularly. In contrast, in group B, only 18 per cent ate healthy, 53 per cent bathed daily and 37 per cent practiced hand wash regularly.

The figures bring out the correlation between good hygiene practices and academic performance of students. Experts are unanimous that good hygiene behaviour in students helps reduce the risk

of diarrhoea-like diseases which, in turn, contributes to improving school attendance and academic performance of a child.

It was found that 68 per cent of students in group A followed basic hygiene practices compared with only 19 per cent in group B who did so. The study also found a co-relation between hygiene habits and sickness absenteeism i.e. students who had poor hygiene fell sick more often and therefore had poor attendance. This might have led to poor academic performance in these (group B) students. In most of the group A students, on the other hand, good hygiene practices probably led to regular attendance and good academic performance.

"Majority of children are not properly taught healthy sanitary and personal hygiene habits like washing hands regularly, especially before and after eating, and bathing daily. These children suffer more in terms of academic performance. Infections lead to absenteeism, and the learning process suffers as a result. Infections also lead to mal-absorption of nutrients causing malnutri-

ties, which, in turn, contributes to improving school attendance and academic performance of a child.

Apart from sickness absenteeism and hygiene practices, CHIP study also sought to compare other behaviour practices in students of both the groups.

It was found that in group B, only 43 per cent students studied more than 3 hours a day, 39 per cent slept less than 7 hours a day and 64 per cent ate in the school canteen more than 3 days a week; in contrast in group A, 63 per cent studied more than 3 hours a day, 15 per cent slept less than 7 hours a day and only 28 per cent ate in the school canteen more than 3 days a week.

Of these factors, sleeping duration and eating in school canteen in group A and group B showed marked difference which reveals that these factors also have a great bearing on a student's performance.

Improved sanitation and good personal hygiene, like regular hand wash and daily bath, are the most effective interventions that can be made in breaking the chain of infections, the study observed.

Hindu, June 3, P10

Will the new type of oral polio vaccine be effective?

Wouldn't it be nice to have a better sort of oral polio vaccine?

Widespread use of the oral vaccine has brought the eradication of polio tantalisingly within reach. Since 1988 when the world embarked on an effort to wipe out the disease entirely, the number of cases has fallen by 99.8 per cent.

Developed by an American scientist, Albert Sabin, the oral polio vaccine (OPV) uses weakened strains of the virus. The vaccine is easy to administer – simply put a couple of drops of it in a child's mouth. The viruses in the vaccine replicate in cells in the gut and evoke an immune response that protects the child when a wild virus comes along.

Nevertheless, the oral vaccine has a major drawback, one that could stand in the way of the total eradication of all polioviruses. As it multiplies in the gut, the mutations that weaken the virus can get reversed, giving rise sporadically to vaccine-derived strains that are as virulent as wild forms and spread as easily. In India, although no child has so far fallen victim to the wild virus this year, one has already been paralysed by a vaccine-derived strain.

Consequently, the end-game for polio eradication could well involve introducing inactivated polio vaccines (IPV), which use 'killed' viruses that cannot replicate and therefore carry no risk of turning virulent again. But IPV has its own problems, including higher cost and the fact that it has to be injected.

An oral polio vaccine strain that has been further crippled so that it cannot revert to virulence is therefore an attractive proposition.

Recently, Hyderabad-based Ella Foundation received a grant from the 'Grand Challenges Explorations' initiative of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to develop just such a vaccine strain.

The Ella Foundation is an independent scientific and industrial research organisation with a focus on research in infectious diseases. It was established by Krishna Ella and his wife, Suchitra Ella, who started the biotechnology company, Bharat Biotech International, which makes a

variety of vaccines and biotherapeutics.

Scientists of the Foundation would, according to information given on the Grand Challenges Explorations web site, "develop and test for use in a vaccine a live single-cycle poliovirus that has been modified to eliminate the gene essential for replication. This highly disabled virus will be tested for its immunogenicity and its inability to re-emerge as vaccine-derived poliovirus."

No replication

In a review paper published in 2006, U.S. scientists Tim Dudek and David Knipe, outline how it might be possible to create replication-defective viruses that could be used in vaccines.

Such mutant viruses would possess the advantages of both classical types of viral vaccines, i.e. those using inactivated viruses and ones based on attenuated strains, they noted.

The paper notes that by manipulating the viral genome, mutant versions could be made that lack a key protein needed for successfully completing its replication cycle in a cell. The mutants are then propagated in cell lines

that supply the missing protein.

If such mutated strain could be successfully created for polio, the idea is that, given as an oral vaccine, the viruses would infect intestinal cells and go through its replication cycle just once.

But without the crucial protein, these viruses would not be able to produce viable progeny that could go on to infect other cells.

According to information provided by the Ella Foundation's public relations agency, more experiments were needed before deciding which poliovirus gene (or genes) would be deleted.

"The idea is full of holes," exclaimed Vincent Racaniello, Higgins Professor of Mi-

crobiology and Immunology at Columbia University in the U.S., who has worked a great deal on the poliovirus.

"First and foremost, if you are delivering a polio vaccine orally, I suspect that it has to replicate," he pointed out in an email.

The big question

It would be straightforward to delete a poliovirus gene and make a stock of the mutant virus. The question was what sort of immune response it would elicit after being given orally.

Even if the mutant strain was taken up by gut cells, without viral replication and in the absence of immune-boosting chemicals known as adjuvants, "it would not make a robust immune response."

Although many replication-defective viral vaccines are being tested, particularly against HIV, none have yet been licensed for use in humans, said Dr. Racaniello in his email.

Hinder, June 7, P.18

WHO partnership for better health care

Staff Reporter

NEW DELHI: Union Health & Family Welfare Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad on Friday launched the World Health Organisation's new country cooperation strategy with India (2012-17) paving the way for a strategic partnership in the global health scene.

"In the context of the opportunities and challenges we face, the well-being of Indian citizens will depend on a number of strategic choices related to health and equity that must be made in the next few years. Not only our health but our children's health too depends on these strategic choices and the collaboration between the critical constituents of our health system," said the Minister.

Mr. Azad also noted that implementing the strategy will make India healthier and more equitable.

A release issued by Union Health Ministry noted: "It is for the first time that the Country Cooperation Strategy (CCS) has been developed jointly by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and the WHO Country Office for India. To contribute meaningfully to the national health policy and Government's health agenda, the CCS has identified strategic priorities including promoting access to and utilisation of affordable, efficiently networked and sustainable quality services by the entire population, financial protection and helping to confront the new epidemiological reality of India."

In her message, WHO Director-General Dr. Margaret Chan said: "This CCS is our contribution towards health progress in India. We are convinced India will continue improving the health of its people and this will have a global impact."

Hindustan, June 30, P. 9

India may miss infant, maternal health goals

BY KIRTHI V. RAO
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NEW DELHI

India is unlikely to reduce infant and maternal mortality as committed by 2015, said Nata Menabde, World Health Organization (WHO) representative to India. A report released by the ministry of statistics and programme implementation earlier on Friday backed up Menabde's assessment.

The country, however, has been moving towards achieving the United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goal (MDG) targets over the last seven-to-eight years, she added.

Menabde was speaking at a briefing following the launch of the WHO India Country Cooperative Strategy 2012-17. The country cooperative strategy (CCS), which was developed in collaboration with the ministry of health and family welfare, lays down priorities and focus areas

for national health policy in the next five years.

Improving the health of mothers and children by raising the scale of reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent

health services is a key focus area under CCS.

The strategy is to be implemented taking into account the health priorities identified by the 12th Five-Year Plan.

The Millennium Development Goals-India Country Report 2011 released by the statistics ministry, forecast that by 2015, infant mortality rate at 44 per 1,000 live births and maternal mortality at 139 per 100,000 live births will continue to remain higher than MDG targets, which are 27 and 109, respectively.

According to the report, 47 of every 1,000 infants died before reaching age one in 2010, down from 50 in 2009. Also, the number of women who died because of causes related to preg-

nancy for every 100,000 live births declined from 254 between 2004-06 to 212 in the 2007-09 period.

MDG targets were agreed to by UN member states in 2000 for reducing extreme poverty. The country report forecast that India will fail to achieve MDG targets for reducing child mortality and improving maternal health, and that it was "slow or off-track" on other targets as well.

Mint, June 30, P. 9

कैंसर के एक तिहाई मामले धूम्रपान की वजह से

नई दिल्ली, 31 मई (भाषा)। देश में गुरुवार को 'विश्व तंबाकू निषेध दिवस' मनाए जाने के दौरान कैंसर को अधिसूचित बीमारी बनाने की दिशा में कदम बढ़ाए गए और दो राज्य केरल व पंजाब इस प्रस्ताव पर सहमत हो गए हैं।

इस मुद्दे पर चर्चा करने के लिए अगले सप्ताह राजधानी दिल्ली में स्वास्थ्य मंत्रालय में विभिन्न राज्यों की एक बैठक आयोजित की जाएगी। पंजाब और केरल सभी कैंसर मामलों का पहले ही पंजीकरण कर रहे हैं और वहां पर सभी मरीजों का एक डेटाबेस भी बनाया जा रहा है। स्वास्थ्य सचिव पीके प्रधान ने कहा, 'हम कैंसर को अधिसूचित बीमारी बनाने की संभावना पर कार्य कर रहे हैं और एक विशेषज्ञ समूह पहले ही इस मामले को देख रहा है।'

उन्होंने हालांकि कहा कि ऐसा करने से पहले पूरे देश में कैंसर के इलाज और उसकी पहचान के लिए आधारभूत ढांचे में सुधार के लिए कदम उठाए जा रहे हैं। इस बीच जानेमाने कैंसर रोग विशेषज्ञ विनोद रैना ने कहा कि भारत के संदर्भ में तंबाकू कैंसर की एक प्रमुख वजह है। संबंधित आंकड़े चौंकाने वाले हैं क्योंकि पुरुषों की हर पांच मौतों में से एक और महिलाओं की हर 20 मौतों में से एक मौत धूम्रपान व तंबाकू के अन्य पदार्थों के कारण होती है।

अखिल भारतीय आयुर्विज्ञान

संस्थान (एम्स) में मेडिकल आन्कोलॉजी के प्रमुख रैना ने कहा, 'भारत में अब करीब 12 करोड़ तंबाकू इस्तेमालकर्ता हैं जिसका मतलब है कि प्रत्येक नौवां नागरिक तंबाकू इस्तेमाल करता है।' उन्होंने कहा कि 'भारत में एक तिहाई कैंसर के मामले तंबाकू (धूम्रपान) से संबंधित होते हैं।'

उन्होंने कहा, 'फेफड़े से संबंधित ट्यूमरों के 80 से 90 फीसद मामलों के लिए तंबाकू का घुआ जिम्मेदार होता है।' उन्होंने कहा कि 56 फीसद फेफड़े के कैंसर के मामले चौथे स्तर में पकड़ में आते हैं जिसमें तीन से चार महीने तक जीवित रहने की संभावना होती है। उन्होंने जागरूकता व जांच सुविधाओं की कमी को इसके लिए जिम्मेदार ठहराते हुए कहा कि वर्तमान समय में 10 फीसद से कम मामलों की ही जानकारी हो पाती है।

प्रधान ने कहा, 'सरकार वर्तमान कैंसर केंद्रों को मजबूत करने और जांच प्रक्रिया में सुधार की दिशा में काम कर रही है। इसके साथ ही कैंसर की जांच और इलाज के लिए और मानव संसाधन तैयार किया जा रहा है।' रैना के मुताबिक वर्तमान समय में 19 तरह के कैंसर हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि फेफड़े का कैंसर सीधे तौर पर सिगरेट पीने से संबंधित है और यह देश में होने वाली मौतों का प्रमुख कारण है।

Jansatta, June 1, P.18

Habits raise cervical cancer risk

Poor Hygiene, Unprotected Sex With Many Partners Key Factors

Durgesh Nandan Jha | TNN

New Delhi: Every fourth death due to cervical cancer occurs in India, and by 2025 the death rate could increase by 70%, data published by Internal Agency for Research on Cancer shows. The reasons for this surge in cervical cancer cases range from unprotected sex with multiple partners to early sexual activity and poor genital hygiene. Doctors say a few precautions can help women avoid the disease.

"Cervical cancer is mainly caused by the human papilloma virus (HPV); it's sexually transmitted. Women who have had more than one sexual partner in their lifetime

or have intercourse with a man who has had more than one partner, are likely to be infected," said Dr GK Rath, who heads the BRA Institute Rotary Cancer Hospital at AIIMS. "Practising good genital

Early exposure to human papilloma virus raises the risk of cervical cancer. Doctors stress the need for vaccination

hygiene can lower the risk by more than 50%," he added.

According to Dr Aasha Sharma, head of the gynaecology department at Rockland Hospital, girls who have

sex at a young age are also at higher risk. "Early exposure to HPV increases the risk of cervical cancer as it increases the overall time frame that the virus has to influence the development of abnormal cancerous cells," she said. Sharma stressed the need for HPV vaccination.

Dr Suversha Khanna, executive director of Dharmshila Cancer Hospital and Research Centre, said early diagnosis has made fighting cervical cancer easier in developed nations. "Regular gynaecological checkups and specific tests like pap smear after a woman becomes sexually active can help in early diagnosis."

Early stages of the cancer

bring on symptoms like abnormal vaginal bleeding or spotting between periods, pain during intercourse or bleeding afterwards, pelvic pain and weight loss. Treatment depends on the stage of the cancer. "In the early stages, it can be treated by a cone biopsy, which involves removing a part of the cervix. However, in advanced cases, a major surgery involving removal of the uterus is necessary. This may be combined with radiation and chemotherapy," said an expert.

He added that in some cases the entire treatment revolves around radiation therapy, with or without chemotherapy.

durgesh.jha@timesgroup.com

Times of India, June 10, P.5

हो जाएं सावधान, बढ़ रहा डेंगू का खतरा

■ जागरण संवाददाता, नई दिल्ली

दिल्ली में इस वर्ष डेंगू का प्रकोप बढ़ने की दिल्ली सरकार के स्वास्थ्य मंत्री की आशंका सच साबित होती दिख रही है। मानसून की दस्तक से पहले ही डेंगू का प्रकोप दिखने लगा है। राजधानी में दो नए मामलों की पुष्टि हुई है। दोनों पीड़ित एक ही परिवार के हैं और इलाज के बाद दोनों मरीजों को अस्पताल से छुट्टी मिल गई है। इस वर्ष दिल्ली में डेंगू के कुल मामलों की संख्या बढ़ कर छह तक पहुंच गई है। यह बुखार बीते एक दशक में दिल्ली के सैकड़ों लोगों की जान ले चुका है।

पश्चिमी दिल्ली के पोचनपुर गांव के रकेश सहरावत (32) और उनके भतीजे जय सहरावत (10) के खून में प्लेटलेट्स की हो रही कमी की वजह से द्वारका सेक्टर-19 स्थित मैक्स लाइफ

डेंगू के मामले और मौतें

वर्ष	मामले	मौत
2006	3366	38
2007	0548	01
2008	1312	02
2009	1153	03
2010	6259	08
2011	1130	08

केयर अस्पताल में भर्ती कराया गया। डॉ. नितेंद्र सिंह ने दोनों मरीजों में डेंगू की पुष्टि की है। उन्होंने बताया कि रकेश को जब अस्पताल में लाया गया था तो उनके प्लेटलेट्स लगातार गिरते जा रहे थे। जांच में डेंगू की पुष्टि हुई। रकेश में मलेरिया के भी लक्षण मिले थे। इसी बीच उनके भतीजे को भी अस्पताल में डेंगू की वजह से भर्ती

कराया गया। इलाज के बाद दोनों को छुट्टी मिल गई है। नगर निगम के स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी एनके यादव का कहना है कि अस्पताल की तरफ से सूचना नहीं मिली है। सूचना मिलने के बाद ही मामले को सूची में शामिल करेंगे। पिछले गुरुवार को दिल्ली सरकार ने मच्छरों की संख्या में भारी इजाफे को देखते हुए सभी संबंधित एजेंसियों को इस की रोकथाम के आदेश दिए थे। स्वास्थ्य मंत्री डॉ. ए के वालिया ने राष्ट्रीय मच्छर जनित रोग नियंत्रण कार्यक्रम निदेशालय तथा स्थानीय निकायों द्वारा की गई जांच रिपोर्ट का हवाला देते हुए कहा था कि इस वर्ष मच्छरों की उत्पत्ति तथा घनत्व में अत्यधिक वृद्धि हुई है। लिहाजा डेंगू बुखार के फैलने का अंदेश भी बना हुआ है। जांच में इस वर्ष 12 हजार से भी अधिक घरों में मच्छरों का प्रजनन पाया गया, जबकि पिछले साल इसकी संख्या 7653 पाई गई थी।

Dainik Jagaran, June 25, P.2

DIABETES

महामारी का रूप ले रहा मधुमेह

नई दिल्ली, ग्रेट : शहरी भारत का हर सात में एक व्यक्ति तनावग्रस्त और हर नौ में एक मधुमेह से पीड़ित है। हाल में किए गए एक सरकारी सर्वेक्षण के नतीजे बताते हैं कि गैरसंचारी रोग भारत के शहरी क्षेत्र में महामारी का रूप अख्तियार करते जा रहे हैं। सरकार ने स्वास्थ्य व परिवार कल्याण मंत्रालय की मदद से कराए सर्वेक्षण में देश के 20 राज्यों के 91 जिलों के लोगों को शामिल किया है। सरकार ने यह कार्यक्रम वर्ष 2010 में शुरू किया था।

कैंसर, मधुमेह और हृदय से जुड़ी बीमारियों के राष्ट्रीय कार्यक्रम के तहत देश भर के 75 लाख लोगों का परीक्षण किया गया। सर्वेक्षण से पता चला कि करीब 6.5 फीसद लोगों को मधुमेह की शिकायत थी, जबकि 5.5 फीसद तनावग्रस्त थे। सर्वेक्षण में आए दिल्ली, बंगलूर, चेन्नई और कोलकाता सहित अन्य शहरी क्षेत्र के नतीजे परेशान करने वाले थे। नतीजों के मुताबिक इनमें करीब 15 फीसद लोग तनाव और 11 फीसद मधुमेह से पीड़ित हैं।

स्वास्थ्य अधिकारियों के मुताबिक यह अब तक का दुनिया का सबसे बड़ा सर्वेक्षण है। कार्यक्रम के तहत चालू वर्ष में देश के 21 राज्यों के 100 जिलों में मौजूद 30 वर्ष से ज्यादा आयु के लोगों के साथ ही गर्भवती महिलाओं को शामिल करने का लक्ष्य रखा गया है। इसके अलावा

12वीं पंचवर्षीय योजना में पूरे देश के 540 जिलों के सभी वयस्क और सभी गर्भवती महिलाओं का परीक्षण करना तय किया गया है। अधिकारियों ने बताया कि कैंसर को छोड़कर मधुमेह और हृदय से जुड़ी बीमारियों का जल्द पता लगाने व जेनेरिक दवाओं के जरिये उपचार के लिए सभी स्वास्थ्य सुविधाएं मुहैया कराने का भी प्रस्ताव है। उम्मीद जताई जा रही है कि चालू वित्त वर्ष के दौरान चार करोड़ लोगों का परीक्षण किया जाएगा। अधिकारी ने बताया कि कार्यक्रम का उद्देश्य स्वास्थ्य सुविधाओं को मजबूती देना और कैंसर व गैरसंचारी बीमारियों में परामर्श सुविधाओं को बेहतर करना है। साथ ही गरीबी रेखा से नीचे (बीपीएल) गुजर कर शेष पृष्ठ 2 कालम 2 पर

रहे लोगों को कीमोथेरेपी और जेनेरिक दवाएं मुफ्त कराना भी इस कार्यक्रम का लक्ष्य है। तय किया गया है कि बीपीएल मरीजों को एक लाख रुपये और हर जिले को एक करोड़ रुपये दिए जाएंगे। कार्यक्रम के तहत चालू वित्त वर्ष के लिए 775 करोड़ रुपये तय किए गए हैं।

खतरों की घंटी

- दिल्ली, बंगलूर सहित बड़े शहरों के 11 फीसद लोग मधुमेह व 15 फीसद तनाव से ग्रस्त
- 12वीं पंचवर्षीय योजना में 540 जिलों में सभी वयस्कों के परीक्षण का लक्ष्य

Dainik Jagaran, June 25, P.1

Reopened Govt vaccine unit to fight diphtheria

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Four years after it was shut down for failing to comply with good manufacturing practice (GMP) norms, Government vaccine unit Pasteur Institute of India (PII), Coonoor in Nilgris is set to roll out the first batch of vaccine doses for diphtheria from June-end.

Around 15 lakhs of DPT will be supplied from the PII to the country's Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) from this month-end. This is for the first time since 2008 that the institute is releasing DPT vaccines for the programme, a senior health ministry official said. The institute proposes to supply 300 lakh doses of DPT vaccine for the UIP during the fiscal year 2012-2013.

The institute initiated vaccine manufacturing process in 2010 after revocation of sus-

pension of vaccine manufacturing license, in the existing facility and after due validation of the process and quality control testing, the first batch of DPT vaccines was sent to CDI, Kasauli in March 2012 for certification.

PII was among two other public sector vaccine units — Central Research Institute (CRI), Kasauli and Bacillus Calmette-Guerin (BCG) Vaccine Laboratory, Guindy — closed down on January 15, 2008, by the then Health Minister A Ramadoss when he suspended licences of the units on grounds that they did not comply with WHO's GMP norms.

Following huge uproar, Health Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad in 2010 reversed the decision promising to restart vaccine production in the three plants in fully compliant with GMP standards within three years.

CRI Kasauli was the first to

kick-off the production with nearly 134.55 lakh doses of Diphtheria, Pertussis, and Tetanus vaccine made available under the UIP since the revocation of suspension of licence.

The Rs 137 crore proposal for upgradation of PII as per GMP standards has been approved to start soon. BCG which was manufacturing anti-tuberculosis Bacillus Calmette-Guerin vaccine for the last 60 years is yet to start production.

The officer added that work at the Integrated Vaccine Complex at Chengalpattu in Tamil Nadu will be completed by 2014. The complex at an estimated cost of ₹594 crore will manufacture vaccines, including the pentavalent combination (DPT plus HepB plus Hib). This move aims to fulfill the requirements of the Government's plans for inclusion of pentavalent vaccines in UIP.

Pioneer, June 16, P-6

Decline in AIDS cases, discrimination still on

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government may have been patting its back for declining number of AIDS cases in the country, people afflicted with the HIV (PLHIV) continue to face the burnt of discrimination.

But what has come as more anguishing and traumatising for the segment is that the verbal and physical violence has come from not only the outsiders but also their own family members, says a survey.

For nearly half (48 per cent) of general females, who reported physical assault at least once, were assaulted by their husbands or partners and another one-third (36 per cent) of them faced assault from other members of the family.

In addition, 52 per cent of general male, 31 per cent of transgender (TG), 12 per cent of male having sex with male (MSM), 15 per cent of female sex workers were assaulted by family members, as per survey conducted in Tamil Nadu by the Family Planning Association of India, International Planned Parenthood Federation in collaboration with the UK aid from the Department of International Development (DID).

A total 1,594 PLHIV were interviewed between December 2010 to September 2011. The survey found that their social exclusion too was abundant in the form of not being allowed to participate in religious activities and fami-

AIDS STATUS IN COUNTRY



■ Total 23,95,442 PLHIV
■ No. of New Infections 1,20,668
■ No. of AIDS related deaths 1,72,041
■ Male: 14,69,245 Female: 9,26,197

For nearly half (48 per cent) of general females, who reported physical assault at least once, were assaulted by their own family members

ly activities besides verbal and physical assault. It was often experienced by Transgenders (14 per cent) followed by FSW (11 per cent) and MSM (10 per cent).

Physical assault by unknown person was reported mostly by People who Use Drugs (PUD) (36 per cent) and transgenders (40 per cent).

A sizeable majority of the sample was between the ages of 25 to 49 years, with almost 22 per cent having received no formal education. Expectedly, the highest numbers were from BPL, reflecting that poverty was one of the major reasons for the disease or vice versa, it says.

"Incidentally, it was found

that the majority of MSM who were living with a partner felt less self stigma and experienced fewer acts of discrimination than those who were single. Thus, having a stable relationship (with either a male or female partner) appears to confer positive benefits to MSM."

The Southern State has witnessed a strong and effective response to the epidemic in terms of securing services and coverages. As per the state fact sheet for March 2010 of the National Aids Control Organisation, Tamil Nadu has a total 1,54,742 PLHIV. It has reported 850 new infections while 12,459 have died due to AIDS related diseases.

In view of the wide prevalence stigma in the society against the sector, the survey has strongly recommended "sensitisation of health care providers on reproductive choices, ensuring pre test counseling during HIV testing and community based stigma reduction campaigns."

As per NACO, new HIV infections has declined by more than 50 per cent over the past decade from 2.7 lakh in 2000 to to 1.2 lakh in 2009 in India.

Pioneer, June 10, P.7

Rehab centre for HIV kids at Belgaum

BANGALORE: The State government will set up a rehabilitation and a research centre for HIV-infected and affected children at Belgaum for which 250 acres of land (40 km from the city) has been identified, said Medical Education Minister S A Ramdas.

Addressing a gathering at the release of a documentary 'Me, Myself and My Gender' by Ashodaya Samithi here on Wednesday, the minister said Rs one crore has been allotted for the purpose.

He further said that "about 300 children are identified to be rehabilitated.

"The centre will be a residential school which will provide all the facilities including treatment. The Central Food Technology Research Institute (CFTRI) will manufacture nutritious food for these children. The project will be launched before the Belgaum session of the legislature," the minister added.

Mobile clinics

The Union health ministry has already agreed to provide five



red buses with doctors and antiretroviral therapy (ART) facility to the State. The bus which will be launched shortly, will travel to even the remote places in the State.

Ramdas said that elected representatives - MLAs and MLCs - will adopt HIV positive children in terms of taking care of their needs. At present, 14 MLAs have adopted five children who were orphaned due to HIV.

'Me, Myself and My Gender,'

the documentary deals with the third gender including men having sex with men (MSM) and transgender (TG) community living in Mysore, Belgaum and Bellary. The film also documents their fight against stigma and discrimination.

Pilot project

Ashodaya Samithi's pilot study titled Differ (Diagonal Interventions to Fast-Forward Enhanced Reproductive health) was also launched on the occasion.

The pilot study aims to improve access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH).

Chief Minister DV Sadananda Gowda said the documentary focuses on some of the issues that were never discussed openly in public.

"Several organisations working for persons with HIV have urged the government to bring in policy changes in dealing with HIV patients in the health system," he added.

He promised to hold consultations with the organisations to evolve a policy in this regard.

DH News Service

Deccan Herald, June 14, P. 4

Malaria records 300% growth, govt ups ante

WAR ON MOSQUITOES Govt prepares comprehensive plan to curb breeding



Rhythmia Kaul

■ rhythmia.kaul@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: It's that time of the year again. And the Delhi government is bracing up to fight mosquitoes and the diseases such as dengue, malaria, chikungunya, etc. that the tiny insects spread by their deadly bite.

Though dengue cases have not reported a significant rise than last year but malaria has already announced its arrival with a three-fold rise in cases than the corresponding period last year. "As many as 61 cases of malaria have been reported so far, against 18 cases last year for the same period. The rise may be attributed to more diagnostic laboratories for malaria, but that doesn't mean we will be any less careful," said a health official from the unified municipal corporation of Delhi (MCD).

MCD's mosquito breeding surveillance teams have found 12,000 premises infested with the bug. Rural pockets of Narela, Najafgarh, Shahdra north and west zone were found to be most vulnerable. Delhi health minister AK Walia met officials from the three civic bodies, NDMC, Delhi Cantonment board and

IDENTIFY AND ELIMINATE VECTOR-BORNE DISEASES

THE USUAL DENGUE HOT SPOTS

SOUTH DELHI



■ Vasant Kunj ■ Vasant Vihar ■ the stretch between Yusuf Sarai and All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) ■ Anand Lok

■ Sarvodaya Enclave ■ Hauz Khas

CENTRAL DELHI

■ All Lajpat Nagar colonies. (Ghazipur dairy and Rail bhawan)

MALARIA HOT SPOTS

■ Najafgarh ■ Narela ■ Civil lines ■ Shahdra

CHIKUNGUNYA HOT SPOT

■ Najafgarh

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF DENGUE

■ Sudden high fever, over 103 degrees Fahrenheit ■ Body ache ■ Pain behind the eyes ■ Nausea and vomiting ■ Severe headache ■ Rash, itching in the body ■ Muscular weakness

DETECTION: blood test, three days after fever appears

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF MALARIA



■ High fever ■ Chills/shivering ■ Flu-like symptoms ■ Headache ■ Vomiting

DETECTION
Blood test

MEASURES TO CURB MOSQUITO BREEDING

■ Coolers should be cleaned every week ■ Temephos granules should be put in coolers and kerosene/petrol in water tanks ■ Water tanks should be covered ■ Collection of stagnant water should not be allowed ■ Use mosquito repellent

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CHIKUNGUNYA

■ High fever ■ Swelling and stiffness in joints ■ Unbearable pain in joints ■ Muscle pain ■ Headache ■ Nausea

DETECTION: blood test

HOW TO AVOID MOSQUITO BITES

■ Close windows at dawn and dusk ■ Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts ■ Use insect repellents ■ Those with sensitive skin should avoid creams ■ Use mosquito net and net windows to keep mosquitoes at bay

irrigation and flood control department on Wednesday.

"We must take preventive steps and intensify surveillance to ensure breeding is curbed, which is the best way to fight dengue and other vector-borne diseases," said Walia.

Experts say the onset of monsoon is the ideal time for mos-

quito breeding. "The combination of heat and humidity is ideal for the breeding of mosquitoes," said a senior doctor with AIIMS.

Not just RWAs but heads of institutions, hospitals, police stations and market federations are being roped in to ensure that rain water is not allowed to stagnate anywhere. Workplaces are the

primary focus area, as last year 60% of the affected people were between 15 and 45 years of age.

Over 3000 domestic breeding checkers and 700 hand-held fogging machines have been pressed into service. Hospitals have been directed to make all arrangements for timely diagnosis and treatment.

Hindustan Times, June 23, P.5

Child rights commission to conduct nation-wide drug use study

Staff Reporter

NEW DELHI: The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has initiated a nation-wide study on pattern, profile and correlates of drug use in children.

Collaboration

Slated to be completed by the end of this year, the study is being conducted by the NCPCR in collaboration with the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences and 142 non-gov-

- **Study slated to be completed by the end of this year**
- **Over 4,000 children from 30 States, 100 cities to be covered**

ernment organisations across the country.

The study will cover over 4,000 children from 30 States and 100 cities in the country.

"The Commission is con-

cerned about the prevalence of substance and drug abuse among children. It has taken cognizance of the plight of such children who are victims of abuse in the North-East, Delhi and other States," said NCPCR chairperson Shantha Sinha.

"On the occasion of International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking [on Tuesday], we seek the support from all and hope that laws are strictly followed in this regard. We must make our country

and its children free from drug abuse," Dr. Sinha added.

First-of-its-kind

"The Commission is going to roll out a study on pattern and profile of substance abuse among children, which will have a large number of respondents as children who have been or currently are under the influences of drugs. This study is going to be first-of-its kind by NCPCR in India," said Committee member Vinod Kumar Tikoo.

Hindu, June 26, P4

NARCOTICS CONTROL BUREAU (MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS) WEST BLOCK-1, WING-5, R.K. PURAM, NEW DELHI-110066

HARMFUL EFFECTS OF DRUG ABUSE

- Impaired health, Infectious diseases, HIV/AIDS
- Absence from school/college
- Loss of job/income
- Possible death due to frustration or ill health
- Drug addicts may commit crimes like theft, rape, murder, corruption, narco-terrorism

SIGNS OF DRUG ABUSE

- Sudden change of mood/temper
- Bouts of drowsiness or sleeplessness
- Body pain, nausea, unsteady gait, loosing interest in job, studies, telling lies, stealing money
- Keeping powder, tablets, scorched tinfoil, cigarettes, needles or syringes

DRUGS AND THE LAW

(NARCOTIC DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES ACT, 1985)

- Following constitute offence in relation to illicit drugs:
- Possession even in small quantity
- Cultivation of drug crops without permission
- Allowing your premises to store, sell or consume
- Illicit manufacture, sale, purchase and transportation
- Trafficking of drugs is a non-bailable offence (prison sentence upto 20 years and fine upto Rs. 2 lakhs)
- Death penalty for repeat offenders

Hindus Jan Times, June 26, P17

5 tips to help kids say no to drugs

“Just say no to drugs.” This message has been used so much over the years that many teens simply tune out whenever they hear another lecture beginning this way. Parents need to be more creative these days in keeping their kids off drugs, but for many parents, this task seems overwhelming. How do you get your kids to listen to you about things like drugs when it is hard enough to get them to listen to you about what kind of clothes they should wear? It might take a little contemplation and hard work, but it can be done. Here are some guidelines to keeping your kids off drugs and alcohol.

1. Know what they do. Stay involved in your child's life as they get older, and make sure they are supervised by you or another responsible adult. Don't assume that just because they are legally old enough to be home alone, that they are ok being left for hours at a time. Kids that come home from school to an empty house will find ways to keep themselves busy, and this is when many of them start experimenting with drugs or alcohol.

2. Know their interests. Not only will this help you know if your child is trying something harmful, but it will also help you build a healthy relationship with your teen. Get to know what kind of music they like, what their

favourite television show is all about, how they feel about the latest news stories. Sharing moments with them

and listening to your child will teach you a lot about why they do what they do. Once there is a solid bond between

parent and child, the say-no-to-drugs-talk will be much easier.

3. Build their self-esteem. Help your

child find something they are good at, give them encouragement and praise, and let them know you love them and are proud of them no matter what. A confident teen that knows that drugs can mess up their life will be more likely to stay away from them.

4. Teach them how to say no. It might seem like enough to tell them to say no, but have you ever put yourself in their shoes? Think of your teen, surrounded by a group of friends that are all smoking pot, and if they don't try it too, they will be the outcast. It is a very difficult thing to just say no. Instead, equip your teen with other things they can say to get out of this kind of situation. They could suggest other things to do (go to a movie, play a video game), they could say "I'm not into that", or they could leave and find some other friends to hang out with.

5. Be a good role model. Keep yourself away from drugs and drunkenness. Teens do look up to their parents and will follow their actions more than words. Let them see you taking care of your body and following healthy habits.

It's not enough these days to teach teens to just say no. Find ways to get to know your child and gain their respect, and then have talks with them that equip them with tools to stay away from drugs.

D.N.A., June 26, P.11

18 pc students in Manipur use drugs

SOBHAPATI SAMOM

PALLEL, June 26 - Eighteen per cent of the students in Manipur were found to have used narcotics and psychotropic drugs, claims a senior official of Department of Community Medicine of the Regional Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) in Imphal.

Dr AK Brojen of RIMS said this at a seminar to commemorate the 'International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking', under the theme

'Think Health - Not Drugs' here at Pallel, about 45 km south of Imphal today. He said that they have found the development in their recent study.

"This is an alarming issue but we are turning a blind eye to it," Dr Brojen said and expressed the need to develop a policy on drug users. He urged the concerned authority to develop updated counselling centres at the educational institutions with the involvement of trained hands. Parading of drug users in media is not encour-

aging, he feels.

Manipur is home to 50,000 drug users including 34,500 intravenous drug users (IDU) while about 14,000 drug users are concentrated in Imphal alone, according to UNODC reports.

"Time has come to carry out awareness programmes in our schools on a war footing", said M Gandhar, a former drug user turned NGO worker.

Associate Professor Ch Priyoranjan of Manipur University's Economics department urged the government to step in and

control the drug menace.

The State which is one of the largest supplier and consumer of illicit opium products rank third in India based on the percentage of drug users. With 28 per cent of the population under the influence of drug, Manipur boasts one of the highest cases of IDUs in India. The Assam Rifles in cooperation with Narcotics Control Bureau in the recent past has confiscated and destroyed 2,338 kgs of contraband drugs. The seminar was sponsored by the Assam Rifles.

City teenagers are getting cannabis home-delivered

Assam Tribune, June 27, p. 7

Dilnaz Boga • MUMBAI

What started out as an occasional 'flavoured puff', when a man bought his 18-year-old daughter a hookah, progressed into a deadly addiction.

"Soon, she graduated to cigarettes, and now she's hooked on cannabis. She gets aggressive if she doesn't get her fix," says her mother.

Living in a joint family, the addict, a board topper, now secures only average grades. "With policemen saying in newspapers that using cannabis isn't a serious offence, what do you expect?" asks the worried parent.

The teenager used to take money from her parents to go to Barista, but would use it to buy cannabis. "We thought she was getting coal and

flavours home-delivered for the hookah, but it was actually cannabis," she adds. The teenager's older friends are also a part of the supply chain.

The mother says, "Her professors know about this. Everyone knows even the watchmen are involved. I'm trying to speak to her college authorities but we need help from the police and society too. More

awareness is needed."

Psychiatrist Dr Harish Shetty says that 80% of the children he has tested are cannabis users. "They are aged 14 and above. It is difficult to detect these cases as cannabis is easily consumed. Unfortunately, parents are in denial. They need to get together with our society to take a stand against this issue," he says.

Doctors say, with parents providing significantly large amounts of money to their children, their access to such drugs has increased.

Shetty adds, "Despite the fact that 12 government agencies are in charge of monitoring the drug menace, no one is being held accountable. There have hardly been any hauls. I've come across cases where drugs are being delivered to people's homes."

Teenagers, right from the best schools in Mumbai to engineering colleges, are using cannabis. "This is the 'in thing'. There is peer pressure, the kids want to look cool and fit in," says a parent of another cannabis user.

"We need awareness programmes to highlight the negative and long-term effects of weed. I didn't even know what cannabis looked like until I found it stashed in my child's room."

D.N.A., June 4, PITS

Tobacco pips resolve to quit

If you are a tobacco user, chances are that you might have often thought of kicking the habit. However, quitting tobacco is easier said than done.

According to Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) India survey released by doctors and experts from Tata Memorial Centre on Friday, only 3.6% of daily adult tobacco users in Maharashtra have successfully given up the habit in the past 12 months. Even though the number of those in the state who've quit smoking is low, the number of adults who've attempted to stop consuming tobacco is slightly higher.

According to the survey, 31.3% of smokers and 29.7% of those who chew tobacco in Maharashtra made an attempt to quit over the last 12 months. These abysmally low figures, according to Dr Prakash Gupta, director of Healis Sekhsaria Institute for Public Health, is because of a lack of awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco as well as the lack of anti-tobacco legislation in the state.

The finding that 64.6% of tobacco consumers of any type admitted to consuming tobacco within half an hour of waking up shows the extent to which its usage has become a habit in Maharashtra.

And youth in the state are taking up the habit, which according to WHO data causes the premature death of one in three adults in India.

A total of 27.4% men and 8.3% of women between the age of 15 and 24 have admitted to using tobacco. "Earlier, it was unthinkable of anyone below the age of 35 contracting head and neck cancers due to tobacco use. Now, we get patients as young as 22 to 24 years who contracted the disease," said Dr Pankaj Chaturvedi, head and neck cancer surgeon at Tata Memorial Centre.

The survey devised by the WHO and the Centre for Disease Control Atlanta (US) and implemented

with the help of the state government also revealed that 31.4% of the adult population in Maharashtra use tobacco in some form or the other. That means about 2 crore adults in the state use tobacco.

Dr Chaturvedi said the tobacco-related disease epi-

dem is no longer just a public health concern, it's a major economic concern for the state. "According to WHO data, one in three adults die prematurely due to tobacco-related problems, which means in Maharashtra 66 lakh patients will have life

threatening illnesses due to tobacco consumption," he said. "Many of the patients' treatment costs, which can run up to a lakh of rupees, will have to be borne by the government. Even if 10% of the patients need government help for treatment, the government will be spending Rs6,000 crore to treat diseases that are preventable."

The state government, however, seems to be sluggish in enforcing laws to curb tobacco use. The anti-tobacco lobby suffered a setback on Wednesday when the government order enforcing a regulation of the Food Safety and Standards Act and banning the manufacture and sale of gutkha in the state died in the cabinet proceedings.

The findings in numbers

31.4% ADULT TOBACCO
Overall USERS IN THE STATE
Men: 42.5% Women: 18.9%

28.6% DAILY TOBACCO USERS
Overall IN THE STATE
Men: 38.3% Women: 17.5%

3.6% DAILY TOBACCO USERS
Overall WHO KICKED THE HABIT
Men: 3.8% Women: 3.1%

31.3% SMOKERS WHO
Overall PLAN TO QUIT
Men: 31.3% Women: 37.9%

D.N.A., June 16, P.3

WORLD



Anti Narcotics Day

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVES

The Ministry of Social Justice has initiated Alcohol & Drug Demand Reduction and Preventive Policies to help combat drug use. Here is more information about the initiative.

According to a study carried out by the Ministry of Social Justice in collaboration with the UNODC and ILO, approximately three million of the population is dependent on drugs. Looking at the whopping figures, the ministry initiated the Alcohol & Drug Demand Reduction and Preventive Policies. Here are some of the steps taken under this policy.

TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION OF ADDICTS - GOVT - NGO COLLABORATION

The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, as the focal point for drug demand reduction programmes in the country, has been implementing the Scheme for Prohibition and Drug Abuse Prevention since the year 1985-86. As implementation of programmes for de-addiction and rehabilitation of drug addicts require sustained and committed/involved effort with a great degree of flexibility and innovation, a state-community (voluntary) partnership appears to be particularly strong mechanism for service delivery.

Under this scheme, the ministry is assisting 361 voluntary organisations for maintaining 376 de-addiction-cum-rehabilitation

THE BASIC OBJECTIVE IN CREATING FACILITIES FOR TREATMENT, AT CENTRES RUN THROUGH VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS, IS TO ENSURE THAT THE SUPPORT OF THE FAMILY AND THE COMMUNITY IS MOBILISED TO THE MAXIMUM.

centres and 68 counselling and awareness centres all over the country.

The basic objective in creating facilities for treatment, at centres run through voluntary organisations, is to ensure that the support of the family and the community is mobilised to the maximum. These centres adopt a wide variety of approaches, systems and methodologies for treatment and rehabilitation of the addicts suitable and adaptable to the social customs, traditions and culture. To facilitate the medical treatment of hard-core addicts who require intensive long-term medical attention, 100 de-addiction centres are being run in government hospitals/primary health centres, etc.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, in collaboration with the International Labour Organisation and UNODC, implemented a project on "Developing Community Drug Rehabilitation and Workplace Prevention Programmes", to sensitise and train the voluntary organisations and workplace settings on prevention of alcoholism and substance abuse in workplace. It is viewed that the work environment of an individual is the most important area of preventive intervention for a potential addict as he still enjoys economic security. The loss of a job further aggravates the addictive behaviour. This aspect was not getting its due importance under the on-going programme. A number of corporate institutions have also volunteered for the project.

CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Article 47 of the Constitution of India directs the State to regard the raising of the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health as among its primary duties, and, in particular, to endeavour to bring about prohibition of consumption, except for medicinal purposes, of intoxicating drinks and drugs which are injurious to health.

Hindustan Times, June 27, P17

FOR A SAFE TOMORROW

The Narcotics Control Bureau under Government of India has been working diligently to curtail drug trafficking in the country over the past few years. On World Anti-Narcotics Day, we bring major steps taken by the NCB to help create a safer tomorrow.

NARCOTIC DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES (NDPS) ACT, 1985

The NDPS Act 1985 sets out the statutory framework for drug law enforcement in India. The main elements of the control regime mandated by the act are as follows.

- The cultivation, production, manufacture, possession, sale, purchase, transportation, warehousing, consumption, inter-state movement, trans shipment and import and export of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances is prohibited, except

for medical or scientific purposes and in accordance with the terms and conditions of any license, permit or authorisation given by the government.

- The central government is empowered to regulate the cultivation, production, manufacture, import, export, sale, consumption, use etc. of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.
- State governments are empowered to permit and regulate possession and inter-state movement of opium, poppy straw, the manufacture of medicinal opium and the cultivation of cannabis excluding hashish.

THE PREVENTION OF ILLICIT TRAFFIC IN NDPS ACT, 1985 (PIT NDPS ACT)

The deterrent penal provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and

Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 and other legislative, administrative and preventive measures were found inadequate to control the illicit transit traffic in drugs. It was, therefore, felt that a preventive deterrent law should be enacted with a view to effectively immobilise persons engaged in any kind of illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. To achieve this objective the President promulgated the Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Ordinance on July 4, 1988. To replace this ordinance, the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Bill, 1988 was introduced in Parliament.

The Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Bill, 1988 was passed by both the Houses of Parliament and was assented by the President

on September 6, 1988. It was deemed to have come in force on July 4, 1988 as The Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1988.

The act empowers central government and the state governments have been empowered to make orders of detention with respect to any person (including a foreigner) if they are of opinion that it is necessary so to do with a view to preventing him from committing illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

The expression "illicit traffic" had been defined to include cultivation of any coca plant or gathering any portion of coca plants, cultivating the opium poppy or any cannabis plant, or engaging in the production, manufacture, possession, etc., of narcotic drugs or psychotropic substance.

Drug abuse and illicit trafficking

Pradip Kakati

Every year the 26th of June is observed as The International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking throughout the world. In Assam, the State Anti-Drug and Prohibition Council, a State Government organisation, decided to observe the Day in a befitting manner through-out the State by holding meetings, seminars, etc., with a view to create public awareness against the evil effects of drugs. We must appreciate the Council for such awareness programmes with the active support from the State Government, especially to save our young generation from these evil effects of drugs. Of late the consumption of drug in Assam has increased manifold. It is an alarming situation in Assam particularly amongst the youths in respect of consumption of ganja, drugs and alcohol. Recently, a news item appeared in the local dailies stating that almost 30 per cent of young generation of Assam is addicted to drugs, out of which about 15 per cent is in the age group of 15 to 30 years and in addition, there are around 50,000 drug-addicted youths in Guwahati city. It is our social duty to educate the young generation about the bad effects of consumption of ganja, drugs and alcohol. Everybody in the society should take it as a social responsibility to eradicate consumption of these items by the people, especially by the youths from the society. The

guardians and the teachers may play a vital role in eradicating this social menace in the interest of the society. Most of the youths consume these items usually with their friends without knowing its bad effects, but ultimately they become addicted to them. It is very unfortunate to see the youths inhaling Ecstasy, a fluid used for recreation and also Ecstasy, etc. which are easily available even at petty stationery shops. In addition, some cough syrups containing codeine or codeine phosphate like Phensedyl, Recodex, are sold by various pharmacies without any valid prescription. Recently, the Gauhati High Court by an order allowed the authorities to book any person possessing cough syrups containing codeine or codeine phosphate without valid documents or medical prescription under the provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985.

Various news items are published in respect of seizure of ganja, drugs, heroin, etc., from time to time by the authorities. Even then some unscrupulous traders are doing this business through middlemen. Though the authorities arrest the illegal drug traffickers and peddlers, they fail to arrest the kinkin behind the smuggling of drugs. For the last one year or so, the Government Railway Police and the Anti-Narcotic Cell of

the Criminal Investigation Department have stepped up their efforts to detect the drug traffickers after getting some secret information that the inter-State drug racketeers usually prefer to transport the drugs by trains going out of the State. It may be stated that since the last part of 2010, the drug smugglers started using the railway as a safe transport mode for drug trafficking from the north-eastern States to other parts of the country. Accordingly, the GRP and CID also stepped up efforts to detect drug traffickers from various trains as well as on the platforms mainly of Guwahati and Kamakhya railway stations. It may be stated that Guwahati and a few districts of lower Assam like Dhubri, Bongaigaon have become major transit points for ganja and heroin smuggling despite strict vigil by the police. It may be recalled that in the month of December, 2011, Dhubri police seized about 450 kgs of ganja from a Delhi-bound truck at Chagolia checkgate, which was allegedly carried from Nagaland. According to the Anti-Narcotic Cell officials, the ganja has been found to be the most preferred contraband by the smugglers who carry the sub-

stance from the North East to States like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Guwahati becomes the hub for narcotic items and the city is used as a transit point for loading and unloading the substances for onward despatch to other States of the country. Drugs are mainly imported to Assam from Nagaland, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Myanmar and Nepal. It may be mentioned that Nepal is the highest producer of ganja.

It has come to our notice that the due to strict vigil mainly on the male passengers and their luggage by the personnel of GRP and CID to detect the drug traffickers, the drug smugglers have changed their strategy to smuggle drugs from the North East States to other States like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, etc. through Guwahati by engaging women as couriers mainly through trains including Rajdhani Express, since the women and their luggage are not properly checked by the personnel of GRP and Anti-Narcotic Cell of CID. But on receiving some secret information in respect of their new strategy the GRP and CID personnel stepped up their operation and some women traffickers were arrested along with huge quantities of illegal drugs like ganja, morphine from various trains as well as from

the platforms. Considering involvement of women as drug couriers, we request the competent authority to have a special women battalion to detect female drug traffickers at the earliest. It may be stated that some cough syrups are imported to Assam and other North Eastern States by trucks mostly from West Bengal considering its good demand as a narcotic, mostly by the youths. The recent seizure of about 12,000 bottles of Phensedyl cough syrup at Bongaigaon of Dhubri district valued at Rs 12 lakh proves that substantial quantities of Phensedyl and Recodex cough syrups are still imported from outside the State by a network of drug smugglers to Assam.

It may be stated that a couple of months ago, the police, Anti-Narcotic Cell of CID and officials of Customs department, seized a substantial quantity of illegal drugs like ganja (cannabis) and also cough syrup at the inter-State checkgate in Dhubri district. We must appreciate the action of the Dhubri police, CID and Customs officials for such seizures. The value of seized stock of these items is not important but it saves thousands of youths from consumption of these cough syrups and ganja. As already mentioned, Guwahati has become the hub for various types of drugs like ganja, heroin, morphine, brown sugar and other psychotropic drugs and based on intelligence re-

ports, the Anti-Narcotic Cell of the CID seized huge quantities of these illegal drugs in Guwahati while being smuggled by train, bus or any other mode of transport.

Some drug peddlers used to sell illegal drugs to local consumers in some selected areas in and around Guwahati, like the vicinity of railway station, Manupuri Basti, Lokhan, Pitaisil Anbari, Hanigon, Zoo-Narengi Road, Six Mile, Malligon, etc. Sometime back, a news item appeared in dailies that the Anti-Narcotic Cell of the CID proposed a dog squad to detect drugs and carry out raids against smugglers and peddlers in the city and necessary proposal was submitted to the Narcotic Control Bureau around 10 months back seeking 10 trained dogs. Since we do not have the present status of the dog squad, we request the Anti-Narcotic Cell of the CID to press the Narcotic Control Bureau for immediate sanction of the proposal already submitted. Guwahati is the favourite transit point for transporting illegal drugs from Myanmar via Manipur and Nagaland and also banned psychotropic substances like pharmaceutical tablets and codeine-based cough syrups, which are imported to Assam from States like Bengal, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh for onward smuggling to Bangladesh, Myanmar and other NE States through the city.

Assam Tribune, June 26, P-6

phenomenon'

'Drug abuse is a complex

International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking is celebrated as 26th June every year. It is an exercise undertaken by the world community to sensitize the people in general and the youth in particular, to the menace of drugs.

Today, there is no part of the world that is free from the curse of drug addiction and drug trafficking. India too is caught in this vicious circle of drug abuse, and the numbers of drug addicts are increasing day by day. Millions of drug addicts, all over the world, are leading miserable lives, between life and death.

The epidemic of substance abuse in young generation has assumed alarming dimensions in India. Changing cultural values; increasing economic stress and dwindling supportive bonds are leading to initiation into substance use.

Drug abuse is a complex phenomenon, which has various social, cultural, biological, geographical, historical and economic aspects. The disintegration of the old joint family system, absence of parental love and care in modern families where both parents are working, decline of old religious and moral values, etc lead to a rise in the number of drug addicts who take drugs to escape hard realities of life.

The vulnerability to addiction differs from person to person. The genes, mental health, family and social environment all play a role in addiction. Risk factors that increase the vulnerability include certain factors like Family history of addiction, Abuse, neglect, or other traumatic experiences in childhood.

Adolescents experiment with drugs for many different reasons. Many first try drugs out of curiosity, to have a good time, because friends are doing it, to be a part of group or in an effort to improve athletic performance or ease another problem, such as stress, anxiety, or depression. Mere use doesn't automatically lead to abuse, and there is no specific level at which drug use moves from casual to problematic. It varies by individual.

Drug abuse and addiction is less about the amount of substance consumed or the frequency, and more to do with the

consequences of drug use. No matter how often or how little they're consuming, if drug use is causing problems in their life – at work, school, home, or in your relationships – you likely have a drug abuse or addiction problem.

The warning signs that parents should look out for are as follows.

Isolation from the family: If the child starts spending an inordinate amount of time away from home or locked in his or her room, as a parent, it's your responsibility to identify what's behind the change.

Changes in physical appearance: Unexplained weight loss or weight gain, development of unusual sores on the body, bruises and/or cuts, burns, particularly those on hands or face, facial redness or irritated skin, frequently irritated eyes and strange smells on clothing, dilated pupils, eyes red or glazed.

Unexplained personality changes: It's natural for personality changes to occur during the young adult years; this is the time when men and women develop their adult individuality. It's important to look for strange, unexplained personality changes that don't quite make sense, such as sudden lack of motivation, loss of conscience or inhibitions, boisterous, loud behaviour, out of character withdrawal, over excessive use of perfumes or air fresheners/ odour-neutralizers.

Mental Instability: Drugs can sometimes trigger a psychological imbalance. This can be seen when the child or adolescent begins to perform actions driven by paranoia, act compulsively and lose their ability to concentrate or focus.

Emotional Instability: Mood swings, difficulties in managing anger and depression.

Poor performance at school: Complaints from school like lateness, unexplained absences, complaints reported by peers and/or teacher.

Activities: Substance abuse often be-

comes the highlight of life for addicts, overshadowing the activities that use to bring them happiness. Changes that should cause concern are having lost interest in most or all of their favourite activities, breaking promises or making excuses uncharacteristically.

Behavioural changes: Drug use often causes a person to lose sight of everything else. When looking at their living space or what they hold dear, be concerned if you notice that someone is selling personal items for cash, stealing and in possession of pipes or improvised drug apparatuses.

Relationships: Acceptance with new friends and peers is a common reason for youngsters to start drinking or begin using drugs. Things to look out for where relationships are concerned, new friends they don't want parent to meet, increased flirtatious or promiscuous behaviour and an abrupt breaking of long-term ties with their friends and family members.

It's easy to identify changed behaviour and blame drug use on teenage rebellion, but it could be that drugs are what are affecting your child's behaviour. The real dilemma comes from the parent not believing their child might be experimenting with or using drugs in the first place. This is simply denial. Until a parent understands the real possibility of drugs use – even if their teen has good friends and is active in study – the parents won't be able to get to the root of the problem.

Don't stick your head in the sand or otherwise pretend that your teen knows better than to try drugs. If you are dealing with an out of control teen, and there have been no other traumatic events or psychological problems in your child's life, you are most likely dealing with the effects of drugs or alcohol or other intoxicating substances in one form or another.

The sooner you know what you are dealing with, the better the chance you'll have for finding the right kind of help for your child. Parents can contact psychologists for the changed behaviour observed in the child.

D.N.A, June 26, P.10

INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST DRUG ABUSE AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING 26TH JUNE, 2012

HARMFUL EFFECTS OF DRUG ABUSE

- Impaired health, infectious diseases, HIV/AIDS
- Absence from school/college; Academic Loss
- Loss of Job/income



SIGNS OF DRUG ABUSE

- Sudden change of mood/temper
- Bouts of drowsiness or sleeplessness
- Body pain, nausea, unsteady gait
- Losing interest in job, studies
- Telling lies, stealing money
- Keeping powder, tablets, scorched tinfoil, cigarettes, needles or syringes

STUDENTS

- Always resist peer pressure and say "No" to Drugs
- Drugs are not "Cool" - Decide for yourself
- Girls should be aware that drinks offered to them may be laced with "date rape drugs" like Rohypnol
- Report drug abuse or trafficking to your school/college or Police

TEACHERS

- Sudden drop in performance should arouse suspicion
- Conduct random surprise checks in hostel rooms
- Check vendors and hawkers around the school/college
- Regular dissemination of information on drugs
- Regularly organize events to keep campaign against drug abuse alive

PARENTS

- Care for your children and spend quality time with them
- Talk to them and find out the cause if something is troubling them
- Take interest in child's activities and his friends
- If found to be using drugs, encourage children to overcome their addiction through treatment and counseling
- Set an example by not consuming alcohol/drugs yourself



Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
www.socialjustice.nic.in

Hindustan Times, June 26, P16

टीबी के लिए अब सेरोलॉजी टेस्ट नहीं

नई दिल्ली

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अब टीबी का पता लगाने के लिए सेरोलॉजी टेस्ट नहीं कराया जा सकेगा। केन्द्र सरकार ने इस पर प्रतिबंध लगा दिया है। स्वास्थ्य मंत्रालय के संयुक्त सचिव अरुण पांडा की ओर से जारी नोटिफिकेशन में कहा गया है कि टीबी की जांच के लिए प्रयोग की जा रही संरोडायग्नोस्टिक किट के परिणाम गलत आ रहे हैं, इससे सही रूप से टीबी का पता लगाना मुश्किल है। नोटिफिकेशन सभी राज्य सरकार को भेजा गया है।

ड्रग और कॉस्मेटिक एक्ट 1940 के सेक्शन 26 (1) में कहा गया है कि केन्द्र सरकार ने टीबी का पता लगाने के लिए प्रयोग की जा रही संरोडायग्नोस्टिक किट का निर्माण, बिक्री और वितरण पर पूर्ण प्रतिबंध

बिगड़ जाते थे मामले

एम्स के क्लिनिकल माइक्रोबायोलॉजी के प्रोफेसर डॉ. सरमन सिंह कहते हैं कि सही परिणाम के अभाव में टीबी के इन्फेक्शन का गलत इलाज हो जाता था, जिससे दवाओं के प्रति प्रतिरोधक क्षमता विकसित होने

लगा दिया है। गौरतलब है कि टीबी के मरीजों के मामले में भारत का स्थान दुनिया में पांचवां है। देश में हर साल 17 लाख लोगों की मौत टीबी से हो जाती है और सालाना 92 लाख मामले सामने आते हैं। मैक हिल यूनिवर्सिटी कनाडा के डॉ. मधुकर पाई और यूनिवर्सिटी ऑफ वाशिंगटन के डॉ. करेन स्टैनगार्ड ने टीबी के 92 मामलों

का खतरा बड़ जाता है। सिंह और भारतीय चिकित्सा परिषद के महानिदेशक डॉ. वीएम कटोच ने हालिया पेश अपने रिपोर्ट में कहा कि देश में 73 से ज्यादा कंपनियां सेरोलॉजिकल किट का निर्माण कर रही हैं।

को विश्लेषण कर पाया कि जांच के लिए प्रयोग हो रही सेरोलॉजिकल टेस्ट के नमूने पाल्मोनरी और एक्सट्रा पाल्मोनरी दोनों तरह की टीबी में गलत साबित हुए हैं। नियमित पुनरीक्षण में डॉ. पाई ने लिखा कि जहां तक मरीज जानकारी में, डब्ल्यूएचओ के दिशा निर्देशों के तहत भारत इस टेस्ट पर रोक लगाने वाला पहला देश है।

Rajas than Patrika, June 21, P.2

India first country to adopt WHO TB policy

Organisation had recommended ban on inaccurate serological test kits

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Almost a year after the WHO issued a rare 'negative' policy recommendation urging its member nations to ban the use of serological (blood) test kits for TB, India has issued a notification prohibiting the manufacture, sale, distribution, use and import of such sero-diagnostic kits.

India, which accounts for one-fifth of the global TB burden with some estimates putting a total of 9.2 million new cases and 1.7 million deaths every year, has become the first country to take such a decision which experts hope would protect the patients from a test that is confusing and misleading.

Expert Bobby Ramakant from Lucknow-based Syop TB Forum/Citizen News Service called it a long-awaited move as gadgets being widely used in the private sector were giving inaccurate results, leading to drug resistance among patients.

In a notification issued on

FOOD FOR THOUGHT!

- Tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease caused by a Bacterium, *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* and spreads through the air. A single patient can infect 10 or more people in a year.
- Despite the evidence and lack of any supporting policies, 15 lakh (1.5 million) TB serological tests are estimated to be done in India. Patients spend an estimated ₹75 crores (US\$ 15 million) per year.
- DOTS (Directly Observed Treatment, Short course) programme by the Government is as per WHO regimen.



June 7, the Union Health Ministry said, "It is satisfied that the use of the serodiagnostic test kits for diagnosis of tuberculosis are giving inconsistent and imprecise results leading to wrong diagnosis and their use is likely to involve risk to human beings, whereas safer alternatives are available."

Intriguingly, till the ban came, while one wing of the Health Ministry, Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR), has been seeking a ban on these test kits because of their unreliable diagnosis of the infectious disease, its other wing, Drug Controller General of India (DCGI), has been giving licences to firms to import and manufacture these equipments.

As per ICMR, there are more than 73 manufacturers of TB serology and evaluation of enzyme-linked immunosorbent

assay (ELISA) test kits in the country with China taking the lead for rapid test marketing. There are, at least, 23 TB rapid test kit makers from China alone followed by USA (16) and India (12). The notification will keep a check on this misuse as the DCGI will now not allow import of the serological test kits for the TB, said Arun Panda, Joint Secretary in the Union Health Ministry.

The ban on the kits followed WHO's year-long rigorous analysis on the blood test kits showing that the blood tests produced an unacceptable level of wrong results - false-positives or false-negatives - relative to tests endorsed by it. The impact of false-negatives would be that a person needing TB treatment would not get it, and the disease would progress posing serious threat to the patients.

Pioneer, June 20, p-7

NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH MISSION (NRHM)

NRHM financial wrongdoings reflect systemic irregularities

The National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) was launched seven years ago with the goal of improving health-care delivery to people in villages, especially the poor, through a generous infusion of federal funds. Local authorities were given a relatively free hand in deciding how to spend the money, with the Centre promising funds with no strings attached for the first seven years.

It turns out that some state officials were using NRHM to enrich themselves instead, raising questions about oversight, governance and accountability at the government's marquee public health programme, which has won a five-year extension because many of its goals, such as significantly reducing child mortality and improving maternal health, haven't been met.

Last month, several senior officials of Madhya Pradesh's health department came under investigation for allegedly siphoning off ₹800 crore from

the programme's budget.

That follows a corruption scandal surrounding NRHM in Uttar Pradesh after allegations that ₹5,700 crore was embezzled from the scheme by health department officials during the regime of Mayawati's Bahujan Samaj Party, which was ousted from power in the February-March assembly elections.

Six officials directly associated with the scheme in India's most populous state died in controversial circumstances, one of them in police custody.

In Madhya Pradesh, health director Amarnath Mittal, who was overseeing NRHM's implementation in the state, was suspended after income-tax (I-T) raids led to the recovery of evidence that he possessed unaccounted property worth ₹100 crore, according to Siddharth Chaudhary, superintendent of police, Lokayukta, an independent anti-corruption body that holds oversight of the state government.

Some ₹38 lakh in cash, 2.5kg of gold, jewellery worth ₹72 lakh, foreign currency (€3,000 and 1,080 Australian dollars) and documents claiming titles for 50 acres of land were seized in the raids, Chaudhary said.

Public health experts say the case illustrates the larger malaise of corruption in India rather than fault lines in the programme that allowed flexible spending at the grassroots level.

"There is a need to delink the scheme from the system. The problem is not with NRHM's design, but with governance," said Amit Sengupta, co-convenor of the People's Health Movement. "NRHM has been implemented efficiently in many states. Corruption at this level and of this kind—where bureaucrats are amassing ₹100 crore—does not happen without the connivance of elected representatives."

"Besides, there are vested interests that want NRHM-like schemes to fail so that the argument in favour of outsourcing services to the private sector is strengthened," Sengupta added. "There is a lot of evidence that there is connivance between government officials and private sector."

The alleged financial wrongdoing in NRHM reflects the systemic irregularities that plague centrally funded schemes, including the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme and the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, said Sidharth Sonawat, assistant director and healthcare analyst at industry lobby group Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

"This is a result of giving large amounts of funds, poor administering at state-level organizations and even worse monitoring from the Centre," Sonawat said. "In the case of NRHM, district-level officials to elected representatives seem to

be aware of the irregularities; otherwise such blatant, systemic corruption cannot exist in isolation."

According to officials in the Madhya Pradesh Lokayukta, recent raids have established a payoff between the state's health department and the procurement cell, Laghu Udyog Nigam. These officials didn't want to be identified because they are not authorized to speak to the media.

An audit by the Accountant General of Madhya Pradesh, the apex body for compiling and preparing state-level accounts of public spending, has revealed that the health department incurred expenditures worth ₹67 crore without having budgetary provisions or approvals from the Union government.

In a letter dated 7 May, the audit officer sought a response from Ravindra Pastore, NRHM mission director for Madhya Pradesh.

The investigative arm of the Lokayukta is currently probing 13 cases of misuse of office against health commissioner Manohar Agnani and nine cases against Mittal, but is yet to link them to NRHM.

"As of now, Mittal's raid is being treated as a case of disproportionate assets and we have not yet linked it to NRHM even though he was heading the department that rolled out the health scheme," said Chaudhary.

"Besides disproportionate

Mint, June 11, p.3

Contd...

assets case, we received complaints alleging irregularities under various NRHM schemes in March and we have started our investigations," he added.

While Mittal declined to comment, Agnani maintained that the cases of irregularities have been exaggerated and that he was "unaware that contracts had been given to blacklisted firms, substandard material procured at inflated rates, and unqualified officials had been employed".

"My director (Mittal) would be best placed to answer these queries," he said.

The department's previous commissioner, Rajesh Rajora, is currently under suspension for irregularities to the tune of ₹11 crore, according to official data. Previous mission director Ashok Sharma was suspended in 2009 after ₹130 crore was allegedly recovered from his residence by I-T officials in a raid. Sharma was reinstated in 2010 and is currently director, health services.

"They (I-T officials) recovered only ₹27,000 from the raid at my residence. Subsequently, judicial inquiries were conducted in nine cases in which no irregularity was found," Sharma said. "All those cases have been closed."

Madhya Pradesh health minister Ajay Vishnoi resigned in 2008 on moral grounds after I-T officials raided 56 places in the state and unearthed evidence of a nexus between politicians, bureaucrats and suppliers.

This time, cases being investigated by the state's Lokayukta include procurement of an insecticide under the anti-malaria programme, causing the exchequer a loss of approximately ₹70 crore; imposing monopolies in the purchase of ingredient used for analysis of blood samples that caused a loss of ₹20 crore; appointments in the health department that did not follow prescribed procedures; and favouring of two companies—Nitapol Industries and Kilpest India Ltd—that were blacklisted by the Gujarat government for supplying substandard insecticides.

Both the companies declined to comment on the matter.

NRHM was launched with a budget of ₹6,730 crore; the outlay swelled to ₹20,822 crore in the latest budget. It aimed at improving health indicators in rural areas, with a special focus on 18 states that lagged behind the rest on key health parameters.

It aimed at reducing the infant mortality rate (IMR) to 30 per thousand live births and the maternal mortality rate (MMR) to 100 per 100,000 live births and the total fertility rate (TFR) to 2.1 nationally, in line with the millennium development goals.

At the time of launch, Madhya Pradesh's TFR was 3.6 while, MMR and IMR stood at 335 and 76, respectively. Seven years and ₹3,381.93 crore of spending later, the health indicators remain below target at 3.3, 269 and 67, respectively.

Still, the improvement is commendable given the backdrop of leakages, some public health experts say.

"If these figures are to be trusted, the drop in maternal mortality rate is impressive," said Sakthivel Selvaraj, health economist at the Public Health

Foundation of India. "The nine-point drop in infant mortality is also not bad. Overall, it is evident that NRHM has made a dent in these figures despite leakages in the system."

Last month, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) said it found large-scale financial irregularities in the NRHM scheme during Mayawati's reign over Uttar Pradesh.

According to CAG's audit report, funds worth ₹1,768.12 crore were received from the Centre but never shown in state government accounts. The report revealed that the government had not maintained accounts for advances worth ₹4,938.74 crore.

The Central Bureau of Investigation is investigating at least two ministers in Mayawati's government and several bureaucrats in connection with financial irregularities.

Union health secretary P.K. Pradhan said NRHM could not be faulted because of Uttar Pradesh; anyway, only a portion of the scheme allowed flexible use of funds, he said.

"Because of UP (Uttar Pradesh), everyone is faulting NRHM without seeing how well it is implemented in southern states," Pradhan said. "The government will never be able to implement any scheme if we start faulting in on this basis. Procurement and construction, etc., are the state government's prerogative and states with better governance have done well under NRHM. Since funds were easily available in large amounts, a portion was flexible; states which lacked transparency took advantage of this."

"It is vacuous to blame the system when the issue is individual intention and integrity of state-level bureaucracy and politicians," Pradhan added.

अमेठी में पोषाहार के नाम पर हर महीने करोड़ों का घोटाला

स्वामीनाथ शुक्ल

अमेठी, 18 जून। उत्तर प्रदेश में सत्ता परिवर्तन के बाद बाल विकास परियोजना का हाल बेहाल है। जिले के 16 विकास खंडों में 2417 आंगनवाड़ी केंद्र खोले गए हैं जो महीनों से बंद पड़े हैं। इससे चार लाख 89 हजार 539 बच्चों, गर्भवती और धात्री महिलाओं को भूखों रहना पड़ रहा है। जबकि इनके लिए हर महीने 56705 बोरी पोषाहार का वितरण किया जा रहा है। इस तरह बच्चों और महिलाओं को पोषाहार देने के नाम पर आंगनवाड़ी कार्यकर्ता और अधिकारी मिलकर हर महीने करीब पांच करोड़ रुपए का घोटाला कर रहे हैं। जिलाधिकारी विद्याभूषण सिंह ने जनसत्ता से बातचीत में कहा कि मामला गंभीर है। जांच के आदेश दिए गए हैं।

जिले के 16 विकास खंडों में 2417 आंगनवाड़ी केंद्र खुले हैं। इन केंद्रों पर चार लाख 13 हजार 590 छात्र और 75 हजार 949 धात्री व गर्भवती महिलाएं पंजीकृत हैं। सरकार इन बच्चों और महिलाओं को पोषाहार देने के लिए हर महीने करीब 60 हजार बोरी पंजीरी का वितरण करती है। लेकिन अधिकांश केंद्रों के ताले ही नहीं खुलते हैं। लिहाजा पंजीरी बाजारों में

खुलेआम बेची जा रही है। जिला कार्यक्रम अधिकारी का कहना है कि गमी ज्यादा होने के कारण बच्चे केंद्रों पर नहीं आ रहे हैं। इससे केंद्र बंद पड़े हैं। आंकड़े बताते हैं कि आंगनवाड़ी केंद्रों पर 25 बोरी व मिनी आंगनवाड़ी केंद्रों पर 15 बोरी पंजीरी भेजी जाती है। इन सबकों बाजारों में बेचा जा रहा है। सरकार एक किलो पंजीरी पर करीब 35 रुपए खर्च करती है लेकिन खुले बाजार में इसे कौड़ियों के भाव बेचा जा रहा है। जानकारों का कहना है कि आंगनवाड़ी कार्यकर्ता डेढ़ सौ से दो सौ रुपए में पंजीरी की बोरी बेचते हैं। एक बोरी में 25 किलो पंजीरी होती है। सूत्रों के मुताबिक जिले के 2417 केंद्रों पर महीने में भेजी जा रही 56705 बोरी पंजीरी की कीमत करीब पांच करोड़ रुपए है।

अमेठी के आंगनवाड़ी केंद्र बंद पड़े हैं। इससे गर्भवती महिलाओं पोषाहार नहीं मिल पा रहा है। विश्व बैंक की मदद से देश में गर्भवती महिलाओं और शून्य से 6 साल तक के बच्चों की संपूर्ण देखरेख के लिए आंगनवाड़ी केंद्र खोले गए हैं ताकि उन्हें कुपोषण से बचाया जा सके। लेकिन पोषाहार नहा मिलने से बच्चे कुपोषण का शिकार हो रहे हैं और अधिकारी मालामाल।

एक अभिनव योजना के तहत हर गर्भवती महिला को चार हजार रुपए की आर्थिक मदद की जाएगी। यह गर्भधारण के तीन महीने बाद से शुरू होगी और बच्चे के जन्म तक चलेगी ताकि यह धनराशि गर्भवती महिला अपने स्वास्थ्य पर खर्च कर सके। लेकिन अभी तक यह योजना आम आदमी तक नहीं पहुंची है। विभाग ने 2003 में सभी केंद्रों पर हाटकुक योजना शुरू की थी। इसको मंशा सभी बच्चों को पकापकाया भोजन देना था। इसके लिए सालाना अरबों रुपया जिले को मिल रहा है। पर किसी भी केंद्र पर चूल्हा जलते नजर नहीं आता है।

गर्भवती महिलाओं का कहना है कि उनकी देखभाल और सेहत के लिए सरकार ने भले ही खजाने का मुंह खोल रखा है। लेकिन किसी गर्भवती महिला को इन योजनाओं का पता नहीं है। आंगनवाड़ी केंद्र कहां चलते हैं, उन्हें नहीं पता। ऐसे में पोषाहार मिलने का सवाल ही नहीं उठता है।

सपा के जिला अध्यक्ष छोटेलाल यादव और गौरीगंज व अमेठी के विधायक ने कहा कि बाल विकास व पोषाहार विभाग के संचालित आंगनवाड़ी केंद्रों में जमीनी बदलाव लाने के लिए मुख्यमंत्री अखिलेश यादव को शिकायत की जाएगी ताकि कागज पर चल रहे केंद्र जमीनी रूप ले सकें।

*Jansatta,
June 19, P.7*

अब मिड-डे-मील स्वयं सहायता समूह के हवाले

धिवानी, 3 जून (हरप्र)। मिड डे मील के अंतर्गत विद्यार्थियों को परीसे जाने वाले भोजन को अब स्वयं सहायता समूह की महिलाएं तैयार करेंगी। शिक्षा विभाग ने यह कदम गुणवत्ता एवं पौष्टिक आहार प्रदान करने के उद्देश्य के साथ उठाया है।

इसी के साथ राजकीय स्कूलों में मिड-डे-मील का जिम्मा संभालने वाले स्वयं सहायता समूहों में उस स्कूल के छात्रों की माताओं की अधिक से अधिक भागीदारी भी कवाई जाएगी। शिक्षा विभाग निदेशालय की ओर से शिक्षा अधिकारियों को आदेश दिए हैं कि सभी स्कूलों में स्वयं सहायता समूह का गठन कर मिड-डे-मील के कार्य को सुचारु रूप से चलाने के लिए इस योजना पर अमल किया जाए।

उल्लेखनिय है कि स्वयं सहायता समूह को पिछले साल ही एक आदेश जारी कर स्कूलों में मिड-डे-मील का जिम्मा स्वयं सहायता समूहों को सौंपने को कहा था, जिसके बाद स्थानीय स्तर पर समूहों से संपर्क कर कार्रवाई शुरू की गई, लेकिन जिले के सभी स्कूल अभी तक इस योजना को लागू नहीं कर सके हैं। विभाग का मानना है कि समूहों में विद्यार्थियों की माताएं होने से मिड-डे-मील बनाने व परीसेने में भेदभाव नहीं होगा।

*Dainik Tribune,
June 4, P.2*

“Discourage consumption of junk food by school children”

Krishna Tirath writes to Kapil Sibal to impose restrictions at school canteens

Staff Reporter

NEW DELHI: Aimed at discouraging students from opting for junk food, Union Women & Child Development Minister Krishna Tirath has written to Union Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal asking for creation of “special provisions at schools to discourage unhealthy eating habits among students”.

The Minister in her letter has noted that since childhood was the time for forming

healthy eating habits it is important that students be made aware of foods that are nutritious. “Children, due to stress of studies, lack of time and activity-packed day, often resort to ‘grab-and-run’ eating habits. They opt for junk/fast foods which are easily and readily available but harmful to them in the long run. These foods are full of calories and have very little nutrition value,” said the Minister on Friday.

In a letter to Mr. Sibal, the

Minister has sought help to bring in provisions for sensitisation of school students against junk food and also advocated restrictions on school canteens and eateries.

“A lot of urban children in India are presently battling the challenge of malnutrition and the excessive consumption of junk food adds to this burden. Some urgent and direct measures need to be taken to sensitise school-going children against adopting faulty eating habits. Restric-

tion on school canteens and eateries near the school will send a strong message and we hope will go a long way in discouraging excessive intake of such convenience foods,” the Minister said in her letter.

The Minister also noted that school principals/teachers should also be asked to encourage children as a part of the daily morning assembly or first interaction with the children in their class-rooms to increase intake of healthy food and to avoid junk food.

Hindu, June 9, P. 2

Testing for Hepatitis B during pregnancy a must, say doctors

Jaya Shroff Bhalla
 ■ hrreporters@hindustanimes.com

"Every year, 250,000 newborns are at the risk of acquiring HBV infection from their mothers due to lack of testing and preventive measures," said Dr Ashish Kumar, consultant, gastroenterology department at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, who gets at least five to six new cases of newborns or mothers with hepatitis B infection every week.

"Once a newborn is infected, he or she will silently carry the virus in the liver for years till it manifests in the form of liver cirrhosis or liver cancer during adulthood," he said.

Dr Kumar warned that once the disease reaches an advanced stage, most of these patients die if they do not receive liver transplantation. "Moreover, by this time, these patients have spread the virus to their next generation and the cycle continues," he said.

A research study authored by Dr Kumar, which was published in the Indian Journal of Gastroenterology, said that all pregnant women should be tested for Hepatitis B and those found positive should be treated to prevent the transmission of virus from mother to the baby. It also recommends that this testing should be made mandatory by law to check the spread of Hepatitis B infection.

Over 100,000 Indians die every year of liver disease caused by Hepatitis B.

Hindustan Times, June 8, P. 6

Quality in Maternity Care

Cloudnine, a maternity-care speciality hospital, was co-founded by neonatologist R Kishore Kumar. Seeing crowded, unhygienic government hospitals and poorly-run private nursing centres in the country, Kumar and his team of three co-founders decided to focus on providing quality newborn care.

Initially, Kumar, who spent many years working overseas in the area of infant care, bootstrapped the new venture with

savings from his team and loans from friends and family.

The first year was the toughest as patients were hesitant to test their services and the team had to rely on referrals to grow the business.

As a result, raising funds to scale up operations proved to be a big challenge since investors were not familiar with the concept of specialised maternity care. And not just patients, the founders had to spend a lot of time meeting investors to explain their business model.

However, as Cloudnine satisfied a growing demand for quality care among the middle class, Matrix Partners approached the firm and invested Rs 45 crore in May, 2011. It took Cloudnine around six months to complete the fund raising process.

"The funny thing is that once



THREE TIPS TO RAISE MONEY

Focus on basics, build the business first.

Be transparent.

Back your team

we reached an advanced level of negotiation with one venture capital firm, everybody started approaching us to invest in the venture," said Rohit MA, co-founder of Cloudnine.

Cloudnine has now delivered over 10,000 babies with zero maternal mortality and a 99.83% survival rate for babies.

Peerzada Abrar

Economic Times, June 5, P. 4

You thought you couldn't have kids?

With 40 per cent of the population suffering from latent tuberculosis, (when TB bacteria is inactive in body), genital tuberculosis is by no means uncommon here. And so are its effects on fertility and reproduction.

It's estimated that approximately five per cent of females presenting to sub fertility clinics worldwide have genital TB. And the estimates of incidence vary enormously, depending on country of origin. Being rarest in America and highest in India.

Tuberculosis in general, contributes nearly one-third of the female infertility in India. These figures probably lead doctors to establish a connect between infertility and genital tuberculosis. In case of unexplained infertility, 56 per cent doctors favour screening patients for genital tuberculosis.

During the recently held conference on Genital Tuberculosis and Infertility, by Southend Fertility & IVF Centre, New Delhi, 24 per cent doctors, because of personal experiences, were explicit on the stand that Genital Tuberculosis (GTB) causes Repeated Pregnancy Loss (RPL/ repeated miscarriage). This too, when there is scant literature on the topic. Nearly 64 per cent doubted GTB on this score.

Tuberculosis is an infectious disease caused by bacteria called Mycobacterium Tuberculosis. Only when the bacteria infects parts of the reproductive system does Genital Tuberculosis occur.

Dr SONIA MALIK shares effects of genital tuberculosis on fertility and reproduction and some solutions



"At present, there is no evidence to indicate that RPL can be caused by tuberculosis. But as workers in different regions are working on this aspect and finding the cause with good results, large studies need to be undertaken to settle the issue," said Sonia Malik, senior gynaecologist and IVF expert, Southend fertility and IVF centre, "owing to the dearth of clear evidence and data supporting the theory that Genital TB leads to RPL.

Gynecologists believe this dis-

ease is a major cause of infertility. The meeting called by the Southend Fertility, was an attempt to share experiences of doctors. The majority felt that Genital Tuberculosis must be diagnosed and treated early as possible before it causes irreversible damage to the female.

Strong links between Genital Tuberculosis and infertility or inability to have child, also tempt those couples for tuberculosis treatment, who are found to have latent TB.

Commenting on how the patient

having latent tuberculosis could have infertility, Malik said that it was an interplay of the immune system and the female hormones which cause this condition. In order to understand and overpower the disease, more studies are required.

It would not be wrong to point out the disease barely exists and causes infertility. Or else, so many women would not conceive spontaneously after taking just anti-tubercular treatment. Moreover, in patients who have a severe form of the disease with damage, IVF gives best results. "For couples deprived of a child, due to reasons unknown or say, a low sperm count and obstruction in fallopian tube etc. In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) could be an excellent solution," said Malik.

In IVF, an egg is surgically removed from women's ovaries and fertilised with male sperm in the laboratory. The fertilised egg (now called an embryo) is returned to women's womb to nurture and develop. It must be noted that success rate of IVF falls sharply from 33.1 per cent in women aged under 35. And to 2.3 per cent, in women aged over 45. This simply means that for the couples facing problems of unidentified infertility for years and diagnosed with latent or active genital tuberculosis, IVF offers good opportunity.

Meanwhile, doctors should focus on proper treatment of genital tuberculosis. Because apart from infertility, GTB can also lead to other health complications.

Pioneer
June 16
P.14

Strengthen those muscles

The past century has seen a dramatic fall in maternal morbidity and mortality especially in developed countries. Women now have high expectations of pregnancy and childbirth and feel distressed when complications occur later. One such issue is pelvic floor problems.

The pelvic floor in a woman is a sheet of tissue comprising muscles and tendons that span the outlet of the pelvic bone at the level of the hip. The pelvic floor supports important organs like the uterus, the bladder and the bowel, which exit the pelvis through their respective openings.

Constant tension

The pelvic floor muscles differ from other muscles in the body in that they are constantly under tension and relax only when the bladder or bowel is emptied. They have the ability to contract quickly during an acute stress like a cough or sneeze or distend considerably during childbirth to allow passage of the baby's head and then get back to normal after delivery.

Any damage to the pelvic floor results in pelvic floor dysfunction. Symptoms include urinary or faecal incontinence, prolapse of pelvic organs, sexual dysfunction and chronic pain in the re-

gion. These are debilitating conditions that prevent a woman from enjoying a full and active life.

Pregnancy itself has a considerable bearing on the pelvic floor. The weight of the growing foetus can compress and distend tissues. During delivery, when the foetal head presses on the pelvic floor, the organs are susceptible to injury. The pelvic floor muscles, the bladder and bowel are caught between two bony projections – the foetal head and pelvic bone – and compressed and distorted. The pudendal nerve, which supplies the sphincters of the urethra and bowel, is stretched as the head emerges through the birth canal. In most cases the nerve recovers in six weeks but sometimes the injury is permanent and becomes more telling when the woman ages.

Pelvic floor disorders like urinary incontinence, severely impact quality of life. Though surgery provides definitive treatment for most problems, many non-surgical techniques have developed to treat, if not eradicate, them. As early as 1948 Kegel advised Pelvic Floor Muscle Exercise (PFME) for pelvic floor rehabilitation in postpartum women.

This is a learned technique of contracting and relaxing the muscles that surround the vagina and the bladder and bowel sphincters. These exercises are simple, free of side effects and can be attempted by women in the privacy of their homes. They are effective and can be considered first line treatment for most pelvic floor dysfunction

problems. The first priority in teaching women PFME is to identify the muscles to be exercised. The patient should understand not only the location of muscles, but also how to contract them.

It is important for patients to understand that the pelvic floor muscle is under voluntary control and can be trained like any other muscle in the body. Like other muscles the pelvic muscles need sustained effort. However, overworking them can cause fatigue. Hence a recovery period of typically 10 seconds should be allowed between efforts.

Though there is no standardisation among clinicians about the frequency of PFME, the US department of health and hu-

man services recommends 30 to 80 pelvic muscle contractions a day to reduce stress urinary incontinence. Women are more likely to initiate and maintain a programme with lower repetitions. Exercises can be done in lying down, sitting or standing position. The results may not become apparent for four to six weeks. Exercises should be planned to fit into the daily routine. Patients need to go back for regular follow up to their physicians in six week intervals.

Biofeedback

Biofeedback is a technique that takes information about certain events in the body and presents it in a way that one can see or hear and understand. Biofeedback can be used as a teaching tool to help women learn to control and strengthen their pelvic floor muscles. It also allows the therapist to measure someone's muscle strength and individualise their exercise programme.

Vaginal cones are tampon-sized and available in sets of five incremental weights. They are used for resistance training of pelvic floor muscles. Clinical studies have shown this approach to be effective in incontinence reduction. In light of their

simplicity, these are frequently prescribed as home adjuncts to office-based biofeedback sessions.

Functional electrical stimulation analogous to current that stimulates the muscles in back pain directly stimulates a pelvic muscle contraction. In clinical trials it has been found effective in the treatment of both stress and urgency incontinence. The frequency and the intensity of current are adjusted according to the woman's comfort level. It can be both home and office based.

A PFME program to rehabilitate the pelvic floor muscles should be as much a part of a woman's self care as a monthly selfbreast examination or an annual Pap smear. The physician should routinely offer PFME information to all female patients and incorporate evaluation of PFME technique into the regular gynaecologic examination.

Hindley
June 10, P.6H

बीमार औरते



जनन स्वास्थ्य या यौन स्वास्थ्य स्वच्छता औरतों के हृदय पर प्रजनन क्षमता, संतानोत्पत्ति और सिद्धि पर असर डालता है जहाँ प्रजनन स्वास्थ्य यह सुनिश्चित करता है कि तौन विकसित, संतानोत्पत्ति और सुरक्षित सेवा जीवन किताबों उनके पास प्रकृत क्षमता हो और यह संतानता मिले कि वे ऐसा करे और कैसे करेंगे। इससे निश्चित यह है कि रबी और दुरुब को ध्यान जानने का हक है कि वे जो जनन नियंत्रण के सुरक्षित, प्रभावी, सस्ते और स्वीकार्य तरीके काते मन नुसकिता किता तरह प्राण हो सकते हैं और उन्हें हक है कि वे हरे यौन और प्रजनन स्वास्थ्य स्वामी रोवते तक पहुँच सके किनसे तुरा को प्रजनन और शोध के जना के दौरान सुरक्षित रहे और स्वस्थ प्राणु धाने का केन्द्रीय नीति इस युग का मिला।

स्वच्छताओं के मुताबिक, पूरे विश्व में युवकों में 1.4 बिलियन और किशोरों में 201 बिलियन बीमारों का बोझ प्रजनन और स्वस्थ यौन स्वास्थ्य के कारण है। स्वच्छताओं में अनुमान लगाया है कि हर वर्ष, 3 लाख 500 हजार महिलाओं को यौन गर्भावस्था के दौरान और बच्चों को जन्म देने मारा हुआ है। प्रजनन और यौन स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं तक पहुँच होने से परिवार नियंत्रण सेवा में युगत का प्रसिद्धि द्वारा जनसंख्या और जननी मरुत जने। इसके साथ ही, मरुत-पूर्व देखभाल, सुरक्षित प्रसव और प्रसव के आशावादी देखभाल, बाधक से बचाव और सही इलाज, गर्भावस्था से बचाव, प्रीमि गर्भपात के परिणामों का प्रबंधन, प्रजनन क्षमता सुधारकों का उपचार, यौन संघर्षित रोगों और अन्य प्रजनन स्वास्थ्य की स्थितियों, डिम्बोद्धार, विफल की शिक्षा पर भी ध्यान दे।

एचआईवी/एड्स, स्तन कैंसर, बाधक, प्रसव, हार्मोन विरुद्ध, रोगप्रतिरक्षक चिकित्सा संबंधित सेवा और तापगत-यै सब प्रजनन और यौन स्वास्थ्य सेवा के उपयोग आते हैं।

राष्ट्रीय परिवार स्वास्थ्य सर्वेक्षण रिपोर्टों में कि भारत की जनसंख्या में एक चौथाई किशोर (10-19 साल) हैं और ताभान एक चौथाई जनसंख्या युवा (10-24 वर्ष) तौनी की है। जिस अधिक शिक्षित को भारत के शिक्षित युवा वर्ष में अनुपस्थित हैं उसे इस 31.1%

समूह में आने बचने और बचाव रखने की पूरी क्षमता है। इस समुदाय को करीब एक-दोहाई दशकों की शिक्षा तक पहुँच नहीं है। शिक्षा की कमी और इससे उपजी अधिक अतुरता के चलते महिलाएं प्रजनन स्वास्थ्य पर अपना मत नहीं रख पाती। इस संवेदनशील समुदाय को स्वास्थ्य, शिक्षा, विशेष रूप से प्रजनन एवं यौन स्वास्थ्य के प्रति जागरूकता है तक पहुँच तकनीक जरूरी है। तौनी अर्थिक के नजरिए से, जो यौन और प्रजनन चुनने व व्यवहार यह तौन चुनेगी, वहीं आगे जाकर देश को जनसंख्या और स्वास्थ्य हालात को निर्धारित करेगी। अनुमान लगाया गया है कि भारत में, कुल गर्भपात का लगभग 40% हिस्सा अन-इच्छुक या अनिच्छित होता है। हर पांच सेकेट में एक महिला बच्चे के जन्म के बाद दम तोड़ देती है। भारत की आबादी के बहुत बड़े तौने विशेष तौर पर महिलाओं की प्रजनन अधिकार और सही हेल्थकेयर तक पहुँच बहुत कम है। इन हालात के लिए बहुत से सामाजिक, अर्थिक और संस्कृतिक कारण जवाबदायी हैं। भारतीय जनमानस में फैली, पुरुष-प्रधान मानसिकता, इस तरह की तौनी का सबसे बड़ा कारण है। जब बात शारी, यौन जीवन, गर्भ ठहराना और गर्भनिरोधक की आती है तो महिलाएं शक्य ही तौनी अपनी आसुर उरने पानी हैं। जब बात प्रजनन और यौन स्वास्थ्य की आती है तो गर्भनिरोधक, परिवार की संरचना का

निर्धारण, गर्भावस्था-संबंधी हेल्थकेयर, प्रीमि गर्भपात के बचने, प्रजनन क्षमता सुधारण, लिंग से जुड़ी हिंसा और यौन जनित संक्रमणों किनसे एचआईवी शामिल है, जैसे क्षेत्र की उपलब्धता आदों को जरूरत है। तदुक्ती का स्वास्थ्य विशेषकर, किशोरवयस्था में और प्रजनन आयु से अधिक की महिलाओं का स्वास्थ्य अधिक ध्यान देना है।

डॉ. अमिता शर्मा, ओवरसीटिंग एंड गाइनेकोलॉजी, कोलंबिया विश्वविद्यालय, वाशिंगटन, वाशिंगटन, डी.सी. जब बात प्रजनन स्वास्थ्य की हो, तो गर्भावस्था के दौरान केयर बहुत जरूरी है। गर्भावस्था के दौरान, योग्य तौने का और बच्चे तौनी के ही स्वास्थ्य पर नजरबंदक अगर डालते हैं।

- किशोरावस्था में अपने शरीर में बदलाव की जानकारी
- उत्पादकता और प्रजनन-स्वास्थ्य पर जानकारी
- यौन संक्रमण से होने वाले रोग और एचआईवी
- सुरक्षित सेवा विकल्पों की जानकारी तक पहुँच
- उम्र बढ़ने के साथ ही समाज के प्रति बढ़ती जिम्मेदारी
- परिवार नियोजन सेवाओं तक पहुँच
- प्रसव-पूर्व और प्रसव-पश्चात देखभाल
- सुरक्षित प्रसव
- असुरक्षित गर्भपात का उपचार
- यौन संक्रमित रोगों की पहचान और उपचार
- यौन शोषण से सुरक्षा
- संस्कृति के उपयुक्त सनोवैज्ञानिक परामर्श और मानसिक स्वास्थ्य सेवा
- समझौतावादी कौशल

किशोरों के लिए प्रजनन स्वास्थ्य की जरूरत

अपने देश में अब भी उचित चिकित्सा व्यवस्था हर नागरिक तक नहीं पहुँची है। विश्व षट पर बड़ी-बड़ी बातें करके अपनी पीठ हम कब तक थपथपाते रहेंगे, जबकि हमारी अपनी औरतें जचगी और गर्भपात संबंधी संक्रमणों के कारण बेमौत मर रहे हैं। लिंग आधारित हिंसा व प्रजनन संबंधी निर्णय लेना, तौ अभी दूर की बात है-

Rashtraeya Sahara, June 27, P.1

21.6m unsafe abortions in '08

TEENA THACKER
NEW DELHI, JUNE 21

WORLD FIGURE

An estimated 21.6 million unsafe abortions took place worldwide in 2008, almost all in developing countries. Deaths due to unsafe abortion remain close to 13 per cent of all maternal deaths, the WHO has disclosed.

While the international health experts maintain that over the past two decades comprehensive abortion care have evolved greatly, despite these advances, an estimated 22 million abortions continue to be performed unsafely each year, resulting in the death of an estimated 47,000 women and disabilities for an additional 5 million women.

According to the WHO, the total number

of unsafe abortions has increased from about 20 million in 2003 to 22 million in 2008. The proportion of all abortions that are unsafe has increased from 44 per cent in 1995 and 47 per cent in 2003 to 49 per cent in 2008. "Almost all unsafe abortions occur in developing countries," said the WHO. The risk of death due to unsafe abortion varies among developing regions. The fatality rate for unsafe abortion is 460 per 100,000 unsafe abortion procedures in Africa and 520 per 100,000 in sub-Saharan Africa, compared with 30 per 100,000 in Latin America and the Caribbean and 160 per 100,000 in Asia.

Asian Age, June 22, P. 4

महिलाओं को रहता है

डिप्रेशन का ज्यादा खतरा

प्रमुख संवाददाता ॥ नई दिल्ली

महिलाओं के डिप्रेशन को चपेट में आने का खतरा पुरुषों के मुकाबले कहीं ज्यादा होता है। हालांकि इसकी सही वजह का पता अब तक नहीं लग सका है, लेकिन एक्सपर्ट्स का मानना है कि इसके लिए उनका अपने स्वास्थ्य को लेकर लापरवाही ब्रतने की आदत भी जिम्मेदार होती है।

जीवी पंत अस्पताल की सीनियर सायकायट्रिस्ट डॉ. रेणुमा अग्रवाल कहती हैं, मुड़ डिप्रेसिडर ईसानों में होने वाली सबसे आम समस्या है, जो तकरीबन 2500 सालों से प्रभावित कर रही है। डिप्रेशन की समस्या 20 पसैंट महिलाओं और 12 पसैंट पुरुषों की जिंदगी को कभी न कभी जरूर प्रभावित करता है। यह समस्या किसी को भी हो सकती है। यह बड़ी स्वास्थ्य समस्या है। आत्महत्या के 20 पसैंट मामलों, नशे की गिरफ्त में जाने के तिहाई मामलों, काम से एब्सेंट रहने के तकरीबन 30 पसैंट मामलों में यही जिम्मेदार होता है। इतना ही नहीं, शारीरिक अक्षमता के लिए भी यह डायबिटीज, आर्थराइटिस और एंजाइना जैसी बीमारियों के मुकाबले कहीं ज्यादा जिम्मेदार है। डब्ल्यूएचओ व वर्ल्ड बैंक की हालिया स्टडी में इस बात की पुष्टि हुई है। तमाम उपायों के बाद जागरूकता की हालत इतनी खराब है कि अब भी एक तिहाई से



यहां होता है इलाज

इंस्टिट्यूट ऑफ ह्युमन बिहेवियर एंड
एलाइड साइंसेज (इहवास), राम
मनोहर लोहिया, जीटीवी, जीवी पंत,
एलएनजेपी, एम्स, सफदरजंग
अस्पताल

फ्री हेल्पलाइन नंबर

डिप्रेशन हेल्पलाइन : 55258383
इफशा : 26253289
मानस : 41708517, 41707590
स्वचेतन : 26123931, 26135296
स्नेही : 65978181, 65418181
संजीवनी : 24311918, 24318883
सुमैत्री : 23389090

ज्यादा मरीज इसके इलाज के लिए फैमिली फिजिशियन के पास पहुंचते हैं। तमाम तरह के टेस्ट करा लेते हैं, लेकिन नतीजा शून्य निकलता है, क्योंकि सारी रिपोर्ट सामान्य आती हैं। ऐसे में इलाज में देरी होती है और परेशानी और बढ़ जाती है। इस मामले में सामाजिक भेदभाव भी महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाता है। यहाँ वजह है कि लोग डिप्रेशन को बीमारी मानना ही नहीं चाहते। जबकि अन्य बीमारियों की तरह यह भी एक बीमारी है, जिसका चकते पर इलाज होने से व्यक्ति कुछ ही हफ्तों में पूरी तरह सामान्य हो सकता है।

डॉ. अग्रवाल कहती हैं, डिप्रेशन की पहचान बेहद आसान है। अगर आप ठीक से सो नहीं पाते अथवा बहुत ज्यादा सोते हैं, किसी काम में मन नहीं लगता अथवा छोटे-छोटे काम मुश्किल लगते हैं, आप होपलेस और हेल्पलेस महसूस करते हैं, आप कितनी भी कोशिश के बावजूद नकारात्मक सोच को कंट्रोल नहीं कर पाते, भूख कम लगती है अथवा बहुत ज्यादा खाने लगते हैं, आप पहले से ज्यादा शॉर्ट टेंपर्ड या ऐग्रेसिव हो सकते हैं, पहले से ज्यादा अल्कोहल लेना शुरू कर देते हैं, ऐसे खयाल आने लगते हैं कि जिंदगी का कोई मतलब नहीं है तो तुरंत किसी साइकलॉजिस्ट या सायकायट्रिस्ट से संपर्क करें। इसके लिए तकरीबन सभी बड़े सरकारी अस्पतालों में फ्री काउंसलिंग और इलाज की सुविधा उपलब्ध है।

Nambharat Times, June 18, P3

विशेषज्ञों ने की परिवार नियोजन पर और जोर देने की वकालत

नई दिल्ली, 12 जून (भाषा)। भारत में 50 फीसद से अधिक आबादी के प्रजनन आयु में होने की वजह से हर साल जनसंख्या में 1.8 करोड़ का आंकड़ा जुड़ जाता है जबकि परिवार नियोजन के सफल कार्यान्वयन से न केवल मातृमृत्यु दर, शिशु मृत्युदर को कम किया जा सकता है बल्कि अशिक्षा, गरीबी से लेकर एचआईवी एड्स सहित कई समस्याओं का समाधान निकाला जा सकता है।

परिवार नियोजन की दिशा में और अधिक प्रयास करने की वकालत करते हुए स्वास्थ्य मंत्रालय में स्वास्थ्य योजना उपायुक्त सुषमा दुरेजा ने बताया कि जिला अस्पतालों में परिवार नियोजन के बारे में व्यापक काउंसलिंग मुहैया कराने के लिए काउंसलरों की नियुक्ति करने का प्रस्ताव है। ये काउंसलर गर्भ निरोध के विकल्प, प्रसव के बाद काउंसलिंग, प्रजनन संबंधी अन्य विषयों पर परामर्श देंगे।

प्रजनन स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार नियोजन के क्षेत्र में लंबे समय से सक्रिय संगठन पापुलेशन फाउंडेशन ऑफ इंडिया की कार्यकारी निदेशक पूनम मुटरेजा ने कहा - परिवार नियोजन के लिए काउंसलिंग मददगार साबित हो सकती है। इस समय काउंसलिंग की सुविधा हर जगह नहीं है जबकि प्राथमिक स्वास्थ्य केंद्रों के स्तर पर इसकी बहुत जरूरत है।

गर्भ निरोध को परिवार नियोजन के लिए महत्वपूर्ण बताते हुए 'सेंटर फॉर पब्लिक पॉलिसी' में प्रोफेसर गीता सेन ने कहा कि देश में 12.5 फीसद महिलाएं या तो देर से बच्चे चाहती हैं या और बच्चे नहीं चाहती। लेकिन वे परिवार नियोजन के कारगर तरीके का उपयोग नहीं करती। इसके फलस्वरूप, अनचाहे ही परिवार बढ़ जाता है। प्रो. सेन के मुताबिक यह स्थिति तब है जब देश में 50 फीसद से अधिक आबादी के प्रजनन आयु में होने की वजह से हर साल जनसंख्या में करीब

1.8 करोड़ का आंकड़ा जुड़ जाता है और गरीबी, अशिक्षा, एचआईवी एड्स जैसी बीमारी से लेकर सामाजिक जटिलताओं में उल्लेखनीय कमी भी नहीं आ पा रही है। यानी निश्चित रूप से गर्भ निरोध और परिवार नियोजन पर बहुत प्रयास करने की जरूरत है।

लिंगभेद के मुद्दे पर कई वृत्त चित्र बना चुकी लवलीन थडानी के मुताबिक, पिछड़े इलाकों और गांवों में बेटे की चाहत में परिवार बढ़ता जाता है। परिवार में बेटियों को बेटों के बराबर समझने में लंबा समय लगेगा। शहरों में भी यही स्थिति है। ऐसे में परिवार नियोजन के बारे में काउंसलिंग बहुत जरूरी हो जाती है। लवलीन ने कहा कि देश में परिवार नियोजन पर उस तरह ध्यान नहीं दिया जा रहा है जिसे तरह दिया जाना चाहिए जबकि इससे कई समस्याओं का हल निकाला जा सकता है।

स्त्री रोग विशेषज्ञ डॉ अर्चना धवन बजाज ने कहा कि देश में गर्भावस्था और प्रसव के दौरान विभिन्न जटिलताओं के चलते प्रति एक

लाख जीवित जन्म पर मातृमृत्यु दर का आंकड़ा 200 से ज्यादा है। इसका मुख्य कारण स्त्रीय परिवार नियोजन सेवाओं तक पहुंच में कमी है। यदि परिवार नियोजन पर समुचित ध्यान दिया जाए तो मातृमृत्यु दर में एक तिहाई तक कमी लाई जा सकती है।

आठ जून को भारत में परिवार नियोजन पर सामाजिक संगठनों की एक राष्ट्रीय बैठक आयोजित की गई थी। फेमिली प्लानिंग एसोसिएशन ऑफ इंडिया और उसके सहयोगियों द्वारा आयोजित इस बैठक में सरकारी अधिकारियों और 13 राज्यों के प्रतिनिधियों ने भाग लिया।

पीपफए इंडिया के महासचिव विश्वनाथ कोलीवाड ने कहा - बैठक का मकसद देश में परिवार नियोजन कार्यक्रम में योगदान देना था। हम चाहते हैं कि इसके माध्यम से हमारी आवाज जुलाई में लंदन में होने जा रहे ग्लोबल एफपीए सम्मेलन तक पहुंचे और परिलक्षित भी हो।

Jansatta, June 13, P. 7

Let's get men involved

The focus of family planning is almost solely on women. But they rarely determine the number of children they should have, writes LALITA PANICKER

The next time you hear a knock on your door, it may turn out to be your friendly local health worker with a choice of contraceptives for you. And who will you have to thank for that? None else than health and family welfare minister Ghulam Nabi Azad, whose innovations in the field of population are matchless.

Well, don't hold your breath just yet, this is one scheme that Azad has mooted though it would be a safe bet that not too many health workers will be turning up at people's doorsteps just yet.

Some years ago, population was a subject quite close to the hearts of the political class, though not always in a positive sense. There were two points of view, both not very well nuanced. One was that our population would bring us demographic dividends owing to the large youth component. The other was that the numbers were a drag and that people must be stopped from breeding like rabbits. The Planning Commission has a wonderful roadmap for population in the Eleventh Plan (2007-2012) which lays down in great detail all the problems and solutions. It makes for riveting reading and it would be clear except to the most cloth-eared that if implemented we would be home free.

But as always, the proof the policy is in the implementation. Azad a career politician is not really interested in the nuts and bolts of population, except to say that the total fertility rate (TFR), that is live births per woman fell by 19% in the last decade. Nothing to cheer about Azad, the TFR has only fallen from 3.2 in 2000 to 2.5 in 2010. But the health minister says that he will achieve population stabilisation through people's cooperation and not through legislation. Not so fast, please.

But, herein lies the rub. We have no concept of eliciting people's cooperation in any family planning programme. Has the government ever got around to asking people what they think of family planning, how they would like to go about it, what they think is the optimum family size, whether they are open to the idea of sterilisation, whether they have access to any family planning method? If it has, then it must be a fairly well kept secret.

What we do know is that 60 years after family planning was mooted as a policy, officialdom is still quite fond of sterilisation camps, especially for women. Of course, these are not compulsory but there is an element of coercion in the incentives and in some cases disincentives on offer. The first question we must ask is why this emphasis on women. After all they are not reproduc-

ing in isolation. These camps are run in an assembly line fashion and the woman is rarely given pre- or post-operative care. This is not a dangerous procedure but still certain precautions have to be taken. The fact that it is seen as irreversible means that there is pressure on the woman to have as many children as her husband or family wants before going in for sterilisation. This actually works against the stabilisation goal.

A major lacuna in our family planning programmes and policies is the lack of involvement of men. It is no secret that in a majority of Indian families, it is the man who determines the family size and the number of sons he should have. It is almost always pressure from a husband and in-laws that compels women to produce children until the desired number of sons are born. Yet, men have never been the target of population stabilisation policies. They are referred to in passing but the physical burden of family planning is on the woman.

There is no reason why the majority of health workers in the field should be women. When it comes to dispensing a cocktail of contraceptives, it would be far more effective if there were male health workers who could engage with men. In a largely conservative society, it is impractical to expect women health workers to discuss contraception and spacing with men, especially in the rural areas. In many places, far from reaching contraceptives at one's doorstep, there are large swathes of populations which have never seen a contraceptive. There are also large numbers of people living in remote areas where it is again impractical for women workers to reach.

What we need is a proper mapping and survey of areas which most need reproductive health services and then target those areas. For a start, Azad could get his officials to try and get public health clinics up and running. They are either shut or grossly inadequate in most rural areas.

Getting people's cooperation is all very fine, but it is not a very clever idea to bypass legislation as a method to achieve population stabilisation. The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1976 could well work to ensure that early marriages don't take place. A small 2.5 year increase in first birth reduces the population momentum by 21%. Most of all, the language which the government uses to convince people to have smaller families must change. No one is going to connect when you go to them and tell them to have smaller families so that we can achieve population stabilisation. No, sensitised health workers have to tell people what's in it for them. Smaller families mean the resources will go further, the woman's health is not endangered and more attention will be paid to the children, thereby safeguarding their health and education.

If Azad can get the moribund public healthcare system going then taking care of population stabilisation should be a breeze. The target for population stabilisation was 2045. It has now been revised to 2060. All the plans and proposals are there. It just needs to be delivered if not on your doorstep, at least within easy reach. Maybe the recent attempts by our MPs to fund innovations through their local area development assistance schemes could include a helping hand for the health minister.

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SMALLER FAMILIES MEAN THE RESOURCES WILL GO FURTHER, THE WOMAN'S HEALTH IS NOT ENDANGERED AND MORE ATTENTION WILL BE PAID TO THE CHILDREN, THUS SAFEGUARDING THEIR HEALTH AND EDUCATION

Hindustan Times, June 14, p. 10

India for rights-based approach in family planning

Aarti Dhar

NEW DELHI: India has decided to throw its weight behind the civil society on issues related to family planning, and articulate its rights-based approach at a summit scheduled in London in the next few weeks.

India has kept away from planning family policies since the 70s, and incorporated population stabilisation programmes in the health policies focussing on sexual and reproductive health rights and women's empowerment. While the Centre has discour-

aged a targeted approach and spoken against providing incentives for adopting family planning measures, States have often been found to be adopting these measures.

In addition to making sure that the need for contraception for women in developing countries can be met, the international meet at London will also aim to generate unprecedented political commitment and resources from developing countries, donors, the private sector and civil society to meet the family planning needs of women in the poorest countries by 2020.

A resolution passed at the end of a day-long consultation with civil society organisations here on Friday said there was a need to focus on an equal or balanced approach for contraceptive methods.

'Building a movement to make sure that every family is a planned family, every mother is an empowered healthy mother, and every child is a wanted and healthy child,' it said.

Talking to reporters after the consultations, Tewodros Melesse, Director General, International Planned Parenthood Federation, said an

integrated health policy was needed to provide comprehensive family health services and stepping up of public spending on health and family planning was necessary to reduce maternal mortality.

He added integration of family planning and maternal and child health services, women's empowerment, and participation in programmes were important. Guaranteeing timely and steady availability of contraceptives, improved health facilities, including counselling services and skilled providers were a must. Programmes to end

child marriage, delay child-bearing, and increase birth spacing were equally important, Mr. Melesse said.

Proper sex education

Responding to queries from reporters, Mr. Melesse called upon India to formulate an age and culture-appropriate comprehensive sex education system, by evolving consensus among the stakeholders, parents, and taking into confidence civil society.

"Sex is natural and human, and it cannot be just educated alone. Some forces may be stopping it deliberately.

There are different tools for sex education, and there are issues if it should be so explicit. The Government should convene a meeting of all concerned, including civil societies, parents, and religious leaders to evolve consensus," Mr. Melesse said.

"The government should frame the sex education policy in accordance with the education policy, by evolving consensus of all concerned. The government needs to build a national coalition for this," he said.

There are an estimated 12.5 per cent women in India, who

want to delay or avoid a pregnancy, but aren't using or have access to an effective method of family planning. There is also a huge unmet need for immediate post-partum contraception among women who deliver at public sector facilities, under the various schemes run by the government for mother and child.

The most prevalent and commonly used method in India remains sterilisation, with 38 per cent of women going in for sterilisation, and only one per cent of men opting for this choice.

Hindu, June 9, P.17

Reconstruction can help after female genital mutilation: Study

ABANTIKA GHOSH
NEW DELHI, JUNE 25

RECONSTRUCTION surgery can offer life afresh to women who have been subjected to genital mutilation. A study published in *The Lancet* says such surgery can make it possible not only to reduce the pain such women live with but also restore the lost sensations. It advocates that more plastic surgeons be trained in the procedure.

The study comes at a time when voices are being raised in India against female genital mutilation (FGM) in the Bohra Muslim community. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared the practice as having "no health benefits, only harm".

Islamic scholars suggest there could be up to 1 million women who have been subjected to FGM in India. There is, however, little awareness among surgeons of either the procedure or its reversal though they say that by the sound of it, it should not be a difficult surgery to perform. Dr Ajay Haryani, a consultant plastic surgeon at Mumbai's Nanavati Hospital — Bohra Muslims are mainly concentrated in Maharashtra and Gujarat — said: "That (possibility of reconstruction after FGM) would depend on which parts of the female genitalia are mutilated. There is little information we have on this practice."

An online petition was recently addressed to Bohra high priest Dr Syedna Mohammad Burhanuddin, reportedly by an activist in Mumbai, calling for an end to the practice, known as "khatna". According to WHO's definition of FGM, it involves "all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for

non-medical reasons."

The Lancet study cites surgeries by doctors from three hospitals in France, led by Dr Beatrice Cuzin of the urology department at Lyon's Edouard Herriot University Hospital, on 2,938 women aged 18 or above over an 11-year period till 2009. Reconstruction broadly involved four steps. "The skin covering the stump was resected to reveal the clitoris. The suspensory ligament was then sectioned to mobilise the stump, the scar tissue was removed from the exposed portion and the glans was brought into a normal position."

As per answers to a questionnaire given out before the surgery, 99 per cent of the women who opted for the surgery did so to "get back their identity" while 81 per cent said they want an improved sex life. Of the 840 patients who came back for follow-up, 821 reported an easing of their pain, and by one year, 51 per cent of them reported a more rewarding sex life.

FGM is practised as a means of ensuring "female purity by prevention of illicit sexual relations". WHO labels it a violation of human rights of women and children and associates it with recurrent bladder and urinary tract infections, cysts, infertility and increased risk of childbirth complications and neonatal deaths.

Islamic Scholar Asghar Ali Engineer, a Bohra Muslim himself, says there is no religious sanction for reconstruction after FGM but many women in the community are beginning to talk about it now. "However it is very hush hush, both the mutilation and the reconstruction. Seventy-five per cent women in the community undergo the procedure, so there would be about 1-1.2 million women in India alone who have undergone



140 MILLION
GIRLS AND WOMEN WORLDWIDE
CURRENTLY LIVING WITH
CONSEQUENCES OF FGM,
ACCORDING TO WHO ESTIMATE

1-1.2 million of them in India, based on the estimate that 75% women in Bohra Muslim community have undergone FGM

0-15 years: Age at which FGM is usually carried out

92 million girls aged 10 and over in Africa have undergone FGM

6 February International Day against Female Mutilation, sponsored by UN every year to promote awareness

FGM," says Engineer.

Dr Mahesh Mangal, chairman of plastic surgery at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, said: "I have not come across any case of female genital mutilation. However, reconstruction should not be difficult to do."

The Indian Express, June 26, P. 8

-FREEZING EGGS

The Back-Up Plan

Sanchita Sharma

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FREEZING eggs indefinitely in a cryogenic vat till you are ready to have a baby is the brand new option for women who want to have a baby when they are ready for it. Technically known as oocyte cryopreservation, egg freezing is one way to tackle age-related barriers to childbearing. It extends fertility and raises the chances of conception even after a woman's fertility starts going down after the age of 35.

The frozen eggs are used for conception using in vitro fertilisation (IVF), whenever a woman is ready.

"While most women go for egg freezing because they haven't found the right man, some opt for it because their partner may not be there for IVF cycles or if they are undergoing some cancer treatment. This allows them to have their own genetic children after 35, when fertility starts to wane," says Dr Abha Majumdar, head of the Centre of IVF and Human Reproduction at Ganga Ram Hospital.

Not all cancer treatments lead to infertility, but some types of chemotherapy and radiation can trigger premature menopause in young women. One such 19-year-old with uterine cancer was referred to Dr Majumdar from the Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute. "Oocyte cryopreservation was the only option for her because after treatment she cannot ovulate," says Dr Majumdar.

FLASH FREEZING

Until recently, the only method for freezing unfertilised eggs was a slow-freezing method. Unlike sperm, which has been successfully frozen and used for years, eggs contain a great deal of water, which causes ice crystals to form

WHAT ARE YOUR CHANCES?

IVF is time-consuming, and also expensive. But had it not been for IVF, many couples would not have been able to have children.

Average success rates worldwide, including India

42% in women 35 years and younger

32% in women aged 35-37 years

22% in women aged 38-40 years

12% in women aged 41-42 years

5% in women aged 43-44 years



within the egg and these destroy the cell structure. The fertilisation and pregnancy rates for these slow-frozen eggs, once thawed, is low.

"New cryopreservation techniques use a flash-freezing process known as vitrification to chill the eggs to minus 196°C in less than a second. This does not allow ice crystals the time to form. The instant freezing preserves the quality of eggs and raises the chances of conception from 10% using the old method to 40%," says Dr Majumdar.

Since Ganga Ram introduced the technique, 13 women have opted for it. Of the seven who have undergone IVF,

three have conceived, making the conception rate 42.8%. The average chance of conception in a normal IVF cycle is one in three.

TOUGH CALL

As in routine IVF, women opting for egg freezing have to inject hormones for 11 days to ovulate. "Unlike in the past, the new hormones have to be injected subcutaneously — in the fat tissue in the stomach, hips or thighs — which is not painful," says Dr Hrishikesh Pai, IVF specialists at Mumbai's Lilavati Hospital and Delhi's Fortis Group of Hospitals.

The process of harvesting eggs is the same as IVF — hormones are injected for a period of 11 days to stimulate the ovaries to release multiple eggs. All women produce some eggs that are unusable, and the percentage climbs with age. For a woman in her

mid-30s, it can take up to 10-12 frozen eggs to be reasonably sure of a single pregnancy, which means at least two cycles of injecting hormones for viable embryos.

Even then, there is no guarantee that every woman who goes for it will end up with a baby. "While eggs that are obviously flawed are discarded after retrieval, it's not until the oocytes are combined with the sperms that their viability can be known. Even then there's no way to assure that a seemingly-healthy embryo will implant and result in a baby.

"And with a 40% success rate per IVF cycle, only two in three women go home with a healthy baby," says Dr Pai.

Women should not delay conception thinking they have egg-freezing as insurance, warn experts.

"But it's an option for many who have no other option," says Dr Majumdar. And the option works for two in three women.

*Hindustan Times,
June 11, P.9*

Borrowed wombs-I

Surrogacy is an arrangement in which a woman agrees to carry a pregnancy that is genetically unrelated to her and her husband, with the intention to carry it to term and hand over the child to the genetic parents for whom she is acting as a surrogate. The first report of a baby being born by IVF surrogacy was in the year 1985. The earliest mention of natural surrogacy is in the Old Testament of the Bible.

Types of surrogacy:

There are two main types of surrogacy, traditional and IVF surrogacy. In traditional surrogacy arrangement, sperm is provided by the intended father and the egg is from the surrogate. In traditional surrogacy, the host is also the genetic mother of the child. The procedure is usually done by artificial insemination or intrauterine insemination (IUI). Traditional surrogacy is also known as partial surrogacy or straight surrogacy. In IVF surrogacy or gestational surrogacy, the gametes (egg and sperms) are provided by the intended parents (IP) to produce embryos. These embryos are subsequently transferred in to the uterus of surrogate. The IVF surrogacy is also known as full surrogacy.

Who can benefit from surrogacy?

Although the majority of the infertility causes can be remedied through conventional medical and surgical treatments or In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF), but there are conditions where surrogacy gives women a chance to raise children.

These conditions are:

- Women whose ovaries are producing eggs, but they do not have uterus. Their uterus may have been removed (due to hysterectomy) or they were born without a uterus. This is the most common indication for IVF surrogacy.

- Women who have suffered repeated miscarriages and are deemed to have little or no chance of carrying a child to term.

- Women who suffer from medical problems such as severe heart and kidney diseases, severe diabetes and in whom a pregnancy would be life-threatening. However, their long-term prospect for health is good.

- Repeated failure of treatment by IVF. Women who have never shown any signs of implanting normal embryos in an apparently normal uterus even after five to six IVF cycles.

- Women with congenital defects such as a T-shaped uterus or hypoplastic uterus, with a history of repetitive pregnancy loss. Women with severe untreatable adhesions inside the uterine cavity (intrauterine

synechia).

- Couples in same sex relationship take recourse to this treatment.

Selection of a surrogate:

The IVF surrogates may be known to the intended parents or may be anonymous. Known surrogates are typically relatives or friends who volunteer to carry the pregnancy. Anonymous surrogates are identified through agencies that recruit women to become surrogates.

The surrogate should be a minimum of 21 years of age and have delivered at least one live born child at term and preferably have completed their families. Surrogates should have normal height and weight, stable heterosexual relationship, a supporting husband or partner who is fully aware of the situation.

They must be using barrier contraceptives during treatment. As per ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research) guidelines, she should not be over 45 years of age. Complications like pregnancy induced hypertension or gestational diabetes are more common in advanced age surrogates.

It is important to evaluate the overall health of the surrogate. She should be screened for any underlying medical

conditions that might complicate a pregnancy. Infectious disease screening for syphilis, gonorrhoea, HIV, Hepatitis B and C should be performed. Her blood type should be noted. The uterine cavity should be evaluated with hysterosalpingogram (HSG) or hysteroscopy. A prospective surrogate mother must be retested for HIV just before embryo transfer. A written certificate/statement must be taken from the surrogate that:

- She has not had drug intravenously administered into her through a shared syringe.
- She has not undergone blood transfusion.

- She and her husband (to the best of her/his knowledge) have had no extramarital relationship in the last six months.

This is to ensure that the person would not come up with symptoms of HIV infection during the period of surrogacy. She must also declare that she will not use drugs intravenously of her own, and not undergo blood transfusion except for blood obtained through a certified blood bank.

*Assam Tribune
June 29, P. 2*

'Computer vision syndrome' rising in children, IT workers

ajita singh

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE: Instances of computer vision syndrome are found to be rising among computer professionals and children with each passing day, as long-duration exposure to computers, mobiles and other gadgets is increasing, according to eye care experts.

The findings of an eye-checkup camp in which more than 200 professionals participated at Sap Labs, Sector 54, Gurgaon, confirmed instances of eye strain or computer vision syndrome (CVS) in software professionals are increasing, said experts from the Centre for Sight, a group of eye hospitals. According to ophthalmologists, 85 per cent of those working on computers and Blackberries for more than six hours suffer from CVS.

At the camp, Dr Triveni Grover, a senior ophthalmologist at the Centre for Sight, said, "In many young professionals, the symptoms of CVS often go unrecognised. Other than tiredness in the eyes, getting frequent headaches, pain in the shoulder stiffness in the neck and blurry vision are also symptoms of CVS."

The main cause of CVS or eye strain is that people tend to blink less, when they sit in front

of the computer. Blinking is a natural reflex, which keeps the eyes moist. Dr Grover advised computer-professionals to take a break while working on the computer by applying the rule of 20-20-20. After every 20 minutes, the expert urged the computer professionals to look 20 feet away for 20 seconds to relieve eye strain.

Dr Grover has provided do-able solutions to reduce eye strain like tweaking the ambience lighting, reducing the glare of the computer, putting drapes to shut the external light, increasing the font size of the reading material and working on the ergonomics.

The Delhi-based Center for Sight (CFS), since its inception in 1996, has become one of Asia's largest eye-care chains with the acquisition of the New Vision Laser Center (NVLC), raising the number of its facilities to 35. The CFS has become one of the

largest networks of Lasik and laser-based vision correction centres across Asia, Africa and Australia, its chairman, Dr Mahipal Singh Sachdev, said. Apart from its 22 centers across the National Capital Region, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir, NVLC has 13 centres in Gujarat, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh.

Dr Sachdev said work was on for a 55,000-square-foot super-specialty eye hospital in the Capital's Dwarka area and that it will be finished within 18 to 20 months. The NVLC medical director Dr Rupal Shah said the tie-up would bring NVLC's latest technologies to all the group's centres across the country.



Statesman, June 17, P.5

अब लैब में बनेगी मानव त्वचा!

राहुल आनंद, नई दिल्ली

अब मानव त्वचा भी लैब में तैयार होगी। इस दिशा में भारतीय डॉक्टरों ने प्रारंभिक सफलता प्राप्त कर ली है। डॉक्टरों की मेहनत से लाई तो इस त्वचा को प्रभावित जगह पर आसानी से प्रत्यारोपित भी किया जा सकेगा। इससे जले हुए भाग में बने दाग-धब्बे को दूर करने में काफी मदद मिलेगी। इंडियन कार्डियल ऑफ मेडिकल रिसर्च (आइसीएमआर) से संबद्ध इस्टीमेट ऑफ पैथोलॉजी (आइओपी) में शोध के पहले चरण का क्लीनिकल ट्रायल पूरा हो चुका है और पेटेंट के लिए इंटेलेक्चुअल प्रॉपर्टी राइट (आइपीआर) भी फाइल की जा चुकी है।

आइओपी के बायोर्गैनीक लैब के शोधकर्ता डॉ. लक्ष्मण के. येनेनी ने बताया कि इस अध्ययन से जले हुए मरीजों की



- शोध के पहले चरण का क्लीनिकल ट्रायल पूरा
- पेटेंट के लिए आइपीआर कर दिया गया है फाइल

त्वचा को ठीक करने में डॉक्टरों को मदद मिलेगी। बोन मैरी और कॉर्ड ब्लड सेल्स की तरह मानव त्वचा के अंदरूनी हिस्से में भी कैरेटिनोसाइट्स नामक स्टेम सेल्स पाई जाती हैं। इन सेल्स में उपस्थित कैरेटिन प्रोटीन अपने तरह की कई सेल्स विकसित कर त्वचा को फैलाने में मदद करता है। लेबोरेट्री अध्ययन में जले हुए मरीजों की त्वचा से इन सेल्स को लेकर विकसित

40 प्रतिशत तक जलने पर होगा प्रत्यारोपण

लेबोरेट्री में बने वाली त्वचा को अभी तक केवल 40 प्रतिशत जले हुए मरीजों को सही करने के लिए प्रयोग किया जा सकेगा। वैज्ञानिकों के अनुसार इससे अधिक जले मरीजों को सही करने के लिए बड़े स्तर पर त्वचा बनानी होगी। फिलहाल त्वचा का इस्तेमाल केवल सरकारी अस्पताल के बर्न युनिट के लिए माना जा रहा है, ताकि इसका कमांडिबिल इस्तेमाल न हो।

सेल्स की परत को दोबारा उसी जगह प्रत्यारोपित करने के बाद सफल परिणाम देखा गया। सफदरजंग अस्पताल के बर्न युनिट के सहयोग से किए गए इस शोध में 40 फीसद जले मरीजों की कैरेटिनोसाइट्स को लेबोरेट्री में लाया गया। डॉ. लक्ष्मण ने बताया कि लैब में त्वचा बनाने के लिए मरीजों की जली हुई त्वचा से पांच सेटीमीटर हिस्सा लेकर उसकी बायोप्सी जांच की गई

और इसके बाद कल्चर प्रक्रिया का इस्तेमाल कर त्वचा को कल्चर डिश में लेकर केमिकल के साथ रिप्लेशन करवाया गया। त्वचा को बढ़ाने में हम सफल हुए। फिर इस त्वचा को उसी जगह प्रत्यारोपित किया गया, जहां से त्वचा ली गई थी। इस प्रक्रिया को ट्रांसप्लांटेशन ऑफ ऑटोलोगस रेपिडरमल कहा जाता है।

पहले चरण का क्लीनिकल ट्रायल पूरा होने के बाद पेटेंट के लिए डीजोसीआइ के पास आइपीआर भी फाइल किया गया है। लेबोरेट्री में त्वचा तैयार होने के दो से तीन सप्ताह का समय लगता है। शोध के दूसरे व तीसरे चरण का काम पूरा करने के लिए एनआरडीसी जमरूदपुर, आइपीआर से जुड़े वैज्ञानिक और खूब आइसीएमआर मदद करेगा। इसके अलावा कई प्राइवेट बायोटेक्नोलॉजी फर्मों ने भी मदद की बात कही है।

Dainik Jagaran, June 23, P.1

Neglected diseases: WHO shot in arm for R&D funding

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Opposition from the US notwithstanding, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has agreed to initiate negotiation for a new binding instrument among countries to promote financing for R&D for neglected diseases such as Kala Azar and yellow fever. These diseases mostly afflict the developing nations.

The proposal for R&D fund was recommended by the 'Consultative Expert Working Group on Research and Development: Financing and Coordination' (CWEG). This group was set up by the World Health Assembly (WHA) last year.

Ignoring strong opposition by the US and some rich nations, the 65th World Health Assembly (WHA), a highly decision-making body of the WHO adopted a resolution agreeing to discuss the recommendations of the CWEG report.

It has sought setting up of a global fund that would bind countries to fund research and

vaccines or diagnostics," it said, adding that "markets fail because intellectual property rights are not an effective incentive in these circumstances, and public investment is also dominated by the rich world and its own health needs."

The WHO resolution also agrees for national level consultations to discuss the CWEG report and other relevant analyses resulting in concrete proposals and actions at the next round of



development for neglected diseases. Every nation would be required to commit at least .01 per cent of GDP on Government-funded R&D devoted to meet the health needs of developing countries.

The move is being hailed by India along with the other developing countries particularly in the South-East region, which faced the brunt of numerous such diseases. This is for the first time the WHO has been compelled to deliberate on the ways of R&D funding. Developing countries in particular can hope significant investment for drug discovery and development to tackle diseases like TB, malaria and other neglected tropical disease.

Currently investment in R&D is almost nil in developing nations including India due to acute shortage of fund and expertise.

This view was echoed by the CWEG report as well. "The poor suffer and die because there are no effective health technologies like medicines,

meeting in September.

"All countries will have to prepare a roadmap detailing how and who will fund for what type of R&D projects. This would also ensure capacity building," said a senior Health Ministry official.

India had lobbied hard to push for the recommendations of the CWEG at the WHO. "Generating R&D outcomes as public goods, freely available for further research and production would delink R&D costs from product prices. This binding agreement would facilitate drug discovery and development which will be relevant to the diseases which afflict the poor and the vulnerable in the developing countries," India said while welcoming the CWEG recommendations.

Pioneer, June 5, P5

Free medicines for all from October

Lawrence Saha

New Delhi (ANI) - A government plan to provide free medicines to all patients attending a government health facility across the country will be rolled out from October.

Sacked by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh himself, the free medicines for all scheme - being referred to as the "real game-changer" - has received its first financial allocation of Rs 400 crore from the Planning Commission for 2012-13. The entire programme, however, is estimated to cost Rs 28,360 crore over the 13th five-year Plan. At present, the public sector provides healthcare to 22% of the country's population.

The ministry estimates that this will increase to 52% by 2017, once medicines are provided for free from 1.6 lakh sub-centres, 25,000 primary health centres, 5,000 commu-



At present, the public sector provides healthcare to 22% of the population. The health ministry estimates that this will increase to 52% by 2017, once medicines are provided for free.

nity health centres and 600 district hospitals. The ministry has sent the National List of Essential Medicines, 2011 (NLEM) drugs which includes anti-AIDS, analgesics, anti-ulcers, anti-psychotics, sedatives, anaesthetic agents, lipid lowering agents, steroids and anti-platelet drugs) to all the states to use as reference.

The states, however, have been asked to create their own essential drugs list (EDL), keeping in mind the diseases that worst affect them. Around 75%

of the funds under the scheme will be borne by the Centre, while the rest will be the state's responsibility. Around 5% of the district funds will be allowed to be used to purchase drugs outside the EDL. The Cabinet has approved the setting up of a Central Procurement Agency (CPA) for bulk procurement of drugs.

The PMO has asked the ministry to set up the CPA as early as possible. At present, 78% of the entire health expenditure in India is from out-

of-pocket (OOP). Purchasing drugs alone accounts for 7% of this OOP expenditure.

Additional secretary in the ministry, C Goyal, said a scientific committee will have to draw up the EDL list for the states. It has also been asked to devise standard treatment protocols in order to avoid unnecessary and irrational treatments.

Goyal said, "The states will procure drugs directly from manufacturer or importer through an open tender. Companies applying for the tenders will have to have GMP compliance certificate, a non-conviction certificate and should have a specified annual turnover. The drugs must carry a not-for-sale label printed on the packaging." He added, "We plan to roll out the game-changing programme from October." Goyal said a district-level state-of-the-art warehouse will have to be set up by states to

store the drugs and a transport driver system will move the medicines to district hospitals, CHCs and PHCs will then send the drugs to the sub-centres.

He added, "It is being made mandatory for all doctors in the public sector to prescribe generic drugs and salt names and not brands. Action will be taken against doctors found prescribing brands."

Tamil Nadu has been providing free medicines in its public health centres for the past 13 years, while Rajasthan introduced it last October.

A Planning Commission panel had said drug prices have shot up by 40%, between 1996 and 2006. It said that during the same period the price of controlled drugs rose by 0.82%, while those in the EDL increased by 15%. The price of drugs that were neither under price control, nor under the EDL, grew by 137%.

Times of India, June 23, P.7

मुफ्त दवा का तोहफा

मुद्दा

प्रमोद भार्गव

ह राहत की बात है कि सरकार देश के सभी नागरिकों के लिए सरकारी अस्पतालों में मुफ्त में दवा दिए जाने का इंतजाम करने जा रही है। यह व्यवस्था अक्टूबर 2012 से लागू होगी। इस योजना को लागू करने में यह एक अनिवार्य शर्त भी जोड़ी गई है कि सभी सरकारी अस्पतालों व स्वास्थ्य केंद्रों के चिकित्सक केवल जेनेरिक दवाएं लिखने के लिए ही बाध्य होंगे। इससे न केवल गरीब रोगी इलाज के दायरे में आ जाएंगे बल्कि दवा कंपनियों को ब्रांडेड दवाओं के दाम भी घटने को मजबूर होना पड़ेगा। लेकिन ऐसा तभी संभव होगा, जब केंद्र व राज्य सरकारें ऐसे चिकित्सकों के विरुद्ध कड़ा रुख अपनाएं, जो योजना लागू हो जाने के बाद भी पत्रों पर ब्रांडेड दवाएं लिख कर नियमों को धोता बताने से बाज नहीं आएं। क्योंकि हमारी सरकारें कई बार बहुराष्ट्रीय दवा कंपनियों के आगे लाचार दिखाई देती हैं। इसीलिए न केवल ब्रांडेड दवाएं जेनेरिक दवाओं की तुलना में कई गुना अत्यधिक महंगी हैं बल्कि मूल्य के बरक्स असरकारी भी नहीं हैं जबकि राष्ट्रीय दवा मूल्य प्राधिकरण की ओर से दवाओं में मुनाफे का आंकड़ा महज सौ फीसद ज्यादा रखने की छूट दी गई है, जैसे, लागत के दोगुनी से ज्यादा कीमत दवा नहीं बेची जा सकती है।

केंद्र सरकार इसी साल अक्टूबर से देश के सभी सरकारी चिकित्सालयों में जीवनरक्षक समेत हर प्रकार की दवा मुफ्त में मुहैया कराने जा रही है। केंद्र यदि इस योजना को ठीक से पालन करने में सफल होता है तो यह योजना उसे 2014 में होने वाले लोकसभा चुनाव में गाय की पूंछ पकड़कर वैतरणी पार कराने का मंत्र भी साबित हो सकती है। यह योजना यदि राष्ट्रीय फलक पर कारगर साबित होती है तो यूपीए सरकार जनता को लुभाने में फिर से कामयाब हो सकती है। वित्तीय वर्ष 2012-13 के छह माह के लिए योजना आयोग द्वारा फिलहाल इस 'मुफ्त दवा योजना' भद में महज 100 करोड़ रुपये आवंटित करने की मंजूरी दी गई है जबकि आम लोगों का दवा खर्च इससे कहीं ज्यादा है। यह योजना यदि पूरी ईमानदारी से लागू होती है तो 12वीं पंचवर्षीय योजना में इस पर करीब 28,560 करोड़ रुपये खर्च आएगा।

इसलिए इस भद में धन राशि बढ़ाने के लिए केंद्र व

राज्य सरकारें उस धनराशि को भी जोड़ सकती हैं, जो वीआईपी इलाज के नाम पर सरकारी पेशेवरों और नेताओं के उपचार में खर्च की जाती है। देश का यह वीआईपी तबका सरकारी अस्पतालों में इलाज कराएगा तो न केवल सरकारी चिकित्सा सुविधाएं दुरुस्त होंगी बल्कि आम लोगों में इसकी विश्वासनीयता की भी बहाल होगी। शसन-प्रशासन के सीधे सरकारी अस्पतालों में इलाज कराने से चिकित्सकों में पंच पर ब्रांडेड दवाएं न लिखने का भय भी बना रहेगा। यही भय उस गटजोड़ को तोड़ सकता है, जो कंपनियों और चिकित्सकों के बीच अद्योषित रूप से है। यह एक ऐसी व्यवस्था है, जिसकी वजह से दवा कारोबार मुनाफे



की हवस में तब्दील हुआ है।

फिलहाल देश में स्वास्थ्य सुविधाओं पर खर्च इतना बढ़ गया है कि 78 फीसद आबादी को यदि सरकारी स्वास्थ्य सेवा मुफ्त में उपलब्ध नहीं कराई जाती है तो वह जरूरी इलाज से ही वंचित हो जाएगी। अभी तो देश की केवल 22 फीसद आबादी ही सरकारी अस्पतालों में इलाज कराने पहुंचती है। इस मुफ्त में दवा योजना के अंतर्गत केंद्र सरकार की मंश है कि 2017 तक 58 फीसद भरीजों का इलाज सरकारी अस्पतालों में हो। इसलिए ही इस योजना को देश में पीकूड 1.60 लाख उप स्वास्थ्य केंद्रों, 23 हजार प्राथमिक स्वास्थ्य केंद्रों और 640 जिला चिकित्सालयों में अक्टूबर 2012 से अमल में लाया जा रहा है। एम्स, चिकित्सा महाविद्यालयों से जुड़े अस्पताल और सेना व रेलवे के अस्पतालों में मुफ्त दवा योजना लागू नहीं होगी।

चिकित्सक बेजा दवाएं पंच पर न लिखें, इस नजरिये से स्वास्थ्य मंत्रालय ने एक 'आवश्यक दवा सूची' भी तैयार की है। इसमें 348 प्रकार की दवाएं शामिल हैं। केंद्रीय स्वास्थ्य मंत्रालय ने राज्य सरकारों को कुछ दवाएं अलग से जोड़ने की भी छूट दी है। इस लिहाज से भिन्न जलवायु कारणों तथा प्रदूषित पेयजल के कारण क्षेत्र विशेष में जो बीमारियां सामने आती हैं, उनके उपचार से जुड़ी दवाएं राज्य सरकार इस सूची में जोड़ सकती हैं। हालांकि तमिलनाडु में पिछले 15 सालों से क्वैर राजस्थान में अक्टूबर 2011 में जीवितरक्षक दवाएं सरकारी अस्पतालों में निःशुल्क बांटी जा रही हैं। मध्य प्रदेश सरकार ने भी बीपीएल कार्डधारियों को मुफ्त इलाज की सुविधा मुहैया कराई हुई है।

प्रधानमंत्री मनमोहन सिंह के दिशा-निर्देश पर गठित डॉ. के श्रीनाथ रेडडी के नेतृत्व में चिकित्सा व दवा विशेषज्ञों के एक समूह ने मुफ्त दवा योजना का प्रारूप तैयार किया है। इसमें यह प्रस्ताव भी शामिल है कि दवाओं की खरीद पर 75 फीसद राशि केंद्रीय स्वास्थ्य मंत्रालय खर्च करेगा जबकि 25 फीसद राशि राज्य सरकारों को खर्च करनी होगी। केंद्रीय कैबिनेट ने इस प्रस्ताव को भी मंजूर किया है कि दवाएं थोक में खरीदी जाएंगी। इस खरीद के लिए केंद्रीय सरकारी दवा खरीद एजेंसी का भी अलग से गठन किया जाएगा। दवाओं की थोक खरीद का केंद्रीकरण इस योजना को पलौटा लगा सकता है? क्योंकि दवा कंपनियां जिस तरह से चिकित्सकों को लालच देकर उन्हें ब्रांडेड दवाएं लिखने को बाध्य करती हैं, वही काम ये कंपनियां खरीद समिति के लोगों को कमीशन देकर करा सकती हैं। इस कारण वे जेनेरिक दवाएं भी महंगी होती चली जाएंगी, जिनकी स्वास्थ्य मंत्रालय ने सूची तैयार की है और वही दवाएं पंच पर लिखने को चिकित्सकों को बाध्य किया गया है।

दरअसल, अब दवा खरीद का शत-प्रतिशत विकेंद्रीकरण होना चाहिए। जो दवाएं सूचीबद्ध की गई हैं, उनके मूल्य का निर्धारण 'राष्ट्रीय दवा मूल्य प्राधिकरण' करे। वही दवाएं अस्पताल और अस्पताल में उपलब्ध न होने पर दवा की दुकानों पर मिलें। दवाओं के रैपरों पर हिंदी में मूल्य के साथ यह लिखना भी बाध्यकारी होना चाहिए कि यह दवा मुफ्त में मिलने वाली दवाओं की सूची में शामिल है। इससे मरीज को न तो चिकित्सक ब्रांडेड दवा लिख पाएंगे और न दवा विक्रेता रोगी को जबतक ब्रांडेड दवा थोप पाएंगे। इस नीति को अमल में लाने से ब्रांडेड दवाओं के मूल्य थो धीरे-धीरे नियंत्रित होने लगेगे। बहरहाल, मुफ्त दवा योजना नीति तभी कारगर होगी, जब इसका सख्ती से पालन हो।

Rajasthan Sahara, June 27, P.10

65% prescriptions for branded drugs: Study

Govt Effort To Promote Generics Has Failed

Durgesh Nandan Jha | TNN

New Delhi: The Delhi Government's attempt to curb overuse of antibiotics and promote generic drugs in hospitals has failed to enthuse doctors. A sample study was conducted on prescription trends at the state-run Deen Dayal Upadhyaya (DDU) Hospital and it has shown that only 34.8% drugs are prescribed by their generic name (chemical name). The rest are costlier branded medicines.

The prescription of antibiotics was also seen to be on the higher side in the study — which has been published in the latest issue of the Indian Journal of Medical Research.

According to Dr Uma Tekur, head of the pharmacology department at Maulana Azad Medical College that conducted the study, the prescription of generic drugs improved post-intervention. "We conducted two workshops with the prescribers/doctors from medicine and surgery department — one immediately after the finding and the other a month later. The prescription of drugs as generics almost doubled," she said.

The prices of generic drugs, which have the same therapeutic qualities, are sig-

LOSING OUT TO BRAND NAMES



PRESCRIPTION TRENDS

	General	Medicine	Surgery
Avg no of drugs per patient	2.2	2.8	2.3
% of drugs prescribed as generic	34.8	15.1	20.3
% of antibiotics in prescription	43	20	83.3
% of drugs prescribed from EDL	78.1	81.4	86.3
% of drugs labelled	00	00	00
% Patient knowledge of correct dosage	66.9	74.4	78.1

nificantly lower than their branded versions. For example, popular brands of paracetamol cost Rs 10 for a strip of 10 tablets (500 mg). Whereas, its non-branded generic equivalent costs as less as Rs 2.45 for the same batch of tablets.

Overuse and misuse of antibiotics has been a cause of concern and government has been pressing on the need to rationalize prescriptions. But the study shows that out of 100 drugs prescribed, 43 were antibiotics. According to a senior doctor, previous studies conducted on drug utilization in other health institutions have revealed a similar trend. Overuse of antibiotics is leading to

growing antimicrobial resistance in India. Experts point out that many diseases, earlier treatable with first generation medicines, are now being treated with second and third generation antibiotics.

The study showed on an average, patients were prescribed 2.2 drugs per visit, which experts say can be reduced. "We found only 78.1% drugs are prescribed from the Essential Drugs List (EDL) formulated by the Delhi government and the pharmacists do not label the drugs before giving it to patient. "We found over 30% did not know the correct dosage," said the lead author of the study, Dr Tekur.

Series of India, June 28, P.5

Scheme helps 23 children

Twelve-year-old Pushendra of Simco Labour Colony in Bharatpur had lost all hopes for seeing the world around him with the doctors telling him that he had permanently lost his vision. His parents were resigned to fate, believing that he would have to spend the rest of his life as a blind.

Pushendra and 22 other visually impaired children in Bharatpur district are now leading a normal life and are able to see the world around them, thanks to a philanthropic gesture which enabled them to undergo complicated eye surgery. The new ray of light has arrived as a glimmer of hope and aspiration for a bright future for these

young children, who are now studying hard at schools.

The children were selected during a survey conducted by the Lupin Human Welfare and Research Foundation in all the nine panchayat samiti areas of Bharatpur district. The survey found 184 boys and girls had lost their vision for different reasons. The Lupin HW&R Foundation organised an eye camp for these children in collaboration with Dr Shroff Charity Eye Hospital, Delhi, and identified a total of 35 boys and girls who could get back their vision with surgery or implantation of high-power lenses with modern technology. They were sent to Dr Shroff Hospital in Delhi, where they were operated upon free of charge with the state-of-the-art equipment.

Lupin HW&R Foundation Executive Director Sita Ram Gupta pointed out that 16-year-old Bhupendra of Kale Ka Nagla village in Sewar Panchayat Samiti has even started riding motorcycle after his vision was restored. These children had become a burden on their families as a result of their visual impairment and some of them had started getting pension for disability from the Rajasthan Government. With the philanthropic initiative taken by Lupin HW&R Foundation, the young boys and girls have retrieved their innocence and are growing up with the usual joys of childhood.

Children have now joined the main stream of society and turned bread winners.

Gupta said the foundation would shortly launch a new survey for finding out more visually challenged children and work for restoration of their vision. The success of the first eye operation camp "has encouraged us to take up more such efforts in future."

P J Joychen in Jaipur

*Deccan Herald,
June 3, '96*

गर्भ में पता चलेगा बच्चे का भविष्य

आगरा न्यूज नेटवर्क, नई दिल्ली : वैज्ञानिकों ने मां-बाप के लिए वरदान बनने वाली एक पद्धति को विकसित करने में सफलता हासिल की है। इसकी मदद से गर्भ के दौरान ही यह पता लगाने में सफलता मिलेगी कि बच्चा कैसा होगा। उसे भविष्य में होने वाली 3,500 अनुवांशिक बीमारियों की पहचान का सस्ता भी साफ हो गया है। शोधकर्ताओं ने पहली बार गर्भवती महिला के खून और उसके पति की लार की जांच से होने वाले बच्चे के गुणसूत्रों का पता लगाया है। इसकी मदद से बच्चे के डीएनए का ब्लूप्रिंट उसके पैदा होने के कई महीनों पहले तैयार किया जा सकेगा। डॉक्टरों ने इसे चिकित्सा जगत में नई क्रांति के जैसा बताया है।

पैतृकता के आधार पर गुणसूत्रों की कड़ियों को जोड़ने का यह अब तक का सबसे अनुत्ता तरीका है। इससे पहले डीएनए मैपिंग के परीक्षण स्वयं के जरिये ही होते थे। इस नए तरीके के ब्लूप्रिंट की मदद से कई ऐसी अनुवांशिक बीमारियों का पता लगाया जा सकेगा जो मां या पिता के किसी एक जीन या उनकी वंशावली में हो सकते हैं। किसी भी एक जीन के किसी



- भ्रूण की 3500 भावी अनुवांशिक बीमारियों के बारे में मिल जाएगी जानकारी
- 18 हफ्ते की गर्भवती महिला के ब्लड टेस्ट से सबसे सटीक नतीजे

भी संक्रमण के उस भ्रूण में भविष्य में प्रभावी रूप से उभरने का यह अब तक का सबसे प्रमाणिक लेखा-जोखा होगा। चूंकि भ्रूण मां के गर्भ में उसके खून से बने प्लाज्मा में जीता और विकसित होता है। इसलिए मां के ब्लड टेस्ट को

इसके लिए सबसे उपयुक्त पाया गया। इसलिए 18 हफ्ते यांनी करीब साढ़े चार महीने की गर्भवती महिला का ब्लड टेस्ट और उस भ्रूण के पिता की लार के परीक्षण से सबसे सटीक नतीजे हासिल होंगे। वाशिंगटन यूनिवर्सिटी के अनुवांशिकी विभाग के वैज्ञानिकों ने इस शोध को अंजाम दिया है। यह शोध पत्र साइंस ट्रांसलेशनल मेडिसिन जर्नल में छपा है। शोध के बारे में कनेक्टिकट यूनिवर्सिटी के अनुवांशिकी विभाग के प्रोफेसर पीटर बेन ने कहा कि यह तकनीक का अद्भुत चमत्कार है। वैज्ञानिकों ने भ्रूण की डीएनए कड़ियों का पता लगाने के लिए नई तेज गति वाली डीएनए कड़ियों (डीएनए सीक्वेंसिंग), ऑकड़ों और कंप्यूटर ग्राफिक्स का इस्तेमाल किया। इसके नतीजे 98 फीसदी तक सही आए। वाशिंगटन यूनिवर्सिटी के शोधकर्ता जे सिंडर ने बताया कि इस टेस्ट की कीमत 20-50 हजार डॉलर (करीब 28 लाख रुपये) पड़ेगी। शोधकर्ताओं ने कहा कि तीन से पांच साल के अंदर पूरी दुनिया में उपलब्ध हो जाएगा। हम इस न केवल सस्ता बल्कि पूरी तरह से सही परिणाम देने वाला बना देंगे।

Dainik Jagaran, June 8, '11

FDA to keep an eye on drugs used in abortion cases

DNA Correspondent

The state's Food and Drug Administration has decided to monitor the sale of drugs and medicines related to Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) in Beed and other districts where the rate of the female foeticide is very high.

Action against 15 medical stores and distributors in Beed has been initiated and cases against some of them have been lodged.

FDA officials have been directed to monitor the sale of the drugs and take strict action against chemists and dealers found with excessive sale. Teams comprising inspectors and commissioners from FDA have been deputed in Beed, which is the worst hit district, to ensure that drugs are not supplied for illegal operations of termination of pregnancy.

Satej Patil, minister of state for FDA, said on Wednesday that FIRs against three medical stores in Beed have been registered, while 12 others have been served with show cause notices. "We are also recommending a ban on the advertisements of abortion pills that are unreasonable. We will keep a special vigil in

the worst affected districts, including all the districts in Marathwada," said Patil.

Patil also announced the plan to strengthen the awareness drive among the youth. He said that the heads of the villages will be directed to attend wedding ceremonies and teach the couple about the importance of girls.

DNA, June 7, P 7

TORMENTED BY HEADACHES?

By SOJATA KULKAR SHETTY

A dull ache started behind my right eye one afternoon six months ago. By the evening it had morphed into a throbbing the size of a golf ball. It got so bad that after 3 hours of bracing the pain I had to take a paracetamol and lie down. The paracetamol didn't help and I spent the evening feeling maddeningly alert given the throbbing in my head and the pangs of nausea that accompanied the pain. The headache came in waves till it finally subsided. The headache came again around the same time next month and the months thereafter. There was a pattern, the headaches preceded my monthly period by exactly two days.

I consulted S. Murali, consultant neurologist at Manipal Hospital, Bangalore. He took a detailed patient history and advised that I get a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan done to check for any structural abnormalities in the brain. The scan was normal and Dr Murali said what I was experiencing was a run-of-the-mill migraine headache.

Common though they may be, migraines can be ex-

ceedingly painful and debilitating. I was losing two-three days every month because there wasn't much I could do except lie down once the headache started.

Once diagnosed, the doctor recommended that I take a paracetamol as soon as the headache began and keep a diary to identify my migraine headache trigger. It could be anything from skipping a meal to environmental changes like too much humidity that ends up "triggering" a migraine episode (see "Common migraine triggers"). I found that taking a paracetamol right at the onset of the headache made the throbbing golf ball in my head bearable. Also, I discovered my trigger—in an effort to lose weight I had been on a low-carbohydrate diet the last few months.

I switched to eating more carbs and that helped. Dr Murali called me a "mild migrator".

Primary or secondary

K. Ravishankar, consultant-in-charge of the headache and migraine clinics, Jaslok Hospital and Research Centre and Lilavati Hospital and Research Centre, Mumbai, says that regardless of the symptoms, a sufferer must find out if the headache is primary or sec-

ondary. A primary headache is one where there is nothing structurally wrong in the brain—migraines, tension headaches and cluster headaches all fall in this category.

A secondary headache is one where there is an identifiable cause like a brain tumour or a meningitis infection. A sinus-related headache is also a secondary headache, but one that is easy to treat. He adds, "90% of all headaches are primary headaches."

Praveen Gupta, head of neurology at Artemis Health Institute, Gurgaon, says a headache that is accompanied by the following symptoms is likely to be a secondary headache: fever, vomiting, visual disturbances, feeling numb in the feet and hands or feeling weak in one side of the body.

The migraine factor

"Migraines are the most common headaches and occur three times more often in women than in men and can be far more painful in women," says Dr Murali.

In a research paper "Men, Women and Migraine: The Role of Sex, Hormones, Obesity and PTSD", published in *The Journal of Family Practice* in April, B. Lee Peterlin—director, headache research, Johns Hopkins Headache Center, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, US—and his colleagues concluded that the disproportionate number of women suffering from migraines was because the female hormones progesterone and estrogen play a role in the occurrence and severity of migraines. It is said that 14% of women migraines only get menstrual migraines and since these women, like me, suffer from migraines at a specific time in their hormonal cycle, it is likely that the monthly dip in estrogen levels is responsible for this tendency. Migraine treatment depends upon the severity. I was lucky and only needed paracetamol and trigger management. In severe migraine, defined as the number of attacks being more than three in a month, preventive

Mint, June 26, P.12

Contd...

medicines need to be taken every day. Also, medication that specifically works to fight migraine pain is prescribed for such a patient, says Dr Ravishankar.

aches are caused by gastric problems. "Acidity does not cause headache, the headache that coexists with acidity is a migraine and needs to be treated as such." Another common myth he finds among patients is that headaches are caused by eye problems. When he first started the headache and migraine clinic in 1995 at the Indraprastha Hospital and Research Centre, many of the referrals were from ophthalmologists. "The eye is not the commonest cause of headaches; the most often seen causes of headaches are migraines, tension-type and cluster headaches," says Dr Ravishankar.

Tension-type headaches

The pain in a tension-type headache is a dull, generalized ache around the head and neck and can feel like someone has put a thick band around your head. The tightness of the muscles can extend to the neck and the base of the head and can last for a few hours in an acute scenario, or extend to a few days or weeks in a chronic one. "This is a featureless (not accompanied by other symptoms like an intolerance to light or vomiting) headache that will respond to simple painkillers or mild sedatives," says Dr Ravishankar. Like migraine headaches, tension-type headaches have triggers too and it helps to identify them and then learn to avoid them.

Cluster headaches

Cluster headaches are less common than migraines or tension headaches and occur mostly in men in the 40-60 age group. A cluster headache is an explosive pain that is usually in the forehead area or around an eye. It is also accompanied by other symptoms, including teary eyes, nasal congestion and sweating. It manifests at the same time every day and comes in a cluster of weeks and then disappears for a couple of years, only to reappear, says Dr Gupta.

He describes a recent patient, a 55-year-old man who came to his clinic complaining of piercing pain in the left side of the head. The pain appeared at exactly 3 in the afternoon every day and lasted for 2 hours. The pain started a month before he sought medical help and he had no history of any previous illness.

This kind of headache is often called a "suicidal headache." Dr Gupta, for instance, quoted the patient as saying "dying would be better than anticipating and bearing this pain every day". Dr Gupta gave him a prescription for a specific set of medicines that reliably treat cluster headaches and the man got relief.

The medicines used for all headaches should be supplemented with relaxation techniques like yoga and meditation as these can help reduce the severity of attacks.

COMMON MIGRAINE TRIGGERS

- ▶ Getting too much or too little sleep
- ▶ Suffering from acute emotional stress
- ▶ Going overboard with an exercise regime
- ▶ Dieting and/or skipping breakfast
- ▶ Increased humidity in the atmosphere
- ▶ Drinking too much caffeine (tea, coffee, Coke)
- ▶ Eating Chinese food (containing MSG or monosodium glutamate)
- ▶ Eating processed and fast food
- ▶ Spending too much time in the sun, particularly without sunglasses
- ▶ The fan or AC being on too high a setting
- ▶ Long hours in front of the computer or television

CLUSTER-HEADACHE TRIGGERS

- ▶ Drinking alcohol
- ▶ Cigarette smoking
- ▶ High altitudes experienced during air travel or hiking in the mountains
- ▶ Bright light of all kinds, including sunlight
- ▶ Going overboard with an exercise regime
- ▶ Excessively hot weather

COMMON TENSION-HEADACHE TRIGGERS

- ▶ Drinking alcohol
- ▶ Cigarette smoking
- ▶ Caffeine overuse or withdrawal
- ▶ Teeth grinding or jaw clenching
- ▶ Fatigue

FIGHTING BACK

- ▶ Eat well-balanced regular meals
- ▶ Exercise on a regular basis, at least five times a week
- ▶ Take the prescribed pain medication but don't overuse it
- ▶ Maintain good posture at all times, particularly when at the desk
- ▶ Find hobbies that you enjoy and that relax you and incorporate them into your daily/weekly schedule
- ▶ Use relaxation techniques like yoga or meditation
- ▶ For migraine and cluster headaches, keep a headache diary that lists what you ate, how much you slept and the activities you engaged in before a headache attack
- ▶ Once you identify your headache triggers, find ways of avoiding them
- ▶ The better you get at avoiding triggers, the less medicine you will need to combat the pain.

-HEALTH INSURANCE

PUBLIC HEALTH INSURANCE TAKES ILL

When the state government announced its ambitious free health insurance scheme for the poor, worth Rs1,000 crore — the Rajiv Gandhi Jeevandayee Arogya Yojana (RGJAY) — last October, Rajashree Welavkar hoped that she would soon be able to get rid of the pains that had taken hold of her body. The 54-year-old Malad resident had been battling arthritis for too long. A fall in her house two years ago, which led to fractures in her hips and knees, had aggravated the condition, confining her to a bed.

When the pains became unbearable, she was admitted to the KEM Hospital four months ago. All her hopes are now pinned on hip and knee replacement surgeries. But here's the glitch: KEM Hospital doctors say she requires four surgeries over a period of two to three years, which will cost Rs5 lakh. The first hip replacement surgery itself would run up a bill of Rs1.5 lakh, as orthopaedic transplants are expensive and have to be procured from private companies.

The Welavkars received their free health insurance cards two months ago. But they have been of little help: the RGJAY's pilot project, which aimed to cover 40 lakh families, is yet to take off. Blame the delay on the slow distribution of health cards as well as leading private and charitable hospitals' reluctance to climb on the bandwagon.

MOVING AT A SNAIL'S PACE

The first phase of the RGJAY, which is largely based on Karnataka's Vajpayee Arogyasri scheme, will cover families earning less than Rs1 lakh a year in eight districts — Mumbai and its suburbs, Raigad, Solapur, Dhule, Amravati, Nanded and Gadchiroli. Health cardholders will

be able to receive free treatment amounting to up to Rs1.5 lakh at empanelled public, private and charitable hospitals.

RGJAY authorities had assured in March this year that the project will roll out after 50% of the pegged 40 lakh cards are distributed. But, eight months since the scheme was announced, the state health department is nowhere close to meeting its target — only 17.34 lakh cards have been handed out to date. And topping the shame list are Mumbai and its suburbs, where just 4.5 lakh of the 16.24 lakh beneficiaries have received their health cards. Other districts, except Solapur, have performed much better, covering 50% to 90% of the target population.

"We receive close to 600 calls every day on our toll free number: 1800-233-2200 enquir-

ing about the scheme. Close to 60% of the distribution is pending," shrugs Dr K Venkatesh, chief executive officer of the RGJAY.

THE HOLDUP

Welavkar's son, Vishal, is ready to throw up his hands. His hope that the scheme would begin before his mother's first surgery has been waning by the day. "What's the use of receiving health cards when the scheme does not help us out in the time of need?" asks the exasperated 33-year-old, even as he admits to making enquiries at the RGJAY kiosk at KEM Hospital daily. Vishal lost his job at a courier company, which paid him Rs5,000 a month, recently. He is at his wit's end trying to collect funds for the surgery. "I am now scrounging for aid from charitable trusts and other sources."

Jayesh, a resident of Mazgaon, took the government at its word when he went to the ration shop closest to his house to collect his health card. The state has been repeatedly directing yellow-card holders (those below the poverty line with an annual income below Rs20,000) and orange-card holders (those above the poverty line with a yearly income less than Rs1 lakh) to approach the nearest ration shop to collect their health cards. "I was told at the ration shop that my card had not arrived from the central ration office," says Jayesh, whose income is less than Rs1 lakh a year. The 23-year-old commerce graduate is forced to look for a new job every six months as each workplace draws up only a short-term contract with him. With elderly parents and a sister to take care of, Jayesh says he needs the RGJAY card to secure his family in case of an illness or hospitalisation.

"In 2009, all yellow and orange ration cardholders' details were archived by the ration office. We are using this data to make the health cards," says Dr K Venkatesh. For Mumbai's dismal distribution rate, he points the finger at ration inspectors, who, he claims, have refused to co-operate with RGJAY authorities.

But, sources argue that ration inspectors weren't just rebels without a cause. They say 40% of the posts of ration inspectors in the city are lying vacant. The others' refusal to shoulder the extra burden led to the roping in of 5,500 anganwadi workers for the distribution work. However, when these anganwadi workers refused to work during the summer holidays, card distribution hit the wall. "We did co-operate in the distribution of health cards April. But, we have refused to start any such work before June 15. We will not work during the summer holidays," clarifies an anganwadi worker from Dharavi.

HOSPITALS PLAY HOOKEY

But even if all beneficiaries receive their cards, the project will continue to be stuck in a rut as long as leading private and charitable hospitals refuse to implement the scheme.

Last Friday, chief secretary JC Banthia held a closed-door meeting with the city's charity commissioner as well as leading private and charitable hospitals to convince them to be part of the scheme.

Sources at the health department say a solution is being worked out between the state and leading charitable hospitals to club the charity commissioner's 10% bed reservation scheme for the poor with the RGJAY. But, a report of a sample survey, released by the department this May, of Jaslok Hospital, Breach Candy Hospital and Bombay Hospital revealed that they were using only 4-4.5% of such beds for the poor.

While authorities of these three hospitals were not available for their comments, Dr Sudhir Dagaonkar, spokesperson of the Laxmi Hospital at Bandra, also a leading charitable hospital, says, "We treated 757 poor patients last year. However, whether to be a part of the RGJAY or not is currently being debated by the management. We have already implemented the charity commissioner's free bed scheme."

Dr Ravindra Gupta, spokesperson of the Seven Hills Hospital at Andheri, which is one of the eight private hospitals empanelled to implement the RGJAY, says over 800 patients have already registered for free surgeries under the scheme's 972 enlisted procedures. "The hospital's infrastructure is ready. We are now waiting for the state to give us the green light to start performing such surgeries."

Health activists are opposing the idea of merging the charity commissioner's scheme with the RGJAY. "It has been mandated under the scheme design of the RGJAY that in case of charitable hospitals, 10% beds should be reserved for the indigent and 10% for economically weaker sections. Of the remaining, 25% should be reserved for RGJAY beneficiaries. There is no room for confusion," explains Omkar Kurian of the Centre for Enquiry into Health and Allied Themes, Mumbai.

Asked to put a deadline to the RGJAY's launch, health minister Suresh Shetty says, "There have been impediments in distributing health cards. We are in negotiations with leading charitable hospitals to convince them to get empanelled on the scheme. We will start the scheme anytime now."

Thousands of beneficiaries, though, will find that assurance hard to believe.



HEALTH CARD DISTRIBUTION

DISTRICT	TARGET	ACHIEVED
Mumbai and its suburbs	16.24 lakh	4.5 lakh
Solapur	6.42 lakh	2.04 lakh
Raigad	4.07 lakh	2.02 lakh
Nanded	3.49 lakh	2.04 lakh
Dhule	3.15 lakh	2.18 lakh
Amravati	4.51 lakh	3.24 lakh
Gadchiroli	1.45 lakh	1.32 lakh

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पत्नी की पिटाई गलत

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पत्नी को पिटाई को सही बताने वाले यूनिसेफ के सर्वे पर राजस्थान की औरतों ने सवालिया निशान खड़ा कर दिया है। धरलू हिंसा से जुड़े 'राजस्थान पत्रिका' के सर्वे में 99.4 फीसदी महिलाओं ने पिटाई को सही नहीं बताया। साथ ही पति और पत्नी के बीच झगड़े का बड़ा कारण परिवार के अन्य सदस्यों को बताया है। यूनिसेफ ने अपने सर्वे में कहा था कि एशिया की 54 फीसदी औरतें मानती हैं कि पत्नी की पिटाई होती है तो यह उचित है। इसका कारण खाना जला देना, बहस करना, बिना बताए बाहर चले जाना माना गया। इसके विपरीत राजस्थान की 1300 महिलाओं व किशोरियों पर अलग-अलग हुए सर्वे में महज 0.6 फीसदी औरतों ने ही इसे सही बताया। शहरी क्षेत्र की किशोरियों और महिलाओं ने समाज



ऐसे हुआ सर्वे

1300 सुविधियों व महिलाओं से पूछे गए सवाल

15 से 19 वर्ष 650 किशोरियां और इतनी ही महिलाएं

08 स्थान किए गए सभी महिलाओं से

विचारधारा दिखाते हुए पत्नी को पिटाई को अनुचित कर दिया। विवाद पैदा करते हैं : सर्वे के मुताबिक झार ससुर का व्यवहार मधुर है तो अन्य सदस्य व्यक्तिगत स्वार्थों के लिए दोनों के बीच विवाद पैदा कर देते हैं। मामला इस इंद तक बढ़ जाता है कि पत्नी को पिटाई हो जाती है। अन्य सवाल में नौ फीसदी महिलाओं ने स्वीकार किया कि पिटाई का असल कारण 'पत्नी' भी है। वहीं 21 प्रतिशत औरतें पिटाई का कारण पति को बताती हैं। शेष सत्तर फीसदी को नजर में फसाद की बड़ परिवार के अन्य सदस्य और समाज है।

विरोध नहीं : राज्य में पत्नियों को पिटाई होते देखने के बावजूद महिलाएं दूसरों पर की 'पंचायतों' में नहीं पड़ना चाहती। महिलाओं से जब पूछा गया कि क्या उन्होंने किसी पति को पत्नी की पिटाई करते देखा है तो 39 फीसदी ने कहा कि 'हां'। महज 24 फीसदी औरतों ने ही विरोध करना स्वीकार किया। पिटाई निजी मामला ? : महिलाओं का मानना है कि पत्नी को पिटाई करना निजी मामला नहीं हो सकता। सर्वे में 49 फीसदी से अधिक ने माना कि यह सार्वजनिक मामला है और इसमें हस्तक्षेप होना चाहिए।

पति और पत्नी के बीच होने वाले झगड़े का कारण परिवार के सदस्य भी हैं। पत्नी को उसके हक का सम्मान मिलना चाहिए। अनेक मामलों में परिवार की कलह गारपीट तक पहुंच जाती है और परिवार टूट भी जाते हैं।

लाड कुमारी जैन, अध्यक्ष, राजस्थान महिला आंदोलन

करें तिरस्कार : पंद्रह साल की किशोरी हो या फिर सत्तर साल की महिला। अधिकार का मानना है कि यह गलत है। 86 फीसदी महिलाओं ने माना कि इसका विरोध हर स्तर पर होना चाहिए।

भारत में महिलाओं की स्थिति सबसे बदतर

Rajasthan Patrika June 6, P.10

• थॉमसन रॉयटर्स फाउंडेशन के सर्वे में भारत अंतिम पायदान पर

लंदन, एजेंसी : महिलाओं की स्थिति का आकलन करने के लिए थॉमसन रॉयटर्स फाउंडेशन की ओर से कराए सर्वेक्षण में भारत को 19 देशों की सूची में अंतिम स्थान पर रखा गया है। सर्वेक्षण में शिक्षा, स्वास्थ्य, रोजगार और हिंसा जैसे विषयों को ध्यान में रखते हुए महिलाओं की स्थिति की तुलना की गई है। संगठन ने विभिन्न देशों में महिलाओं की स्थिति का अध्ययन करने वाले 370 विशेषज्ञों

की राय लेने के बाद यह सूची तैयार की है। यह सर्वेक्षण 19 विकसित और उभरते हुए देशों में किया गया है। इनमें भारत, मेक्सिको, इंडोनेशिया, ब्राजील, सऊदी अरब जैसे देश शामिल हैं। भारत के पड़ोसी देश पाकिस्तान और बांग्लादेश सर्वेक्षण में शामिल नहीं किए गए हैं। भारत में महिलाओं की स्थिति को सऊदी अरब से भी बुरा बताया गया है, जहां महिलाओं को गाड़ी चलाने और वोट डालने जैसे बुनियादी अधिकार व्यवहारिक रूप से हासिल नहीं हैं। सर्वेक्षण के अनुसार, दिल्ली

और आसपास के इलाकों में महिलाओं को राह चलते उद्य लिया जाता है। चलती गाड़ी में सामूहिक दुष्कर्म की खबरें लगातार आती रहती हैं। देह व्यापार के लिए महिलाओं की तस्करी और शोषण की खबरें भी अखबारों में लगातार छपती रहती हैं। इतना ही नहीं, भारत में महिलाओं के खिलाफ हिंसा को स्वीकार्य समझा जाता है। सर्वेक्षण में एक सरकारी अध्ययन का उल्लेख करते हुए बताया गया कि भारत में 51 प्रतिशत पुरुष और 54 प्रतिशत महिलाएं पत्नी को पिटाई को सही मानते हैं। भारत में

महिलाओं का दर्जा दोस्त और उनकी सामाजिक स्थिति पर निर्भर करता है। भारत के 19 देशों की सूची में सबसे अंतिम पायदान पर रहने के लिए कम उम्र में विवाह, दहेज, धरलू हिंसा और कन्या भ्रूण हत्या जैसे कारणों को गिनाया गया है। विशेष रूप से कम आयु में विवाहों में ऐसी हिंसा अधिक होती है। सर्वेक्षण कहता है कि भारत में एक महिला प्रधानमंत्री रह चुकी है और अभी देश की राष्ट्रपति भी महिला ही हैं, लेकिन ये तथ्य गांवों में महिलाओं की स्थिति से मेल नहीं खाते।

Dainik Jagaran, June 14, P.12

Accused are known to the victims in most cases: Cops

WOMAN'S ASSAULT Police say BBA graduate knew the acc

how safe are
women
in delhi?

568 Cases of rape
registered in 2011

507 Cases of rape
registered in 2010

653 Cases of molestation
of women in 2011

601 Cases of molestation
of women in 2010

Karn Pratap Singh

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NEW DELHI: Despite several steps taken by the Delhi Police to curb crime against women, the Capital is still as unsafe as ever for the fairer sex.

In the recent past, the city has witnessed a significant increase in the number of rape and molestation cases and in a majority of them, the accused were known to the victim.

The latest case of crime against a woman was reported from south Delhi's Vasant Vihar area where a graduate from a prestigious business institute in Noida was drugged and physically assaulted by her male friend and his accomplice before they

dumped her at an isolated place.

Police said even in this particular case, one of the accused was known to the victim; he was her senior at college. Police said the girl was offered a lift by the accused and she accepted it. Police have arrested both the accused, Prashant and his accomplice Milind.

"The girl said Prashant had offered to drop her home in his car around 12 noon. On the way he offered her a cold drink, which was laced with sedatives. After drugging her, he drove around in the city. She was in a drowsy state and said when she protested, he assaulted her," said a senior police officer.

Police said around 8pm, Prashant called his friend Milind

and asked him to meet him. They then allegedly moved the girl to Milind's car and she was later dumped near a petrol pump in Vasant Vihar area, police said. Prashant had reportedly left for home after shifting her to Milind's car.

According to sources, the victim was assaulted and molested by the accused when she protested his intention.

"The girl somehow managed to inform her parents about the incident and reached the AIIMS Trauma Centre. The hospital authority informed us later and on the basis of the victim's statement, we registered a case and arrested the accused," added the senior officer.

Hindustan Times, June 16, P.3

Supriya for women empowerment

MAHARASHTRA AFFAIRS

PRAKASH BAL JOSHI

NCP chief and union minister Sharad Pawar has set his eyes on state assembly elections scheduled in year 2014 to ensure that his party emerges as the single largest party in Maharashtra. He believes in social engineering to ensure electoral supremacy and recent setting up of young women's front of the party in Mumbai is part of his political planning.

As a Congress chief minister in early 1990s, he had engineered alliance with Republican Party of India (RPI) leader Ramdas Athawale. Now in 2012, Athawale who had remained with NCP since its inception is no more with him. As a result, Pawar is in search of new vote banks. With 50 per cent reservations for women in local self-government bodies, he feels that large section of women votes in the state, especially younger generation needs support and political training.

In the process of setting up Nationalist Yuvati Congress (NYC), Pawar is also providing a platform for his MP daughter Supriya Sule for a bigger political role on the national stage. On the 13th foundation day of the NCP the new organization for young women was formed with Supriya making all the organizational arrangements.

This is perhaps first political front specially set up for young women between the age group of 18 to 35. Normally, young women have always been part of youth wing of the political parties across the political spectrum. The NCP also have a youth wing at the state as well as national level, but Pawar thought there is a need for a special effort for mobilization of young women in Maharashtra. Despite all social reforms taking place in the state for last two hundred years. Following footsteps of Saints Dnyaneshwar, Tukaram, Eknath, Mukta, social reformers in 19th century critically examined social customs and religious practices and gave priority to social reforms rather focusing on political freedom. Mahatma Phule, Babasaheb Ambedkar, Dhondo Keshav Karve, Justice Ranade, Gopal Krishna Agarkar and

many more led social reforms movements.

Despite these movements, even present day Maharashtra has feudal power structure of male dominated social order, especially in political field. Even today, with the help of modern technology, many cases of female foeticide are reported from rural as well as urban part of Maharashtra. There is deep-rooted antipathy and belief persisting even today in political milieu of the state that women should not enter power politics, which is reserve for male.

During last one decade, the state has witnessed increased presence of women on political platform of all the political parties since the state was first to grant 33 per cent reservation for women in local self-government bodies. It is alright to make reservation for women, but initially it was very difficult to get proper candidates for the seats reserved. Political parties have also realized importance of womanpower and trying to woo them towards their ideology. When initially, a political party held interviews of women candidates to allot tickets for election, they came across a husband who represented his wife. When he was asked where the candidate is, he replied, "She is at home. You do not worry about her, take my interview. I will campaign and get her elected." Obviously she was denied ticket without any of her fault but the story reflects the ground reality. This have changed for better but not so much as power politics remain dominated by gender bias against women.

Empowered women in urban centers like Mumbai Pune are fast climbing corporate ladders and enjoying perks of successfully running business. However there is antipathy towards power politics making them keep a distance from the political process. The day, a small percentage of these elite women starts taking interest in humdrum of power politics, situation may change drastically. There is indeed a need to protect and educate large number of women in the state and prepare them for taking up political positions at various levels in the political parties as well as government administration. Supriya, who has been working on the social front in the state found a niche role for her to lead such an organization and secure a powerful vote bank in the state for the party. The first-

of-its-kind front plans to enroll young women in the state by providing them training and opportunities for actual experience at various levels. In a bid to make the organization more broad based, it will be taking up issues of female foeticide, women health, education, health care and employment.

The new wing of the party will be dominated by daughters and daughters in law of established political leaders of the party. The 80-member core committee of the Nationalist Yuvati Congress (NYC) is dominated by young women from political families - nearly 25 per cent are kith and kin of the prominent leaders. But it is inevitable in the political process. One will find first generation women activists shunning such well-established parties and joining parties like Shiv Sena or MNS which give priority to first generation aspirants. In fact, the Shiv Sena had almost 90 per cent first generation activists in early 1980s who later rose the ladder of power politics and have established themselves as veteran politicians. Power also flows like water and finds its own level with different strata of society.

A section in the NCP also view the setting up of NYC, as an effort on the part of Sharad Pawar to project Supriya as a political heir apparent which may lead a rift between her and supporters of deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar. Ajit is ambitious and leading the party upfront in the state with Pawar spending more time with the national issues like presidential elections. Ajit is a strategist and floor manager of the party preparing for the battle royal in 2012. The party cannot afford to ruffle his feather.

Supriya was quick to scotch such perception within her party as well as in political arena at large. She made it clear, "I have no interest in state politics. I am a member of the Parliament and happy functioning as one. I have been active on social front working for women and down trodden and would continue to do such work which will ultimately help the party." She has emphasized that she would be seeking ticket from Baramati for Lok Sabha in 2014 and even after to work for the constituency. Pawar's is a savvy political family, mature enough to understand damage party will suffer if any kind of fault lines becomes visible at this juncture.

Free Press, June 14, P.10

Now, women cops to handle rape cases

New Delhi: Rape cases will now be investigated with greater sensitivity as only women officers will be allowed to interact with victims. In a written order, special commissioner (law and order) Dharmendra Kumar has directed all district DCPs to ensure that only women sub-inspectors and inspectors are assigned rape cases. Recently, 11 women officers from the special branch and security units were transferred to police stations for this purpose.

"We have drawn up a list of 33 women officers — three from each district — to investigate such cases for the time being," said Kumar. Sources added that the order also lays down that these officers "should not be overburdened with other cases" until the rape cases under them are disposed of in court.

DCPs and ACPs have been instructed to arrange special

training for these investigators, especially with the CBI, so that blood, semen and DNA samples of the accused are collected and preserved properly. "In view of the observations made by the court that the FSL results were sometimes inconclusive because the samples are putrefied, the senior officers will arrange special short courses to emphasize the urgent need to deposit these exhibits at the earliest with FSL, Rohini," the order stated.

The DCPs will have to submit a written report every time there is a delay. Police have also written to the Delhi principal secretary (home) requesting that the Rohini forensic lab be directed to submit its reports within 10 days of submission of samples.

After an internal police report found that none of the city police stations had a refrigerator to stock forensic evidence, it has now been proposed under the moderniza-

RIGHT WOMAN FOR THE JOB

- > Only women officers of the level of sub-inspectors and inspectors will investigate a rape case
- > Victim will talk to a woman officer only
- > District DCPs will ensure that all such women officers are posted at police stations, not in any specialized units or offices
- > Special training courses should be held for these officers. They must learn to pick blood, semen and DNA samples so that they do not get putrefied. Refrigerators to stock specimens must be procured at each police station itself
- > All rape case chargesheets should ideally be filed within 45-60 days of the incident



- > FSL Rohini must deal such crimes with utmost importance and provide results in shortest possible time
- > Whenever a rape accused applies for bail, the counsel of Delhi Commission for Women should be immediately informed
- > 33 officers—three from each district—must be identified for probing such cases

The order also lays down that these officers "should not be overburdened with other cases" until the rape cases under them are disposed of in court, said sources

tion scheme to allow them to buy these. "Even murder evidence is lost due to non-availability of basic equipment like refrigerators," a source said.

Among other recommendations, the commissioner has asked for all chargesheets to be submitted in 45-60 days and the home ministry's help has been sought to make forensic labs complete their reports at the earliest. While a rape victim is at the police station, the SHO's room will be vacated and its toilet made available for her use. Not only victims but also the counsel-

ors will be provided vehicles round the clock, the order states. "Whenever a bail matter is listed for a rape accused, the lawyer of the Delhi Commission for Women should be immediately informed at the Rape Crisis Cell," the order states.

Delhi Police had started its transformation into a gender sensitive force with women-friendly police stations in North Campus and South Campus and women personnel on motorcycle patrol around educational institutions and girls' hostels. Surprise checks on buses and women-focused policing will also be on the police agenda this year which has already seen a number of sensational crimes committed against woman, including the abduction and gangrape of young women in Dhaura Kuan and Mongolpuri. The city has witnessed a sharp increase in rape and molestation cases last year.

*Times of India
June 2, 12*

Overcome Policy Paralysis to Address Gender Issues

Having taken a positive step on the setting up of a committee to ascertain the status of women, the government, in typical desultory fashion, is dilly-dallying on taking the next one. As a result, the panel under former Supreme Court judge Ruma Pal has become stranded because the entitlements of its members are yet to be determined by the finance ministry although it was the next logical step after the committee's formation. The delay, which is now four months old, is strange because the goal of gender equality can be deemed to be a matter of high priority for the administration considering President Pratibha Patil's exhortations to this effect. The objective has apparently gone out of focus somewhere along the labyrinthine bureaucratic maze. No one can be sure, therefore, when the committee will be able to begin its deliberations on the 'appropriate policy interventions based on contemporary assessments of women's needs'.

Yet, the urgency of the task cannot be gainsaid since India ranks at a deplorable 114th place out of 134 nations in this matter, according to the World Economic Forum's index of global gender gap. Infanticide and child marriage have been identified as some of the reasons why India's place is so low down in the scale, along with explanations such as women being burned as a result of 'dowry-related disputes' or being 'exploited or abused as domestic slave labour'. Although the economic forum has acknowledged the gains which India has made in the political empowerment of women, their general condition in the economic, educational and health sectors remains poor. No tangible progress is feasible if women continue to languish at the bottom of the social and economic ladder.

Since much of these dismal statistics are known and scholarly suggestions have been made about ways to move forward, the proposed committee should have no difficulty in formulating 'appropriate' policies once the policy paralysis hindering its functioning is overcome.

New Indian Express, June 14, P.6

घरेलू हिंसा की शिकार मुस्लिम महिलाएं ले सकती हैं तलाक : फतवा

नई-दिल्ली (एजेंसी)। देश की प्रमुख इस्लामी शिक्षण संस्था बरेली मरकज ने कहा है कि पति के जुल्म और घरेलू हिंसा की शिकार महिलाओं को तलाक (खुला) लेकर अलग होने का पूरा अधिकार है। बरेली मरकज ने यह बात एक फतवे में कही है। यह फतवा घरेलू हिंसा से जुड़े एक सवाल के संदर्भ में दिया गया है।

संस्था से जुड़े दारुल इफ्ता के प्रमुख मुफ्ती कफ़ील अहमद ने फतवे में कहा कि इस्लाम में महिलाओं को सताना अथवा उनके साथ जुल्म करना बहुत बड़ा गुनाह है। अगर कोई महिला इस तरह के जुल्म का शिकार हो रही है तो उसे शौहर से तलाक लेने का पूरा हक है। यह अधिकार उसे इस्लाम ने दे रखा है। इस्लाम में विवाह को खत्म करने के लिए पति और पत्नी दोनों को अधिकार है। पति को यह अधिकार तलाक और पत्नी को 'खुला' के रूप

में दिया गया है। एक युवती ने बरेली मरकज से सवाल किया था कि अगर किसी महिला के साथ उसका पति जुल्म करता है तो उससे वह कैसे अलग हो सकती है? शरिया में पत्नी की ओर से तलाक की पहल करने की इजाजत है या नहीं? इस सवाल पर आए फतवे में कहा गया है कि इस्लाम में पूरी आजादी है कि महिला अपने शौहर से तलाक लेकर अपनी जिंदगी का फैसला कर सकती है। इस्लाम में पति के सम्मान की बात की गई है, लेकिन उसका जुल्म सहना किसी भी सूरत में जायज नहीं है। फतवे पर ऑल इंडिया मुस्लिम महिला पर्सनल लॉ बोर्ड की प्रमुख शाहस्ता अंबर ने कहा कि इस्लाम में महिलाओं को पूरा अधिकार दिया गया है कि वह अपनी जिंदगी का फैसला खुद कर सकती है। इतनी बड़ी संस्था ने इस्लामी नजरिए से यह फतवा दिया है और हम इससे पूरा इंतफाक रखते हैं।

बरेली मरकज

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Rashtriya Sahara, June 25, P.2

Man can get divorce for wife's cruelty: HC

CHENNAI: In a landmark judgment, the Madras High Court has ruled that the male spouse in a marital relationship "is entitled to get the relief of divorce", if the wife inflicts "mental cruelty" by filing a criminal complaint against her husband and his relatives that lands him in jail.

A Division Bench of the High Court comprising Justices Elipe Dharma Rao M

Venugopal on Monday ruled that such acts of commission by a woman would clearly fall within the "purview of cruelty", entitling the male spouse to get divorce.

The judges gave this ruling, described in legal circles here as a first of its kind, when they allowed appeals by a person (one Ramesh in this case), challenging the common order of the Principal Family Court here of April 24, 2008, which

had dismissed his petition seeking divorce from his wife.

However, the Family Court had allowed his wife's petition seeking restitution of conjugal rights. Ramesh had married the daughter of a former Tamil Nadu MLA, here in April 2000 as per traditional Hindu customs. The High Court Bench pointed out that based on a complaint by Ramesh's wife, her husband had been put in jail for 22 days for alleged offences of dowry harassment and attempt to murder. Further, the woman had gone to the extent of even filing inter-

vening application opposing the bail plea by her husband. However, Ramesh was later acquitted in the case.

The judges said that all these acts by Ramesh's wife "clearly constituted mental cruelty to the husband, who admittedly have undergone a traumatic experience and suffer humiliation in social circles".

Observing that the marriage had become "emotionally dead", and had inevitably broken down, the judges said there was the added factor of the "element of separation" between the spouses concerned. They

pointed to an intention to "bring cohabitation permanently to an end".

Citing a Supreme Court judgment, the judges said cruelty would normally consist of not just harmful acts. It also included injurious reproaches, complaints, accusations or taunts.

"It should be established that one party in the marriage, has misbehaved himself or herself to the point of the other party finding the relationship unendurable, and that such misconduct has caused injury to health or a reasonable apprehension

of such injury," the Bench pointed out.

"The husband (Ramesh) is thus entitled to divorce, but his wife is not entitled to get the relief of restitution of conjugal rights," the Division Bench ruled and declared the marriage would stand dissolved.

The judges emphasised that what conduct amounted to "cruelty" was a question of facts and had to be decided on the facts and particulars of each case. The wife in this case was granted an alimony of Rs. 2.50 lakhs.

*Deccan Herald
June 2, P.13*

पत्नी को वित्तीय मदद दिए बगैर घर नहीं बेच सकता पति : कोर्ट

जास, नई दिल्ली : अगर कोई शख्स अपनी पत्नी व बच्चों को गुजारे भत्ते के तौर पर कोई वित्तीय सहायता नहीं दे रहा है तो वह उस संपत्ति को बेचने का अधिकार नहीं रखता, जिससे उसकी पत्नी अपना व अपने बच्चों का पेट पाल रही है। यह टिप्पणी करते हुए, पटियाला हाउस कोर्ट स्थित महानगर दंडाधिकारी नविता कुमार बाबा ने महिला की शिकायत पर उसके पति को शंकर मार्केट, सीपी स्थित संपत्ति को बेचने से रोक दिया है।

एक महिला ने एक अर्जों दायर कर कहा कि अप्रैल 1986 में उसकी शादी हुई थी। उस समय वह पति के साथ शंकर मार्केट, कनाट प्लस स्थित संपत्ति में रहती थी।

1996 तक वे इस घर में रहे। उसके बाद उन्होंने इंदिरापुरम में घर ले लिया और वहां रहने लग गए। उसने बताया कि उनके दो बच्चे हैं। पति की बुरी आदतों व मारपीट से तंग आकर उसने वर्ष 2009 में अलग रहना शुरू कर दिया। उनकी इनके अलावा भी कई संपत्ति है। उसके पति ने कहा कि वह शंकर मार्केट स्थित संपत्ति के किराये से अपना घर चला सकती है। इसलिए उसने इस संपत्ति के एक हिस्से में एक पालर खोल रखा है और बाकी किराये पर दे रखा है। इसी से वह अपना व अपने बच्चों का पालन-पोषण कर रही है। अब उसके पति ने उनकी संपत्तियों को बेचना शुरू कर दिया है और वह शंकर मार्केट स्थित संपत्ति को भी बेचना चाहता है।

Dainik Jagaran, June 27, P.3

दहेज हत्या में उम्रकैद से कम सजा नहीं : सुप्रीम कोर्ट

जनसत्ता ब्यूरो

नई दिल्ली, 10 जून। सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने कहा है कि दहेज हत्या जैसे जघन्य अपराध के लिए अभियुक्त को उम्रकैद से कम सजा नहीं दी जा सकती है। यह टिप्पणी अदालत ने दहेज हत्या के एक मामले में पीड़ित के पति सहित तीन अभियुक्तों की अपील खारिज करते हुए की। दोषियों ने उम्रकैद की सजा में कमी करने की मांग करते हुए अदालत से नरम रुख अपनाने की फरियाद की थी।

न्यायमूर्ति स्वतंत्र कुमार और न्यायमूर्ति रंजन गोगोई की एक खंडपीठ ने दहेज हत्या की शिकार के पति और देवर की ओर से अपनी युवावस्था और अपनी मां की वृद्धावस्था का हवाला देते हुए नरमी बरतने की अपील की थी। इसे अदालत ने ठुकरा दिया। इन तीनों पर आरोप था कि दहेज की मांग पूरी न होने पर उन्होंने 17 फरवरी 1996 को रुड़की में रेणु की जलाकर कर मार डाला था। जजों ने कहा कि एक बार जब धारा

304-बी के तहत सिद्ध हो गया कि यह दुर्घटना नहीं बल्कि दहेज के लिए जघन्य तरीके से किया गया अपराध था तो सामान्यतः अदालत उम्रकैद से कम सजा देने के लिए अपने न्यायिक विवेक का इस्तेमाल नहीं करेगी। इसके साथ ही अदालत ने पति मुकेश भटनागर, देवर राजेश भटनागर और सास कैलाशी उर्फ कैलाशवती की नरमी बरतने संबंधी अपील खारिज कर उनकी उम्रकैद की सजा बरकरार रखी। अदालत ने मुकेश की इस दलील को भी अस्वीकार कर दिया कि रेणु की मौत स्टोच फटने से हुई। मुकेश का कहना था कि पत्नी को बचाने के प्रयास में वह भी झुलस गया था। अदालत ने बचाव पक्ष की इस दलील को बेमुकाबताते हुए कहा कि यदि अभियुक्त ने मृतक को बचाने का प्रयास किया होता तो उसे भी जलने के जख्म हुए होते। लेकिन मुकेश के शरीर पर जलने का एक भी जख्म नहीं मिला था।

अभियोजन पक्ष के मुताबिक मुकेश,

राकेश और कैलाशी तीनों दहेज में टीवी सेट और कुलर आदि नहीं लाने के कारण रेणु को बुरी तरह मानसिक और शारीरिक यातनाएं देते थे। तीनों अभियुक्तों पर हरिद्वार की अदालत में दहेज हत्या का मुकदमा चला था। सेशन अदालत ने तीनों अभियुक्तों को उम्रकैद की सजा सुनाई थी। उत्तराखंड हाईकोर्ट ने इस सजा को पुष्टि कर दी तो तीनों अभियुक्तों ने सुप्रीम कोर्ट में अपील दायर की।

सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने अपील खारिज करते हुए कहा कि रिकार्ड में उपलब्ध सारे साक्ष्यों से स्पष्ट है कि रेणु की मौत सामान्य तरीके से नहीं हुई थी। ससुराल में रेणु से लगातार दहेज लाने की मांग की जाती थी। इसी मांग के चलते उस पर मिट्टी का तेल डालकर आग लगाई गई जिससे उसकी मौत हो गई। अदालत ने कहा कि इसमें किसी प्रकार का विवाद नहीं है कि रेणु की विवाह के सात साल के भीतर ही असामान्य तरीके से मौत हुई थी।

Jansatta, June 11, P.8

'Muslim girls can wed at 15 without parental consent'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Ruling that a Muslim girl can marry a person of her choice if she has attained puberty i.e. 15 years, the Delhi high court has held the marriage of a minor valid and allowed her to stay in her matrimonial house.

"According to Mohammedan Law, a girl can marry without the consent of her parents once she attains the age of puberty and she has the right to reside with her husband even if she is below the age of 18....," a bench of justices S Ravindra Bhat and S P Garg observed while accepting the minor's plea to allow her to stay in her matrimonial home.

Citing various verdicts of the Supreme Court, the bench disposed of a petition filed by the girl's mother alleging that her daughter was kidnapped by a youth and forced into marriage in April last year.

HC said that it is clear that a Muslim girl who has "attained puberty, i.e. 15 years, can marry and such a marriage would not be void. However, she has the option of treating the marriage as voidable, at the time of her attaining the age of majority, i.e 18 years".

The bench accepted the 16-year-old's statement that she had left her parental home to marry the man of her choice and her husband should not be booked on the charge of kidnapping. Meanwhile, to ascertain the girl's well being, the court has directed the couple and in-laws to appear before a CWC once in every six months till the girl attains majority.

The girl's mother had claimed in petition that after abducting the girl on March 13 last year, the man telephoned her threatening to kidnap her other daughter if any legal action was taken against him. An FIR was registered on April 14 in Gokalpuri police station, northeast Delhi stating that the man had kidnapped the minor. The mother said police had not taken any action, forcing her to approach the court.

Times of India, June 6, P.3

Marriage with no dowry in TN

CHENNAI, DHNS: At least one species of a politically-blessed mass wedding comes with no bride price in Tamil Nadu.

This spectacle unfolded when 1,006 couples from economically weaker sections tied the knot in a huge 'pandal' near the Karumari Amman Temple at suburban Tiruverkadu on Monday, under the auspices of the State Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR & CE) Department.

From the four-gram gold 'mangalsutra', silver rings to the brides, the bridal dress to 21 other basic paraphernalia, including stainless steel utensils and brass oil lamps to auspiciously set up a new home, everything came free from the State for these couples entering wedlock.

As the AIADMK supremo



A couple during the mass marriage in Chennai on Monday. PH

and Chief Minister J Jayalalitha took centre stage, with all the gift articles on splendid display on one side and 'Vedic Pundits' performing a common 'yagna' on the other side, there was the anxious wait for the auspicious

moment, fixed between 9.30 to 10.29 am. The couples in their bridal attire were seated in blocs, district-wise with the corresponding Minister in-charge lending a hand and keeping a watchful eye. Elaborate arrangements were made

for the past few days to accommodate the relatives of all the would-be couples in nearby 'Mandaps'.

Around 9.40 am, as the 'mela-taal' and 'nagaswaram' music reached a crescendo, Jayalalitha blessed all the 'mangalsutras' with her touch, after which the respective Ministers reached them to the couples. 'Amma' then showered the couples with flowers and saffron-rice as the bridegrooms tied the 'Thali' on their respective brides.

Contrary to the 'self-respect marriages' which the Dravidian political tradition consciously fostered over the decades - eschewing all Vedic rituals and priests - this wedding format seemed a happy blend of both the 'Vedic' and the 'Dravidian' ceremonial elements.

Succan herald, June 19, P. 9

Beed: Where no law of the land applies

Is Beed district in Marathwada an isolated island where no law of the land is applicable? Why is the administration of a so-called progressive state like Maharashtra helpless when almost every rule and norm has been violated for years? Why are marriages of minor girls, dowry practices and female foeticide not treated as crime here?

Such questions, which would disturb any normal mind, have not had any effect on the government or the political leaders who claim to be the torchbearers of the region, where female foeticide is an everyday affair, and where the butcher doctors of Parali proudly admit that theirs is an 'abortion hub' and dare the system to take them on.

Dr Sudam Munde, who according to the police is at large, used to throw female foetuses wrapped in polythene bags at social workers who would protest against him, openly challenging them. The district superintendent of police has requested the home depart-

Pic for representational purpose only



ment to shift the cases outside the district as his force was facing tremendous political pressure. The SP at least was candid enough to admit that some things are out of his control, but the collector has been brazenly claiming that there was nothing wrong in the system.

No activist is ready to believe that the culprits would be brought to book, as the doctor who the police say is absconding is readily available to sign his bail application. Even this much action against him has been possible only be-

cause a mother was killed along with the foetus six months ago. But even this action by the government is a case of too little too late, as the latest child ration fell to a further 801.

Here, both well-to-do families and the farm hands consider the birth of girl child a curse. The dowry system still prevails in some communities that dominate the district's population and that has been the root cause for female foeticide. Marrying a girl without dowry - usually ranging from Rs5 lakh to Rs20 lakh - remains a dream. Parents of girls do not even wait for them to reach the age of 18 and marry them off immediately after they attain puberty. Factor in the rampant illiteracy, and the giving birth to a girl child in these villages becomes a nightmare.

The questions remain: Is our administration really interested in curbing these practices? Will the political heavyweights behind such practices be made to pay the price for their sins?

D.N.A., June 14, P. 4

The girls are in control

Surekha takes out her diary and starts filling different columns in a calendar stuck on the wall. She has just returned from a field visit. As she can barely read and write, she fills up the information by pasting stickers of different colours after matching with the picture drawn in the column. Every parameter like regular check-up, condom users, hospital visits and HIV status of women that she has surveyed has a different colour.

She is one of the sex workers who are trying to empower fellow sex workers on health and other social issues in Budhwarpeth, a red light area in Pune. An estimated 3000 sex workers operate from here. Surekha takes care of about 60 members of the community. She meets them, listens to their problems, gathers information about their health and comes back

to the Dropping Centre, where she regularly updates the calendar. Seasonal migration is common in drought-prone western Maharashtra when people move from rural belts to urban areas. Frequent migration also happens from the rural, impoverished areas Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat. A suitable intervention was required to target this migrating population.

When Pathfinder, an international organisation, first began working on community empowerment among sex workers in Budhwarpeth,

there was very little sense of community bonding. The community is culturally heterogeneous and was accustomed to traditional HIV prevention interventions. It was not acceptable to people belonging to different castes and religions. In addition frequent police raids made the community members vulnerable. Conflicting interests of different implementing agencies further prevented any sort of collective community action.

Keeping these factors in mind, Pathfinder started a

community empowerment project called 'Mukta' with the help of local groups and the Maharashtra State AIDS Control Society in November 2009. Unlike other interventions, this is owned and operated by those most at risk — the sex workers. It helps sex workers to learn how to work together to get the services they deserve, from health and safety to their basic rights. The objective is to not only to create awareness among sex workers, but also make the programme sustainable.

Jyoti Tai, a peer educator,

explains that the approach is tailor-made based on needs. "First we talk about non-health and HIV issues; then comes the health aspect. Then we persuade them to undergo a HIV test. If anybody is found positive, we make the arrangement to register them in the hospital and provide treatment."

As a result, sex workers now have a 'safe space' in the form of a Community Learning Centre (CLC) within the red-light area. This has motivated them to come together and discuss common problems. The centre even has beautician and stitching courses to empower sex workers. It provides necessary impetus to sex workers for collective and cohesive action, which resulted in formation of the community-elected sex worker-core committee.

The core committee has made rapid strides in addressing some major issues such as sanitation and electricity in the area, and has also begun to interact with police, civic authorities and voluntary organisations. "We didn't have proper street lights and garbage removal system in the area, so members of the committee took up these issues with the Pune Municipal Corporation and sorted it out," informs Meenakshi, president of the core committee. "Now our demand is to obtain voting cards," she adds.

Popularly known as Mala Sinha, a sex worker residing in Manpasand brothel boasts that none of the 12 female sex workers working there has any health problem. "We go for regular check-ups every three months. All of us send the customer back if they refuse to have protected sex."

HIV prevalence among female sex workers in the area has registered a significant decrease — from 41.2 per cent in 2008 to 13 per cent in 20

Hindu, June 12, p.10

Giving flesh trade survivors a life of dignity

NGO not only rescues victims, but also lends them skills to have a better tomorrow

Dilnaz Boga

I love *didi*. I carry her photograph in my wallet. She has been transferred to another office and I don't have her contact number, but I can never forget what she has done for me," says Reema (name changed), a 27-year-old rehabilitated survivor of human trafficking, about her programme officer at Save the Children India (SCI), an NGO working towards empowering disadvantaged women and children since 1988.

Like the 140 others like her,

Reema was trained by experts handpicked by SCI for starting a new life post-rescue from a brothel. "Apart from rescuing girls from brothels, we give vo-

ditional training to the freed girls ending up in state homes, like the two at Deonar, between 10am and 5pm," says SCI CEO Dr Subhadra Anand. At a time a

batch of 20 to 25 girls are brought to Sahas Kendra, the rehabilitation centre at Bandra-Kurla complex, and imparted training hospitality, computer

TRAINING TO BE FREE

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graphics, tailoring, nursing and housekeeping, to name a few, says legal consultant Nandini Thakkar, also a programme manager at SCI.

After working as a trainee in the hospitality sector, Reema went on to become a trainer of supervisors within four years. "Her success story, like many others' here, was all about empowerment and independence," says Thakkar. After three months, we identify the survivor's skills and conduct a career test, which helps in deciding her vocation. "Following this, we start training and counselling them for placements later. A year down the line, the girls don't need us anymore," explains Thakkar.

Another aspect that the SCI is working on is sensitising and

training police personnel in the various districts of the state. Stating that over 2,000 investigation officers had been trained in the three phases so far, pro-

gramme officer Pravin Kadam, who is in-charge of police training, says. "We found that the police did not treat the victims sensitively, so we had to work on changing that."

It is often the lack of understanding of the issue among the policemen which causes them to look down upon the victims, thus exposing her to the risk of getting stuck in the flesh trade forever. "Victims are often treated as illegal immigrants, criminalised and re-victimised, without being offered appropriate assistance and protection while the true perpetrators remain at large," says Kadam, adding that,

"There is significant need to enhance the knowledge, ability and expertise of law enforcement agencies about human trafficking." He suggests the police to concentrate on going back to a victim's life, looking into her transit and family, and other factors involved.

The NGO also trained members of the judiciary and the Child Welfare Committee in ru-

ral areas to ensure a better understanding of the complex issues surrounding survivors. "In the rural setup, the nature of the problem is very different as they don't know where to keep the rescued girls. So, we had to address those issues. Now, when the police officers call us asking for advice or giving feedback, we refer them to agencies that can help the victims," says Kadam.

D.N.A., June 11, PS

Training for destitute women: Delhi govt to ink deal with Singapore

swimmi shrivastava

NEW DELHI, 18 JUNE: In the backdrop of the heart-rending plight of the malnourished sisters who were rescued from their house in Rohini last week, the Delhi government has approached the Singapore government to impart training for destitute women in the Capital.

"A memorandum of understanding (MoU) has been prepared and is expected to be signed in July 2012. Considering the condition of the sisters, it is expected that the chief minister, Mrs Sheila Dikshit, is going to announce compensation for the family as well as give individual pension to the family for their survival," the minister of family welfare, Mrs Kiran Walia, said.

"I myself went to see the condition of the sisters. The elder

one remains critical, but doctors are trying their best to save their lives," Mrs Walia added.

Doctors at Baba Bhim Rao Ambedkar hospital where the sisters are undergoing treatment said the condition of the elder sister who is 40 years old and weighs only around 14 kg is still critical but stable. The younger sister's condition is comparatively better, they said.

"She has flexion deformity (non-movement of limbs) from around her limbs. She is able to talk now. She has been insisting that her mother and her nephew (son of the elder sister) were taking good care of her. We think she too needs counselling which will begin soon," said Mrs Walia.

"The younger sister's condition seems to be normal and she talks too much. Doctors explained that the delay in bringing

the two sisters to hospital was due to the younger sister's insistence that she was 'absolutely normal and needed no medical attention,' Mrs Walia said.

The two sisters, allegedly suffering from depression and malnutrition for months with their bodies having started to rot, were sent to hospital by one of their relatives who stays in the area after the stench from the house became unbearable.

How their 65-year-old mother and her 14-year-old grandson managed to live in these conditions without seeking help remains a mystery. The neighbours admitted that they ignored the screams and stench for over two years believing that "the matter did not concern them". On Saturday morning, they came to know the truth through television.

*Sofatesman
June 19/3*

- MISSING WOMEN

41 women went missing from Rohtak shelter home in 3 yrs

Deepender Deswal | IAN

Rohtak/Chandigarh: Forty one women, minor girls and newborn babies have disappeared from an NGO-run shelter home in Rohtak in the last three years, Haryana police said on Friday. The shelter home has been in news for sexual abuse and torture.

"We have compiled the list

(of missing women) after going through the records and inputs provided by the (others living there) and are (seeking) more details about them through newspapers," said Rohtak DSP Dharna Yadav. He said the missing include six minor girls and 12 newborns. "The minor girls and eight others are unidentified as except photographs no

other details are available about them."

The Haryana police have published photographs and other details of 29 of them in leading newspapers to seek their whereabouts.

Sources said Jaswanti Devi, who ran the shelter home and is in jail along with her accomplices, has been trying to stall the police probe.

Times of India, June 12, P.13

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महिलाओं और बच्चों के संरक्षण गृहों पर होगी केंद्र की निगरानी

प्रियंवदा सहाय

नई दिल्ली। रोहतक के अपना घर में बच्चों के यौन शोषण को घटना से सकते में आया महिला एवं बाल विकास मंत्रालय अब ऐसी वारदातों पर लगाम लगाने के लिए निगरानी समिति का गठन करेगा। यह समिति प्रत्येक राज्य में गठित होगी। जो महिलाओं और बच्चों को आश्रय देने वाले संरक्षण गृहों पर नजर

रखेगी। साथ ही अनैतिक कार्यों को भनक लगते ही उस पर नकेल कसने में सक्षम होगी।

महिला एवं बाल विकास मंत्री कृष्णा तोरय ने इस नई पहल की जानकारी देते हुए बताया है कि इस समिति में संबंधित राज्य की महिला मॉसटर, सामाजिक कार्यकर्ता, गैर सरकारी संस्थाओं के सदस्य, राष्ट्रीय महिला आयोग और राष्ट्रीय बाल अधिकार संरक्षण आयोग के सदस्य

अपना घर मामले को देखते हुए समिति गठित करेगा महिला एवं बाल विकास मंत्रालय

होंगे। समिति पंचायत स्तर तक आश्रय गृहों की तहकीकात कर सकेगी। हालांकि राज्यों में गठित

समिति को जरूरत के मुताबिक उन समितियों बनाने का अधिकार होगा। कृष्णा तोरय ने बताया कि मानसून सत्र से पहले महिला सौंघों से मिलकर इस पहल पर उनकी राय लेंगी। उन्होंने बताया कि समिति अपने रिपोर्ट केंद्र को सौंपेगी। इन्हीं रिपोर्टों के आधार पर मंत्रालय अपनी कार्रवाई कर सकेगा। महत्वपूर्ण यह है कि निगरानी समिति को औद्योगिक निरीक्षण का अधिकार प्राप्त होगा।

Amar Ujjala, June 21, P.9

अब महिलाओं को सुरक्षा देगा 'स्वाधार गृह'

पीड़ित एवं विधवा संरक्षण की नयी योजना

चंडीगढ़, 15 जून (हप्र)। हरियाणा सरकार ने पीड़ित महिलाओं को सुरक्षा प्रदान करने तथा उन्हें सम्मानजनक जीवन व्यतीत करने के योग्य बनाने के लिए स्वाधार गृह नामक एक योजना क्रियान्वित करने का निर्णय लिया है। हरियाणा की महिला एवं बाल विकास मंत्री गीता भुक्कल ने बताया कि इस योजना के तहत विभिन्न एजेंसियों तथा संगठनों को बिना लाभ के स्वाधार गृह चलाने के लिए सहायता प्रदान की जाएगी। योजना का उद्देश्य ऐसी महिलाओं को संरक्षण प्रदान करना है, जो परित्यक्त हैं और जिन्हें कोई पारिवारिक सहयोग प्राप्त नहीं है और प्राकृतिक आपदा में जीवित बची विधवाएं, जो बेघर हो गई हैं और जिनके पास कोई सामाजिक-आर्थिक सुविधा प्राप्त नहीं है।

इस योजना के तहत एचआईवी/एड्स से पीड़ित महिलाओं, जेल से छूटी महिला कैदियों तथा ऐसी महिलाएं, जिनका कोई परिवार नहीं है या सामाजिक-आर्थिक, पारिवारिक तनाव या कलह से पीड़ित हैं, जिन्हें गुजर-बसर के उपायों के बिना अपना घर छोड़ने

को मजबूर कर दिया गया है और जिनके पास शोषण से बचने का कोई विशेष साधन नहीं है या पारिवारिक विवादों के कारण कानूनी कार्रवाई में फंसी हैं, को भी सहायता दी जाएगी। यह योजना अवैध रूप से खरीद-फरोख्त करके लाई गई महिलाओं या वेस्पालियों या अन्य स्थानों से छुड़ाई गई या भग कर आई लड़कियों, जिनका शोषण हो रहा था, की सुरक्षा भी करेगी।

800 करोड़ का कर्जा लेगी राज्य सरकार

चंडीगढ़, 15 जून (हप्र)। हरियाणा सरकार ने एक बार फिर से प्रदेश में विकास कार्यों के लिए 800 करोड़ रुपये का कर्जा लेने का फैसला लिया है। इसके लिए सरकार ने 800 करोड़ रुपये (सांकेतिक) के लिए 10 वर्ष की अवधि के हरियाणा सरकार स्टॉक (प्रतिभूतियां) को नीलाम करने का फैसला लिया है। इसके लिए अधिसूचना जारी की गई है।

हरियाणा के वित्त विभाग द्वारा जारी की गई अधिसूचना के अनुसार इस ऋण का उपयोग राज्य सरकार के विकासवात्मक कार्यक्रमों हेतु वित्त व्यवस्था के लिए किया जाएगा।

श्रीमती भुक्कल ने कहा कि स्वाधार गृह के निर्माण के लिए राज्य सरकार की एजेंसियों, जिसमें महिला विकास निगम, नगर निगम तथा पंचायती राज संस्थान शामिल हैं, को अनुदान दिया जाएगा। निर्माण लागत को केंद्र सरकार और राज्य सरकार द्वारा क्रमशः 75:25 प्रतिशत के अनुपात से वहन किया जाएगा, जिसकी अधिकतम सीमा 30 व्यक्तियों के एक गृह के लिए एक लाख रुपये प्रति व्यक्ति है। अधिकतम 30 लाख रुपये दिए जाएंगे। घरेलू अहिंसा से पीड़ित महिलाएं एक वर्ष की अवधि तक तथा अन्य श्रेणी की महिलाएं तीन वर्ष की अवधि तक स्वाधार गृह में रह सकेंगी।

इसी प्रकार, 55 वर्ष से अधिक की वृद्ध महिलाओं को अधिकतम पांच वर्ष तक स्वाधार गृह में रहने की सुविधा प्राप्त होगी, तदीपरंतु उन्हें वृद्धाश्रमों में या ऐसे अन्य संस्थानों में स्थानांतरित करना होगा। उन्होंने कहा कि 18 वर्ष तक की लड़कियों और 12 वर्ष तक के लड़कों को अपनी माताओं के साथ स्वाधार गृह में रहने की अनुमति होगी। इन महिलाओं की विशेष आवश्यकताओं का उचित ध्यान रखा जाएगा और किसी भी परिस्थिति में उन्हें अकेला या बिना देख-रेख के नहीं छोड़ा जाएगा, क्योंकि ऐसा होने से वे अकेलेपन एवं शोषण का शिकार हो सकती हैं।

Dainik Tribune, June 17, P.7

KAMATHIPURA: BOUGHT AND SOLD

According to Sanjay Dutt, executive managing director, South Asia, for global real estate consultants Cushman & Wakefield: "The current rate here for a mediocre quality old structure should range

(from) ₹15,000-40,000 per sq. ft for retail and ₹15,000-25,000 per sq. ft for residential. Expect a 100-200% appreciation in five years for a premium project in its final phase of completion."

Moiratha doesn't seem to care what the market rate is. She looks at her son, less than a year old. The "beemar" (HIV/AIDS) has spread everywhere. She needs money. Mumbai has become expensive. The trade is dead, she says. "Ye sab khatam hua (All this is over)," she says, gesturing with her comb outside her door.

That evening many of her relatives, hearing about her new-found fortune, showed up at her residence. By the next afternoon, Moiratha was gone.

The builders are moving in, buying out Kamathipura, unit by unit. On the ground, word is the purchase of tenancies has begun, seth by seth, madam by madam, and every day, someone quietly shifts. Nalini Patel, director, DB Realty, says, "We are working on it (redevelopment), but can't share details at the moment."

Priti Patkar, who runs the NGO Prerana within the sex district, has been systematically mapping Kamathipura, building by building, since 2010. "We estimated that by end 2012-13, Kamathipura would have gone. Builders have been buying out individual units and leasing them to small indus-

tries—bag makers, hat and mat makers—on 11-month leases," she says. Her map lists everything from new paan-beedi shops to industrial units. It also marks the falling number of brothels: "Building 257: from 22 to 10, Moth Bohri Chawl: 18 to 13..." Overall, the number of brothels is down from 583 to 535 in the period from January-March (see "Brothel Banish" on Page 12).

Unlike an overnight sale which clears out the area, the current redevelopment in Kamathipura is a process. Individual units are being bought and leased to small industries for 11 months. The new industrial units are noisy and spew fumes well into the night. This disturbs the sex workers, business dips, and they too eventually look to sell and leave.

Kamathipura—with its gutters spewing into the streets, rows upon rows of cots, women too tired to walk by mid-morning, a Konkani-speaking Tina with a black eye emerging from a 30 sq. ft room beneath the stairs occupied by three others like her, Sushila, with her pink sari and matching flowers in her hair, pimps smoking beedis—is humbled against the towers encroaching the skyline around.

It was not always like this, Sushila says, sitting on her cot. "Paise usule aate the (The money used to come here)." Now

there is no money flowing into the system. Migrant workers with a few rupees to spare drop by. It costs ₹150 for a session with a woman. "Low budget, savings-usallah..." Sushila laughs. It barely buys them a living.

A woman with a past

The most expensive brothel at Kamathipura's peak in the 1960s cost ₹13 and 80 annas for a sex act, Mumbai Police historian Deepak Rao says. Specific brothels—like No. 25 and No. 107—were on the "approved" list of in-bound sailors. "The pulling down of Bachuseth ki Wadi, and the Kebab House on Foras Road five years ago, where a tower now stands, marked the beating of the retreat," he says.

The late Rajnarayan Chaudavarkar, in a 1998 essay on the racial composition of the Bombay police force, highlights the nexus of power and influence that revolved around one of the most famous brothels of its time—No. 392 Falkland Road; Fritz's brothel. Inspector Favel, recipient of the King's Police Medal in 1917, the essay claims, colluded with the brothel keeper to ensure all new girls—"fresh arrivals"—went there. He provided protection to Mary Fooks, a Russian girl in the brothel, who was to later become an influential brothel keeper herself.

There were distinct lanes for dance bar girls, *mujrewalis* and sex workers. No. 38 Foras Road was once a sprawling bungalow known as Spy House, on the radar of foreign intelligence agencies during the world wars. "It is said men of the culture of national statesmen came here. It was a hotbed of espionage," Rao says. Entry was reserved for men who descended from horse-drawn carriages, wore shoes and,

preferably, a tie.

In the 1950s, when the then chief minister of the erstwhile state of Bombay, Morarji Desai, began his crackdown on social vices, he was reportedly advised that Kamathipura's undisturbed existence was essential to the sanity of society. A "tolerated area", it escaped the crackdown. References to the district abound in Hindi cinema, from *Amar Prem* (1972) to *Chameli* (2003) to the forthcoming *Talaash* by Reema Kagti, starring Aamir Khan and Kareena Kapoor. So far, only Mira Nair's *Salaam Bombay!* (1988) and Namdeo Dhasal's poetry have captured the streets in their raw, stark reality.

The burden of Lal Bazar

Romanticizing the red-light area in popular culture has done it no favours. It has only embedded the onus of social immorality within this district. Svatl Shah, assistant professor at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, US, documents in her 2006 paper *Producing the Spectacle of Kamathipura: The Politics of Red Light Visibility in Mumbai*: "Although everyone living in

Kamathipura does not sell sex, almost anyone who lives, works or passes through Kamathipura is subject to the stigmas associated with prostitution."

Today landlords, unable to deal with the complex mess of tenancies, are handing over "landlord rights" to builders. They, much like the government and private developers, are not clear on whom the onus of rehabilitation must fall, and do not want to address it. Seth Jain, seated at Ambika Electricals and rumoured to own five buildings in which the sex trade continues, won't speak. Merwan Kola, who owns building 56, Foras Road, is waiting to redevelop it. Landlords are fed up of being blamed for a trade spawned by subleases they could never control.

The Kathawala family has owned a 7,000 sq. m. *gala* (shed), located between lane 5 and lane 13 of Kamathipura, for the last six decades. Individual units within the *gala* were leased to around 230 small industries and residences. Patriarch Zuzar Kathawala says they have ruled out cluster, or collaborative, redevelopment: "It's been a headache.

Rent was ₹3 and ₹5, so after municipal taxes, maintenance, etc it was a loss-making enterprise for us," Kathawala is currently in the process of redeveloping his *gala* himself and, despite a recent glow on government approvals, is thankful for the changed laws. "Since we are a large space we are entitled to cluster development, but we opted for 33/7 (a government development rule which grants greater FSI). Earlier, these things were not clearly defined. Today, tenants also know their options. We have been generous landlords, paying tenants well as we purchase plots back from them, so we have no problems now," he says.

At first, all of Kamathipura had hoped for cluster redevelopment. It would have transformed the area overnight. But in the toss-up between private and government, cluster and individual redevelopment, the sex workers proved nobody's problem. Ironic, because it is this realization that has motivated sex workers to now cut deals and move on. "The *gaun* sex worker knows now that whatever crosses these buildings may be sold for, not a paisa is going to come to them," Patkar says. Many locals have seen those few, whose buildings went under Mbada (Maharashtra Housing and Development Authority) redevelopment, languish in transit camps for near three decades now.

Mahendra Warbhuvan, chief executive officer of the Mbada repair board, says: "The government has priorities. India has many homeless people to be rehabilitated. This is under consideration and will take time."

The Congress MLA for Nagpada, south Mumbai, Amin Patel, who has also been involved with the transformation of Bhendi Bazaar by the Sajeev Burhani Upliftment project, says: "It being a charitable trust, many factors of dispute were resolved overnight. Here, in Kamathipura, so many issues come up—there

Ment, June 9, P.12

Willing and able

Ever so often, Nidhi Garima Goyal's parents will meet someone who says, "Oh, your daughter is blind? I know this boy who's also blind. Let's get them married!" The couple, always supportive of their visually impaired daughter, a writer and researcher in Mumbai, ignore this, Goyal says. Someone who says she's never seen herself as "less than anyone else" Goyal does not typically let these things matter.

But she finds herself analysing social expectations like these more often these days. Goyal is one of the main writers and interviewers who've put together *Sexuality and Disability* (SexualityandDisability.org), a new resource for and about women with disabilities which discusses relationships, dating, sex and sexuality. "I was already kind of 90% there, as an individual, because I've always had confidence and my family's always been supportive," she says. "But I've started to analyse how this stuff works across communities in India."

"My parents are okay with you," a male friend used to tell her. "They won't let other girls visit or call at all hours, but you can come over any time." Goyal never really wondered why an orthodox family, which policed their son's contact with women, was 'okay' with her meeting or talking to him whenever she liked, until it dawned on her that it had to do with her disability.

"I simply wasn't seen as a 'prospect'," she says. "The idea was always, 'this girl is safe'. He's never going to go out with her. They're never going to date."

Sexuality and Disability is a collaboration between Point of View, a Mumbai-based non-profit organisation that works with representations of women in art, culture and the media, and Urea, a feminist human rights organisation based in Delhi. "As you can see, the domain name was readily available," says Bishakha Datta of Point of View wryly.

Datta and her team began to work on the site last September, after she and her colleagues realized how little there was, online or offline, that spoke directly to women with disabilities about sex and sexuality-related issues. A 2007 World Bank report states that the number of people with disabilities in India could range between 30-90 million; as women typically account for half or slightly more than half of disabled populations worldwide, by the most conservative estimate, Indian women with disabilities are likely to number at least 20 million.

In the mainstream, both these categories of experience generally exist in separate spheres. Disability rights activism doesn't often focus on gender-specific needs. Talk about sexuality, straight or queer, is almost always about people who are not disabled. Online, sites offer advice for things like wheelchair sex and stimulation that

doesn't begin and end with heterosexual, penetrative intercourse. Plenty of bloggers with disabilities write about dating, sex and relationships. These communities are a vibrant global resource, but they can be scattered, and are often about particular kinds of disability, or particular sexualities.

"The tale you find activists in this area telling, whether they are in India, UK, US or Nigeria, is that many in the disability movement have regarded sexuality as an irrelevant issue," says Janet Price, UK-based disability rights activist and consultant on the *Sexuality and Disability* project. "The argument goes that it is important to address practical issues regarding jobs, income, housing and other such concerns first."

Once they decided to make it their focus, the *Sexuality and Disability* team found themselves working with other organizations, counsellors and activists like Price (who was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in the 1990s) to develop something that would cover disabilities across the spectrum, talk directly to women with disabilities rather than their caregivers or allies, and find common ground on which they could talk about sex and related issues.

"Emotional issues are difficult to bifurcate," says Jyoti Savla, a clinical psychologist whom Goyal interviewed for the website. "It's easy to see someone with a certain physical attribute and think of them as 'handicapped', but certain human behaviours are common to all of us."

In spite of Savla's point of view, mental illness and psychosocial or intellectual/cognitive disabilities are often particularly pathologized when it comes to sexuality. "When you're diagnosed with a mental illness, everything you say or do or think becomes a symptom," says Reshma Valliappan. "As far as sex is concerned, if you're an Indian or Asian woman, you're going to be suppressed, even if you're a straight woman with a disability."

Valliappan, a queer woman with schizophrenia, paints, writes, and is a shadow report-writer for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. She runs the Red Door project online, a site that aims to be "a doorway into a space that explores the idea that every human being is normal, or conversely, every human being is mad in their own unique way".

"I live without medication and psychiatrists don't like it," she laughs. Among other things, psychiatric drugs can complicate sex and sexuality-related issues, she points out. Many of them come with side effects that can affect sexual function and desire.

"You're caught in the four-wall problem," she says. "Whether you're in an institution, at home, in a support

group—but if you don't get out, you don't know what you are."

Over the last four or five years, Price says, things have begun to change. "WHO (World Health Organization) has produced a guidance note on approaches to planning sexual and reproductive healthcare for people with disabilities, and they have begun to undertake slightly more extended research globally around the issues. But even then, the understanding of 'sexual' is largely limited to the aspects of human behaviour linked to reproduction, and to the negative such as sexual violence, with almost no attention paid to sexual desire, pleasure and identity."

The starting points of many of these conversations are covered on the *Sexuality and Disability* website. Notably, in an area where most material, whether personal narratives, academic research or practical advice, comes from Western sources and primarily addresses Western needs, *Sexuality and Disability* comes from what Price calls "the majority world, that is, not in Europe, the US, etc."

"Many of the issues or many of the questions that are asked on the website are questions that a lot of women may ask, regardless of whether they have a disability or not," Datta says. The site features questions like: "I am in love with a non-disabled person. Can this work out?" but also things like "All my friends say that having a relationship is the most important thing in life. Is this true?"

Need for education among women stressed

CORRESPONDENT

GAURIPUR, June 1 - An important meeting of the Dhubri District Women Cell was held recently at the conference hall of the Deputy Commissioner, Dhubri.

The meeting was chaired by Kumud Chandra Kalita, Deputy Commissioner, Dhubri. The meeting discussed about the incidents of family tussles among the women of the district threadbare. The president suggested to convene meetings of the women cell in the block and panchayat level atleast one in a month and suggest measures to improve relations in regards to the violence muted out to the fair section of the society.

The meeting also stressed the need of education among the women folk of the society. The SDO (Civil), Dhubri Ramen Malakar earlier explained the purpose of the meeting. Manju Goswami, secretary of

Dhubri district Mahila Samiti in her speech appealed to the administration to convene meetings of the women cell in the interior rural areas. The meeting also stressed the need of literacy among the illiterate women of the rural areas. The meeting ended with vote of thanks from the chair.

Health camp: Under the auspices of the Government Pensioners' Association, Dhubri and in collaboration with the Rotary Club, Dhu-

bri a health check-up camp was organised on May 26 last on the premises of Dhubri branch Sahitya Sabha Bhanwan.

The camp was formally inaugurated by Ramen Malakar, SDO (Civil) Dhubri. More than two hundred senior citizens were present in the camp. Eye specialists Dr Mukul Barman and Dr Rupam Sharma examined altogether 151 male and female patients and 8 number of the

patients were detected suffering from eye cataract. Dr Debamay Sanyal, Dr Sukriti Purkayastha and Dr Santosh Sarkar attended the camp and they examined a large number of citizens and ad-

vised them to undertake treatment for diabetics.

The attending senior citizens appreciated the efforts of the association and the club for their endeavour in organising such a health check-up camp free of cost.

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June 2, 198*

‘शिक्षित महिलाओं को देश में आगे बढ़ने का पूरा अवसर’

मुंबाई, 10 जून (हप्र)। देश में प्रधानमंत्री डा. मनमोहन सिंह की सरकार सभी को आगे बढ़ने का मौका दे रही है। खासतौर पर शिक्षित महिलाओं को पूरे अवसर प्राप्त हैं। पढ़ी-लिखी महिलाएँ कानून की जानकारी भी प्राप्त करें तो वे और ज्यादा मजबूत हो सकती हैं।

यह जानकारी आज महिला कांग्रेस की राष्ट्रीय महासचिवी ओनिका महरोत्रा ने आज पार्टी नेत्री सुमन देहिया द्वारा जॉन हाल में आयोजित महिलाओं के लिए कानूनी निःशुल्क शिविर में दी है। इस अवसर पर सुमन देहिया और जिलों में विभिन्न पदों पर सुशोभित महिलाओं द्वारा श्रीमती महरोत्रा का स्वागत किया गया। इस मौके पर श्रीमती महरोत्रा ने जहाँ सोनिया गांधी और डा. मनमोहन सिंह की नीतियों की जमकर प्रशंसा की वहीं महिलाओं से आग्रह किया कि वे आगे बढ़ने के लिए किसी की प्रतीक्षा न करें। खासतौर पर महिलाओं को पीछे मुड़कर देखने की आदत छोड़नी होगी।

इस अवसर पर कार्यक्रम के आयोजक सुमन देहिया ने रम्य सभा में भी महिला आरक्षण बिल पास कराए जाने का अनुरोध करते हुए महिलाओं के कल्याण के लिए पांच प्रस्ताव — महिला सशक्तिकरण, चरलू हिंसा, कन्या धूण हत्या, शिक्षा और कानूनी जागरूकता रखे।

इस अवसर पर जिला परिषद अध्यक्ष कविता यादव, निगम पार्षद सोमा पाहुजा, पार्षद रमा रानी राठी, सीनियर स्कूल की प्रिंसिपल निर्मल, सिधरावली कालेज की प्राचार्य डा. प्रवीन शर्मा, पूजा शर्मा, पुष्पा धनखड़, मनोषा आदि भी मौजूद थे।

कार्यकारिणी बैठक: बाद में श्रीमती महरोत्रा ने महिला कांग्रेस की कार्यकारिणी की बैठक को भी सम्बोधित किया और कहा कि वे संगठन को मजबूत बनाएँ और आजकल चल रहे युवा कांग्रेस सदस्यता अभियान में बढ़-चढ़कर भाग लें। इस अवसर पर जिला अध्यक्ष सुनीता सहरावत, पूर्व पार्षद मधु आजाद, ममता शर्मा आदि भी मौजूद थे।

*Dainik
Tribune
June 11,
P. 3*

‘महिला विश्वविद्यालय में पूर्ण निःशुल्क हो शिक्षा’

गोहाना, 10 जून (निस)। सोनिया जी, आप इस गलतफहमी की शिकार हो सकती हैं कि देश के सबसे पहले महिला विश्वविद्यालय में छात्राओं को सस्ती शिक्षा हासिल हो रही है। जर्मनी तककीत यह है कि बी.पी.एस. यूनिवर्सिटी के भारी-भरकम शुल्कों ने इस अमीरजादों की लाडलियों की यूनिवर्सिटी बना छोड़ा है तथा आम गरीब मां-बाप इस विश्वविद्यालय में अपनी बच्चियों को पढ़ाने की सोच भी नहीं सकता।

रविवार को यह टिप्पणी वरिष्ठ कांग्रेस नेता और ए.आई.सी.सी. के पूर्व डैलीगेट पं. उमेश शर्मा ने कांग्रेसीयता को लिखी खुला चिट्ठी में की।

उन्होंने महिला विश्वविद्यालय और हरियाणा के ही अन्य विश्वविद्यालयों के विभिन्न कोर्सों के तुलनात्मक शुल्क देते हुए विक्षोभ व्यक्त किया

कि बी.पी.एस. के शुल्क प्रदेश के शेष विश्वविद्यालयों से भी कई गुणा हैं। शुल्क अधिक होने से आम आदमी की इस विश्वविद्यालय से दूरी बनी हुई है जिससे यह विश्वविद्यालय उतने दाखिले नहीं जुटा पा रहा है जितने होने चाहिए। बी.पी.एस. के प्रोफेसर के पने पलटने के साथ दाखिले का इतना घुट जाता है।

पं. उमेश शर्मा ने यू.पी.ए. की चेयरपर्सन के रूप में कांग्रेसीयता सोनिया गांधी से अपील की है कि वह मुख्यमंत्री भूपेन्द्र सिंह हुड्डा को निर्देश दें कि बी.पी.एस. महिला विश्वविद्यालय में शिक्षा पूर्ण निःशुल्क हो तथा छात्राओं से ट्यूशन फीस समेत कोई भी चार्ज या फंड न लिया जाए। फ्री शिक्षा का प्रावधान होने के बाद इस यूनिवर्सिटी की उपयोगिता में अत्यधिक वृद्धि हो जाएगी।

*Dainik Tribune
June 11, P.5*

Mewati women's education an uphill struggle

Sana Ali is something of a rarity in her hometown of Nuh, in Mewat district of Haryana. Mewat has a woeful record when it comes to the education of its girls, but Ali has just passed her class X exams with 93%. At 16, Ali also speaks fluent English, but she had to go to a school in the district of Rohtak to learn it.

On 9 June, at the first Mewati women's convention in Nuh organized by the human rights non-governmental organization Anhad, Ali made a speech before collecting an award for her achievements from a visiting Union minister of housing and urban poverty alleviation, and culture, Kumari Selja. Facing a roomful of women from the district, many of whom had already spoken their grievances into the microphone, Ali began her appeal to the Indian government. "Mewat is the most backward place in India for girls, you need to come here and do something," she said.

Ali is aware that she is part of a minority. Many Mewati girls have a hard time making it as far as class X at all. "Actually, it's a superstitious thing here," says Ali. "People think there is no need to educate their girls."

Mewat stands apart from the rest of Haryana in one measure of social development: literacy. Although its child sex ratio (at 903) is the best in the state, the district's literacy rate is shockingly low—56.1% in 2011 according to provisional census data, 13 percentage points less than the next lowest. And, looking at the male-female split, the reason becomes apparent. At 73%, Mewat's male literacy rate is below the national average of 82.14—but not disastrously low. For women, however, the figure is just

37.6% compared with 65.46% nationally.

And some experts say that the number could still be an exaggeration. "In rural Mewat, the female literacy level varies from 10-15%, though the official figures put it around 25%," said a report on the region written jointly by Anhad, its rural education offshoot, Pehchan, and the Mewati Development Society.

Conservative values

A Muslim-dominated area, Mewat has traditionally been very conservative, said Shabnam Hashmi, an activist and trustee of Anhad. "You can see there's a high level of discrimination due to the presence of conservative Muslim groups who see the role of women as within the four walls of the home," she said.

But there is also a serious shortage of schooling facilities. According to the report: "Mewat has 430 primary schools for boys, 41 for girls; 282 middle schools for boys, 52 for

girls; 81 high schools for boys, four for girls; 21 senior secondary schools for boys, eight for girls and only one college for boys and none for girls." Although new educational facilities have been proposed in the area, including, in 2006, a women's college and three polytechnics, none of the proposals has yet been realized. "The same year, regional campuses for Mahatma Dayanand University and Maulana Azad Urdu university were also proposed." These campuses are also yet to appear.

For most Mewati women, quality of education is a secondary consideration. Apsari, whose family use only their first names, has two daughters aged eight and 10, and both attend a local madrassa, which she says is substandard. The madrassa was not Apsari's first choice, but the government alternatives are worse, she says. The fami-

Contd...

ly lives in Muhammadpur, a small village right in the middle of Mewat district. Her mother-in-law, Muhurbi, and her youngest daughter, Muskaan, have shared a car ride to attend the convention in Nuh. "I send my daughter to a madrassa, but there are no masters there," Apsari says. "I mean, there are eight masters who sit in the school, but they don't teach, there is nothing taught there. Muskaan just knows how to count to 10. We came here today to make that complaint. There's hardly any food in the school, and there are no books."

Apsari also has two sons, who she sends to a private school in the nearby village of Shikrawa where they learn English. She wants the girls to go there too, next year. But it's expensive: ₹1,000 for each child every quarter.

In her mid-20s, Apsari is slight, with a reed-thin voice and delicate features, which Muskaan has inherited. Her own education was cut short, she says, which makes her more determined that her children should study.

"I studied until the VIII class," she says. "Then, when I was 15, I got married and I came to this area because my husband lived here. After I got

married, I didn't go to school again. I want my daughters to be successful and so I'm very concerned about their education. I wake up at 4am every day and make them food

to take to school." Muhurbi, who never went to school of any kind, listens to her with great attention. "I want her to study again, too," she says, pointing at Apsari. "Even

if these madrassas are of no use, we'll send her somewhere far away."

Changing attitudes

The indifference to women's education in Mewat spreads to other issues. The lack of education also prevents them from accessing their basic rights, according to Anhad's report. "When it comes to basic health facilities, the entire region has only one gynaecologist due to which most of the women get deprived of medical facilities."

Muhurbi and Apsari say that their participation in group events like the one in Nuh is frowned upon by the men in their village. "It's not easy still, because we come for these meetings, but still the men ask me, 'Why do you go, we don't like you to go.' Even if we do come, we listen to what is being said, but then we go home and forget about it."

But Ali's school teacher Shabnam Khan thinks there is reason to hope that the situation may be improving. One of 11 daughters who all completed school, Khan says that she is lucky because her father believed in education. "At the moment there is no attention

from parents in the villages for education, but that can change," she said. "Events like this are fantastic, they give these women a voice and empowerment. They have a chance to express themselves here, in front of us all." Khan looked on as the women swore to raise their voices against child marriage, violence against women and the dowry system.

Hashmi thinks that the improvement is incremental at best. "Change is happening only in the urban pockets," she said. "At Pehchan, we have set up four centres to teach girls, but even to get them out of the

house is an uphill struggle." The effect of efforts like these will probably only be felt by the next generation, said Hashmi.

And the data reinforces her opinion. In the last 10 years, the female literacy rate rose by nearly 14 percentage points, but even a similar jump in the next decade will still leave the district dragging behind.

Inevitably, Mewat's progress will be measured in small steps. "We may not get these girls past class XII," said Hashmi, "but they will surely want to educate their own daughters."

Mint, June 12, P 9

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Village women trained in eri rearing

CORRESPONDENT

NALBARI, June 8 - The 14 day NABARD sponsored Rural Entrepreneurship Development Programme (REDP) training on silk development has brought a ray of hope to 50 women mostly from the Bodo community of Kachimpur village in Nalbari district.

After completing the training organised by the Janashakti Bikash Mancha, a leading NGO of the district, the women have started eri rearing to supplement their livelihood. One Renu Boro (38), an ASHA worker led a women group at

the village for rearing eri.

Similarly, an anganwadi worker, Kamala Boro also mobilised the women to engage in eri rearing so that they can earn to run their families. Of those trained up women 25 got eri spinning machines from the Central Silk Board which inspired the women to do something more.

It may be mentioned here the NGO activist Ajoy arranged the linkage of this women with the Central Silk Board. Most of the women of the village are now engaged in this traditional business.

On the otherhand, the Janashakti Bikash Mancha is also

impairting training on cutting, tailoring and fabric painting to 29 rural women from May 15. The NABARD sponsored training was inaugurated by Tapan Dutta, DDM, NABARD, Nalbari and will be completed on June 26.

Dharna: About hundred homeguards of Nalbari district staged a dharna in front of the Commandant office of Homeguards at Sariahali in Nalbari district on Wednesday.

The Nalbari district committee of All India Homeguards Welfare Society organised the dharna demanding regular engagement in works to the

homeguards working at the district. They also submitted a memorandum to the commandant demanding early solution to their problems.

Fake currency seized: The Nalbari Police and Army, acting on a secret tip off seized fake currency amounting to Rs 60,500 at Morowa in Nalbari district.

The police also arrested a youth Abedur Rahman of Konwarpur village near Hajo PS. According to the police, the youth brought the amount to Nalbari on a motor cycle. Police suspect that the youth had a link with a gang of fake currency in West Bengal.

WOMEN PANCHAYATS

*Assam Tribune,
June 9, 1979*

महिला पंचों को मिलेगा प्रशिक्षण, खत्म होगी पतियों पर निर्भरता : तीरथ

नई दिल्ली, 20 जून (भाषा)। केंद्रीय महिला एवं बाल विकास मंत्रालय पंचायतों और स्थानीय निकायों की महिला सदस्यों को प्रशिक्षण देकर कार्य निर्वहन में उनकी पतियों पर निर्भरता खत्म करने का प्रयास करेगा। इसी सिलसिले में मंत्रालय ग्राम पंचायतों और नगर निकायों के लिए निर्वाचित महिलाओं के एक समूह को बांग्लादेश की राजधानी ढाका भेजेगा जहां इस साल सितंबर में दक्षिण एशियाई देशों की निर्वाचित महिलाएं प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रम में हिस्सा लेंगी।

केंद्रीय मंत्री कृष्णा तीरथ ने कहा कि अक्सर देखा जाता है कि ग्राम पंचायतों और नगर निकायों में आरक्षित या सामान्य सीट पर निर्वाचित होने वाली महिलाएं कार्य निर्वहन के लिए अपने पति या पुरुष रिश्तेदारों पर निर्भर होती हैं। उन्हें अपने पद के अधिकारों तथा अन्य महत्वपूर्ण बातों की कम जानकारी होती है। ऐसे में महिला के निर्वाचित होने के बावजूद उसके पति या पुरुष रिश्तेदार सारा कामकाज संभालते हैं। इसी बात को ध्यान में रखकर यह प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रम शुरू किया गया है।

उन्होंने कहा कि मंत्रालय चाहता है कि निर्वाचित होने के बाद वह महिला अपने अधिकारों को जाने और किसी पर निर्भर होकर काम नहीं करे। तीरथ ने कहा कि प्रशिक्षण के लिए ढाका जाने वाली महिलाएं भारत लौटकर

अन्य महिलाओं को प्रशिक्षण देंगी। यह कार्यक्रम श्रृंखलाबद्ध तरीके से जागे बढ़ेगा। उन्होंने कहा कि सरकार की योजना सभी निर्वाचित महिला सदस्यों को पूरी तरह से प्रशिक्षित करने की है।

इस योजना में केवल ग्राम पंचायतों और नगर निकायों की महिलाओं को शामिल किया गया है क्योंकि संसद और विधानसभाओं की निर्वाचित महिलाओं के लिए इस तरह का कार्यक्रम पहले से ही मौजूद है। ग्राम पंचायतों की महिलाओं को जागरूक बनाना प्राथमिकता है।

हाल में भारत-अमेरिका रणनीतिक बातों में भाग लेकर अमेरिका से लौटी तीरथ ने कहा कि भारत जल्द ही अमेरिका के साथ महिला सशक्तिकरण सहित कई मुद्दों पर सहमति पत्र पर हस्ताक्षर करेगा। निर्वाचित महिलाओं के प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रम में अमेरिकी प्रतिनिधि भी भाग लेंगे। तीरथ ने कहा कि उन्होंने अमेरिका यात्रा के दौरान अमेरिकी विदेश मंत्री हिलेरी क्लिंटन सहित कई मंत्रियों के साथ महिलाओं और बच्चों के मुद्दों पर गंभीर चर्चाएं कीं।

अमेरिकी दौरे पर तीरथ ने अमेरिकी स्वास्थ्य मंत्री केथलीन सेवेलियस के साथ भी विचार विमर्श करके उन्हें भारत सरकार द्वारा महिलाओं और बच्चों के लिए चलाए जा रहे कार्यक्रमों के बारे में जानकारी दी (साथ ही अमेरिकी सरकार की योजनाओं के बारे में जानकारी हासिल की।)

*Jansatta
June 21, 1979*

WOMEN PRISONERS

Raising the bar

There are a few facts that each one of us needs to know. The total number of prisoners in India is roughly about 3.60 lakh, of which, women comprise about 16,000. This is a figure for a particular day when the head count is done and over a year the figure, for instance, could be ten times higher.

Surprisingly, the total number of children living in jails in 2009 was about 2,000 but it hardly reflects how many children go through the prison experience in a year, or five years or 10 years.

Interestingly there is also no information about the children left at home due to parental incarceration, a subject neglected in India.

"Unfortunately, we have not considered it necessary to delve into this subject. We ease our consciences by simply addressing the issue of nutrition and literacy for children inside a prison," says Rani Dhavan

Shankardass, secretary general of PRAJA (Penal Reform and Justice Association) and honorary president of PRI (Penal Reform International), U.K.

PRAJA was set up in 1996 to examine the need for reforms in the Indian criminal and penal justice systems and aims to highlight the relationship between social and formal (institutional) justice. Through research and dissemination of information about good practices, PRAJA works towards reforms that bring justice closer to people and, particularly, to vulnerable groups.

"A vital part of PRAJA's research and work agenda relates to highlighting the fact that a prison is as much

an institution of State as courts or the police. Yet its management and administration is neglected both by the State and by society for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is the fact that it is inhabited mostly by the poor and the powerless," Ms. Shankardass told *The Hindu*.

Working in prisons in Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar and partly in Madhya Pradesh, Ms. Shankardass realised that women and children comprised a special category of prisoners and among them was a sub-category of old, mentally ill and pregnant women who needed special attention. "Why is a prisoner, particularly a woman, in jail and what happens to her after she is released, issues which need to be addressed sensitively and people need to be told about it," she says. Women are the category of prisoners who are instantaneously disowned by society.

"We are now working on children who are left outside when either or both parents are in jail. What happens to the rights of these children is a major issue. One reason for this neglect is that our formal justice machinery does not require the judge to ask whether there is family or children behind. We must take formal cognisance of prisoners left behind," she explains.

Some of the prisoners are proven guilty while some are locked up awaiting trial. Some are small-time offenders and some have

staff and reducing the load of pending cases in courts.

Penal Reform International is a worldwide movement that seeks to go into these details in depth to see how ignorance of all facts about prisons and prisoners leads to sins of omission and commission on our part that need to be avoided.

Penal reforms are seeking to come together to see that alternatives are explored for the small time offender with a view to ensuring that neither he nor his family is ruined by a jail sentence, and that something constructive is done for the victims. Community service is an alternative to prison that has been tried for small offenders in some countries.

Hindu, June 22, P14

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Women's rights

With just one ruling the Delhi high court has ruined the good work done in the past to protect minors from being exploited. How could the honourable judges have forgotten the past exploitation of little Muslim

girls by people from Arab nations who were hand-in-glove with agents from our country? It is rightly stated that those who forget history are condemned to repeat it. They should have also taken into account the health of the

girls, especially considering the fact that in India most married women bear children within two years of their marriage. Every organisation protecting the rights of women should protest this ruling.
—Rati Hegde, Mumbai

*D.N.A.
June 7
P. 2*

No space for women

Looks, they say, can be deceptive. At first glance, Kerala's capital city, Thiruvananthapuram, is not just incredibly green and beautiful but also clean. The latter, in particular, seems a singular achievement given the monuments of uncleared garbage that mark practically all cities, big and small, in India. Yet, open a local newspaper and you read about malaria and dengue, hospitals spilling over with cases and politicians almost coming to blows over the garbage crisis. "So where is the garbage?" I ask the taxi driver. "It is dumped on the inside roads", he informs me, so that casual visitors like me will not see the ugly sight.

The garbage crisis in Thiruvananthapuram has reached epic proportions. In a state where there is little uninhabited space, creating dumpsites for urban waste has become a challenge. People living in villages such as Vilappinshala near the state capital are refusing to allow dumps or waste processing plants to come up in their vicinity. Not in my backyard, they are saying. So whose backyard will handle the increasing tonnage of urban waste? That is a question that all cities will need to ask — and resolve.

But just as Thiruvananthapuram's surface cleanliness hides the true story of uncleared garbage and the spread of disease, the experience of women in Kerala also stands out in marked contrast to the popular myth about their status.

We all know that there are more women in Kerala than men — an exception in a country where girls are being eliminated before they are born. We also

know that women in Kerala are more educated, have longer life expectancy, and get married later than women in the rest of India. Yet, ask them whether they feel safe, and they will tell you a story that speaks of disempowerment, of helplessness, of anger.

Revelatory

Sakhi, a women's resource centre, and several other women's groups set out to survey women's perception of safety in public spaces in four cities in the state — Thiruvananthapuram, Kozhikode, Kochi and Thrissur. Their findings blow

the lid off the myth about the power of women in Kerala.

The overwhelming majority of women surveyed in these four cities said that sexual harassment was their main safety concern. They routinely experienced verbal and physical harassment. Buses that the majority of working women are forced to use were a primary site for such harassment. Women passengers were groped, pinched, leaned upon. Apart from male passengers, even the conductors took their chances.

Girl students in particular had a torrid time. One student reported how someone who stood behind her sliced her dress from top to bottom with a

sharp instrument. Another spoke of the abusive language used by bus conductors. Other women talked of being leaned upon, about men "accidentally" falling on them when the bus took a turn, of men using every opportunity to touch parts of their bodies.

Auto-rickshaws were not a particularly happy alternative as auto drivers would refuse women a ride much of the time and especially in the evenings when they most needed it. In any case, most women said they did not feel safe venturing out after dark.

While women in many cities have to suffer this kind of daily assault, what

was striking was how most women felt unsafe in public parks, beaches, theatres and even standing at ticket counters. Cities like Thiruvananthapuram have beautiful parks that would be the envy of people in cities like Mumbai where we are starved for open spaces. Yet, in the verdant surroundings of Kanakakunnu Palace in the state capital, you rarely see women, or even groups of women. Men accompany the few that come there. My friends tell me that if a group of women decide to break the norm, they will be stared at as if they are entering forbidden territory.

Absence of infrastructure

Apart from the sexual harassment, for women the question of safety was also linked to the infrastructure in these cities. For instance, the majority of women complained about the complete absence of clean and safe public toilets. The few toilets available were filthy and almost routinely used by men. The ap-

proach to such public toilets was such that women would feel afraid to go anywhere near them.

Poorly lit roads, uneven pavements, open drain covers — everything that makes the public space difficult for the elderly, for children, for the disabled also impacts women's sense of safety. Here is an important lesson for urban planners. Make cities safe for women and the most vulnerable and they will be safe for everyone.

Ironically, even the women conducting this safety audit were harassed, stared at, touched, hit and followed. They also found it difficult to persuade women to speak about being harassed because of the dominant perception that only "bad women" get sexually harassed. Hence, the women being surveyed felt that if they admitted to being harassed, they would be considered "bad women".

How women are treated in the public space provides a true reflection of women's status and how they are valued by society. You can educate women, give them health care and give them jobs. But if they cannot step out of their homes and offices without the fear of being assaulted for no other reason than their gender, then clearly there is something very wrong.

Hindu, June 24, '93

Untold story of the rural woman

M. S. Nagarajan

If India lives in its villages, what a shame then that the Indian rural woman has been consistently — nay, deliberately — sidelined in the feminist and postcolonial discourse. One may search in vain the literary canon of South Asia to find any trace of her history since feminist consciousness has generally been dominated by the urban middle-class woman. There is a crying need to reclaim this lost territory, the voice of the voiceless. Jaiwanti Dimri's *Images and Representation of the Rural Woman* does exactly this. It protests the apparently systematic neglect of the rural woman's experience in the literary canon. It investigates, with great specificity, the image of the rural woman projected in eight post-independence woman-authored novels — two in English and six in regional languages. Selected from different social and geographical locales, the fictional representation in these novels is examined in three categories: familial, social and cultural constructs against the background of "(i) subaltern consciousness, patriarchal benevolence and, (ii) feminist postulates of identity and subjecthood."

Dimri maintains that the social or cultural specific image of a woman is not an

unintended, innocuous act but is always determined by domination and subordination. What is most disturbing is that in such a construct the entity 'rural' or 'urban' is homogenised and treated as if it were one unit ignoring the wide chasm that divides the two entities.

Chapter three examines the representation of the rural woman in two categories of patriarchy: brahminical and feudal. How the rural woman has subverted or collaborated with patriarchy in her familial or social roles is examined with reference to these four novels: Kamala Markhandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve*, Ashapura Devi's *The First Promise*, Maitreyi Pushpa's *Idannamam* and *Chaak* in such different contexts as sexuality, violence and female resistance. Patriarchy establishes its control over women by marginalising them in the two primary institutions of marriage and family. Dimri employs the term 'phallo-centric Narcissism' while referring to this oppression. It rewards handsomely those who conform by accepting their roles as wives and mothers and punishes those who disobey or violate these standards expected of them. The hegemonic male domination is perpetually sustained and transmitted through caste, class and gender.

Dimri declares that though the low-caste wom-



IMAGES AND REPRESENTATION OF THE RURAL WOMAN: Jaiwanti Dimri; Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Rashtrapati Nivas, Shimla-171005. Rs. 695.

an is pervasively present in the hegemonic texts, it is only in the non-vedic religions we can identify representations of low-caste women being relocated in social hierarchy. In Dalit literature caste is a determining motif since it is based on felt experience. But it has outgrown these narrow limits these days. It is getting more politically informed and radical. In the genre of autobiography and life-histories Dalit women's writings have surely enriched the literary canon.

Owing to greater urbanisation, migration and other social factors, caste configuration has undergone a sea change. In remote villages mostly conditioned by rigid class privileges, however, the socio-cultural framework is different; hence the dwellers often get segregat-

ed to ghettos. They face social exclusion. The concluding chapter asserts that the image of the rural woman should not be seen as being confined to the family alone. It should also be treated as a cultural construct. This construct could be seen as possessing a wealth of oral tradition in the form of folktales, anecdotes, rumours, proverbs, etc. In the context of homogenisation of culture, subaltern identities get relegated or even disregarded. Indian villages are the nucleuses of our communal culture. Many oral narratives get integrated into the psyche of the village women constituting their collective cultural memory. Western feminist scholarship — especially in Afro-American women's writing — focuses on the retrieval of memories. Folk discourse also adds an emotional tone to the language of rural women.

Gynocritical writings interrogate and reinvestigate old myths by dismantling the absolutes and reinventing new ones. Dimri is convinced that "a gynocritical study of this kind would not only contest and deflate the cultural and civilisational imperialism and offshoots of globalisation but also shift the critique of colonialism from the economic and political domain to the cultural domain from the 'bourgeoisie culture' to 'indigenous culture'."

Hinder, June 19, P.18

महिलाओं के प्रति म.प्र.

सरकार संवेदनहीन

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प्रदेश की सरकार महिलाओं के प्रति संवेदनशून्य हो गई है। एक ओर तो सरकार ने महिलाओं और कन्याओं के लिए कई कल्याणकारी योजनाएं बनाई हैं, वहीं दूसरी ओर दुराचार और महिला उत्पीड़न के प्रकरणों के निपटारे के लिए उसके पास फंड नहीं है। नतीजन प्रदेश में आधे फास्ट ट्रेक कोर्ट (एफटीसी) बंद हो गए हैं।

केन्द्र सरकार की योजना के तहत प्रदेश में 85 एफटीसी संचालित थीं। वर्ष 2010 में केन्द्र

ने योजना के तहत वित्तीय सहायता देने से इनकार कर दिया। प्रदेश सरकार ने

2011-12

के लिए

केवल 56

एफटीसी को

हरी झंडी दी।

इस वर्ष राज्य सरकार ने एफटीसी की संख्या घटा कर 36 कर दी।



वर्तमान में प्रदेश में केवल 35 एफटीसी संचालित हैं, जिनका कार्यकाल 31 मार्च 2013 को समाप्त हो रहा है।

आपराधिक मामलों में विशेषकर दुराचार और महिलाओं पर अत्याचार से जुड़े

मामलों पर जल्द सुनवाई के उद्देश्य से फास्ट ट्रेक अदालतें शुरू की गई थीं। इन अदालतों को कुछ सिविल और दुर्घटना दावा वाले प्रकरणों की सुनवाई का अधिकार भी है।

यें होगा नुकसान

प्रदेश में जिला एवं सत्र न्यायालय स्तर की कई अदालतें खाली हैं। ऐसे में महिलाओं से संबंधित मामले लंबे समय तक लंबित रहते हैं। इन परिस्थितियों में फास्ट ट्रेक अदालतें लंबित प्रकरणों के निराकरण में काफी उपयोगी साबित हो रही थीं।

एफटीसी में हत्या, बलात्कार

प्रदेश में 35 एफटीसी संचालित हैं। इनकी संख्या कम होने से लंबित प्रकरणों के निराकरण पर असर पड़ेगा।

अमरा सक्सेना, एडीएच (डीई) इंदौर

फास्ट ट्रेक अदालतें वीर सख्खा थाने के लिए राज्य सरकार को उचित फंड उपलब्ध चाहिए। हम इस संघ में सरकार से बात करेंगे और महिलाओं के प्रकरणों के लिए प्रत्येक ले एफटीसी वीर मांग करेंगे।

सुधमा जैन, सचिव राज्य महिला आयोग

केन्द्र सरकार की फंडिंग के बंद हो जाने के अधिकतर कारणों में एफटीसी पूर्ण तरह से बंद हो गई हैं। म.प्र. इस मामले में सबसे अग्रणी है। कुछ एफटीसी जमा निरामित एडीओ बंद गए हैं, इसलिए संख्या कम हुई है। कई एफटीसी अदालतें गठित करने की कवायद जारी है।

केडी स्याम, प्रमुख सचिव विधि एवं विधायी किताब

जैसे संगीन अपराधों पर जल्द सुनवाई होती है। इन अदालतों की संख्या कम होने से नियमित

अदालतों का बोझ तो बढ़ेगा ही, साथ ही मामलों की सुनवाई में भी देरी होगी।

*Rajasthan Patrika
June 16, P12*

पत्नी, बेटियों को गुजारा भत्ता देने का आदेश

वस ॥ नई दिल्ली : अदालत ने एक व्यक्ति को अलग रह रही उसकी पत्नी और दो बेटियों को हर महीने गुजारा भत्ता के रूप में 10,000 रुपये का भुगतान करने का आदेश दिया है। मेट्रोपोलिटन मैजिस्ट्रेट ने कहा कि दुर्भाग्य से हमारे यहां पक्षकार अपनी इनकम का सही खुलासा नहीं करते। जहां कहीं पर कोई व्यक्ति पब्लिक सेक्टर में जॉब करता है या उसका अपना कोई कारोबार है, वहां पर उसकी सही इनकम का पता नहीं चल पाता। अदालत ने अपने फैसले में कहा कि इस मामले में भी व्यक्ति ने अपनी सही और वास्तविक इनकम का खुलासा नहीं किया।

अदालत ने हमीरपुर निवासी व्यक्ति को अपनी पत्नी को 5000 रुपये और दोनों बेटियों के लिए 5000 रुपये देने का आदेश दिया। अदालत ने कहा कि वह कई भूखंडों का मालिक है और ऐसा संभव नहीं है कि बिना अच्छी आय के वह इतने बड़े संपत्ति का मालिक हो। सामर्थ्यवान होने के नाते व्यक्ति का पत्नी तथा दोनों नाबालिग बेटियों का गुजारा चलाने का कानूनी और नैतिक दायित्व बनना है। शिवायती महिला ने यह कहते हुए गुजारा भत्ते की मांग की थी कि पति और समुदाय वाले दहेज नहीं ला पाए और लड़के पैदा नहीं करने को

लेकर उसके साथ बुरा सलूक करते थे। महिला ने अपनी याचिका में कहा था कि उसकी फरवरी, 1999 में शादी हुई थी। शादी के बाद वह हमीरपुर गांव में अपनी समुदाय में रहने लगी। शादी के कुछ समय बाद ही पति और समुदाय वाले पर्याप्त दहेज नहीं लाने को लेकर उसके साथ बुरा सलूक और उत्पीड़न करने लगे थे। कई बार उसके साथ बुरी तरह मारपीट भी की गई। उसे मजबूर होकर उनके खिलाफ मामला दर्ज कराना पड़ा, क्योंकि उसके समुदाय वाले लड़कियां जन्म देने को लेकर उसके साथ बुरा सलूक करते थे।

*Nambharat times,
June 28,
P5*

Lack of toilets adds to women's woes

Last week, the Planning Commission drew flak for spending ₹35 lakh to renovate two toilets at its Delhi headquarters. Had the money been spent on basic toilets for women, 70 of them could have been installed, as priced by Sulabh International Social Service Organisation, which works on sanitation and builds public pay-and-use toilets.

Maya Rajashtani knows the value of a simple toilet. A resident of Rajiv Gandhi Camp Street 7, a densely built slum cluster with paved roads on the outskirts of Mahavir Enclave, New Delhi, she and the other 2,025 inhabitants didn't even have access to shared public toilets for nearly 25 years. Instead, they would relieve themselves in a small vacant park tucked away behind the slum, bordered by a large vegetable market. It was humiliating for everyone, she said, but it was the worst for the women. "Men from the market used to watch us as we relieved ourselves. They would jeer and throw rocks at us," the mid-30s, mother of four recalled, face creased into a fierce frown as she smoothed the folds of a sapphire blue sari. After several girls from the community were raped on their way to the area, she decided to take matters into her own hands. She rallied her community, collecting signatures and met monthly with local politicians. It took more than two years, but they eventually managed to secure funding for 22 toilets—12 for women, and 10 for men. "We are very relieved that we do not need to worry for our young daughters and daughters-in-law anymore," she says.

Rajashtani is one of the lucky few. For roughly half of India's

1.2 billion people, toilets are still something of a luxury. Recent census findings show that 46.9% of households in India have a personal latrine, while 53.2% own cellphones. Even the nation's Capital is not exempt from toilet troubles: A 2009 report by the Centre for Civil Society found that Delhi only has 132 public toilets for women (men had 1,534). In Mumbai, there are 10,300 pay-as-use toilets for a population of around 12.5 million (2011 provisional census data)—around one toilet per 10,789 people.

This is bad news for everyone—but it's particularly bad for urban women, for whom lack of a private toilet can mean the difference between safety and sexual assault. A 2010 report on Delhi slums by non-governmental organization (NGO) Sanitation and Hygiene Applied Research for Equity found that of 42 women in three slums surveyed, 66% suffered verbal abuse, 45% were stalked and 30% have been physically assaulted while going to the public toilet. "There's a direct link to women's increased vulnerability to violence," says Janet Geddes, who is working on a report on sanitation and hygiene for Dasra, an NGO based in Mumbai. "That's because either the facilities don't exist, and women have to go in the open to defecate, or they are quite far off, so women have to walk a long distance to get to a facility."

A toilet can determine whether a girl will become educated. Girls attending schools without gendered toilets are far more likely to drop out than those with working facilities. The 2011 *Annual Status of Education Report* found that lack of access to toilets causes girls aged 12-18 to miss around five days of school per month, or around 50 school days per year—and almost 23% of girls drop out of school once they start menstruating.

Even educated women are affected by a city's lack of facilities. Ivori Chopra, who has a masters degree in social work, quit a job with an NGO focusing on women's empowerment after only six months because the building lacked gendered toilet facilities. "Men and women could both walk in—and there was only a short wall separating the door from the toilet. It was very embarrassing," she says. "I know other women who have had the same problem."

Bindeshwar Pathak, founder of Sulabh International, recalls a conversation with a high-ranking female Indian Administrative Service officer from Madhya Pradesh, who said she regularly skipped breakfast and avoided liquids until late in the day, in order to avoid having to go to the bathroom when out in the field. And women in rural India often have to wait until dawn or night to sneak out to the fields to relieve themselves, risking molestation, and scorpion and snake bites. "This is an issue that af-

fects everyone—regardless of class," he says.

Indian women are not alone in their toilet troubles. Up until 1993, female senators in the US had to compete with tourists to use public toilets because there were no women's restrooms, according to a 2010 article in *The Economist*. And in 1994, a Texan firm fired dozens of women rather than foot the bill for women's toilets, the same article notes. Earlier this year in Guangzhou, China, a group of women activists launched a movement for "potty parity". Naming the protest operation "Occupy Men's Toilets", they commandeered men's toilet stalls at a busy public restroom for about an hour, blocking men's access to restrooms to allow women use of both men's and women's toilets.

Today, Indian women, too, are taking up the toilet revolution. Inspired by their Chinese sisters, Nagpur-based NGO Sahyog Trust organized a group of women to conduct an "Occupy Men's Restrooms" movement of their own on Women's Day on 8 March. And for the past year in Mumbai, a group of 40 NGOs have been conducting a "Right to Pee" campaign in protest against women being required to pay to use public restrooms, while men could relieve themselves for free. In less than 10 months, they have managed to secure more than 50,000 signatures of men and women. "In Mumbai, there are so many women who leave their houses and go outside for work," says Minu Gandhi, field coordinator for Apnalaya, one of the participating NGOs. "They suffer serious health problems because there is no toilet—urinary tract infections, kidney stones and other diseases. So, we raised this issue and we are fighting for it."

Two years after the Haryana government launched a "No Toilet No Bride" campaign, the number of women refusing to live with new husbands until a toilet is built appear to be on the rise across the country. Priyanka

is one such woman. A 19-year-old from Madhya Pradesh, she was married in 2007 to a man from Vishrupur Khurd, and moved into his home this April after the *ghana* ceremony only to learn his family had no private toilet. "My mother-in-law told me that there is no toilet in the house, and I would have to go

outside near the fields," she says. "It was very embarrassing since there were always people around." She returned to her parents' home after only a few days, telling her husband's family she would return only after a toilet is constructed. Sulabh International has pledged to give her ₹2 lakh as reward for her decision, and has promised to build a toilet at her in-laws' house so she can return.

But there are signs of change. Earlier this year, the Kerala State Women's Development Corp. Ltd (KSWDC) announced a pilot programme that would build 35 electronic self-cleaning "she-toilets" in the city of Thiruvananthapuram, the southern state's capital. The toilets, which cost approximately ₹4 lakh each,

are mobile and come fully equipped with baby changing stations, and sanitary napkin vending machines and incinerators. If the project is successful,

KSWDC aims to expand it to more than 200 locations across the state. And earlier this

week, Nationalist Congress Party chief and Union agriculture minister Sharad Pawar took on the case, asking the Maharashtra government to allot ₹100 crore for constructing women's toilets in villages, state transport bus stands and public spaces.

British urban planner Clara Greed once said: "You can judge the true position of women in a nation by the state of its toilets and the length of its queues." By this standard, India's women do not seem to rank very high.

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Mint, June 15, P.10

'Foreigners filmed girls naked'

Fresh Charges Hit Rohtak Shelter

Ajay Sura & Deepender Deswal | TNN

Chandigarh/Rohtak: Women inmates at a Rohtak protection home on Wednesday alleged foreign nationals often came and filmed them naked.

"These are very serious allegations. However, we need strong evidence before we make further headway in the case," said Rohtak DSP, Dharna Yadav.

The home, run by NGO Bharat Vikas Sangh, was raided by National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) early May. The NCPCR team had rescued over 90 minor girls, between 10 and 15 years, from the home on May 9. Jaswanti Devi, owner of the home, was charged with immoral trafficking, torture and promoting bonded labour. The inmates told a four-member probe team, appointed by the Punjab and Haryana high

court, on Wednesday that they were filmed by foreign nationals from Mumbai who lured them with good food and clothes.

Inmates said Jai Bhagwan, Jaswanti's son-in-law, would brief them before the foreigners visited. The visitors were looked after well, they said.



"These revelations are shocking. Details can only be revealed after the report is placed before the high court," said Ut-sav Singh Bains, a member of the probe panel.

Culprits could be brought to justice if the matter was investigated by an independent agency outside Haryana, Bains said.

A source said allegations against foreign nationals had surfaced during Jaswanti's interrogation by police. Haryana police on Wednesday set up a three-member special investigation team to probe allegations of sexual abuse by cops.

'Girls supplied for govt officials' parties'

Bhawna Gandhi | TNN

Gurgaon: Inmates of a Rohtak shelter now in the eye of a storm following reports of sexual abuse have claimed that girls would be taken from the NGO-run facility to Chandigarh to attend birthday celebrations of government officials. The girls said they had tried to present their case to the officials when they came visiting the shelter, but to no effect.

Girls over 18 were also married off forcibly to older men in exchange of money, the inmates — six of whom have been brought to a shelter in Gurgaon following their rescue — told TOI. The girls said they were molested and ill-treated by an official of the NGO and her son-in-law.

The girls are in trauma and are being counselled by experts, said Meena Sharma, superintendent

of Gurgaon's Swadhar Grah.

The girls claimed they were tied with ropes, disrobed and beaten. One of the inmates said that a deaf and dumb girl was sexually molested by the NGO official's son-in-law.

Said 19-year-old Kiran (name changed): "I used to be thrashed by the NGO official and her son-in-law for no reason at all. The son-in-law used to forcibly take girls to his room and molest them. One of my friends in the shelter was forcefully taken to his room and raped."

"I tried to escape from the shelter, but was caught. As a punishment, I was disrobed and I was almost strangled. I was also beaten me with a stick on my foot because of which I was unable to walk for several days," said Neeti (name changed), another victim.

In a first for GB Road, brothels issued shut shop orders by cops

*Times of India
June 8, 13*

NEW DELHI: The Delhi Police has taken up cudgels against GB Road and the 23-odd brothels it accommodates, a first-of-its-kind crackdown against the red light district since it was instituted during the Mughal era.

The Delhi Police has invoked the Immoral Trafficking (Prevention) Act to directly target four 'notorious' brothels operating on the infamous Garstin Bastion Road.

Action against more brothels, police say, will follow in a phased manner in coming days.

"The Station House Officer (SHO) of the Kamla Market Police Station, in public interest, has moved the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) to stop four brothels from functioning. This will be the first phase of the project," said DC Shrivastava, additional CP (central).

Accordingly, Shrivastava said, notices have been issued to Kotha numbers 42, 56, 59 and 52H — where recently-conducted raids led to the rescue of dozens of minors allegedly trafficked from southern India, Maharashtra and Nepal. The

brothels have been asked to prepare a statement to defend their 'establishments' in court.

However, for the hundred-odd 'workers' of these four brothels, whom *Hindustan Times* visited and interacted with, the step is in line with several other "measures of harassment" that the authorities, arbitrarily and routinely, subject them to.

"There are more ways in which the system exploits us —

RED MARK

• Garstin Bastion, a British collector, shifted over a dozen red light areas from all over the city to a single location here

• GB Road is also the largest hardware market in the Indian subcontinent

• There are about 23 brothels on GB Road, where about 250-375 sex workers live in hundreds of small rooms

through the police, the Income Tax department and NGOs — than our customers do," said Naazreen (name changed), 32, who claimed to have been working at Kotha number 59 for yje three decades.

"This may look like a brothel to you but happens to be my house. No one has the right to throw me out of my own house."

Others, like Sharpila, 28, (name changed) who said she

was from Nepal, questioned why only a couple of brothels such as hers and three others were being singled out to shut shop.

"Why don't they just shut us up in a room like that man in Germany did during the (second) World War and gas us to death?" asked another sex worker at number 56.

Mandira, 22, (name changed), said she was ready to be 'rehabilitated' but was pretty sure that the authorities had no concrete plans to do so.

"What will they do when they 'rescue' us? It's all a charade! They plant informers among us or send men posing as customers to lure our girls away on the pretext of starting a family. They then throw us in dark rooms at Nari Niketans where there's no food, no freedom and no future," she said.

"The idea is to prevent immoral trafficking of minors who are forced into the sex trade," Shrivastava maintained.

*Hindustan Times
June 20, 13*

आर्थिक जनगणना से पात्रता होगी सुनिश्चित गरीबों की योजनाओं पर नहीं पड़ेगा अमीरों का डाका

भानु प्रताप तिवारी

कुशीनगर, 31 मई। भारत में एक जून से सामाजिक, आर्थिक और जाति के आधार शुरू होने वाली जनगणना से कल्याणकारी योजनाओं को एक नई दिशा मिलने की उम्मीद है। यह पात्रता निर्धारण करने में सहायक सिद्ध होगी। 2011 की जनगणना खत्म होने के बाद भारत सरकार ने सामाजिक, आर्थिक और जाति के आधार पर जनगणना कराने का फैसला किया है। इसमें वित्तीय और तकनीकी सहायता भारत सरकार की ओर से दी जानी है। इस तरह की जनगणना देश में पहली बार कराई जा रही है।

कुशीनगर जनपद की चारों तहसीलों में बीते मंगलवार को एक साथ प्रशिक्षण भी दिया गया। दो चरणों में हुए प्रशिक्षण में लेखपाल, ग्राम पंचायत अधिकारी, रोजगार सेवक, ग्राम विकास अधिकारी और डाटा इंटी आपरेटर शामिल थे। जनगणना के लिए सुपरवाइजर, प्रगणक एवं डाटा इंटी आपरेटरों की तीन सदस्यीय टीम को घर-घर जाकर हर आदमी की जन्मतिथि, धर्म, जाति-जनजाति का नाम, वैवाहिक स्थिति, शैक्षिक योग्यता, मुखिया से संबंध, व्यक्तिगत विवरण, किराए का या

निजी मकान, परिवार के सदस्यों की संख्या, रोजगार व आय का विवरण, स्वामित्व की परिसंपत्तियां, मकान में बैठक, टाइल्स, शयनकक्ष, भोजनकक्ष, ड्राइंग रूम, रसोईघर, स्नानघर, शौचालय आदि का व्योरा दर्ज करने के साथ-साथ चंद्र दिनों के भीतर बड़ा बदलाव नजर आने पर इसकी सूचना पर्यवेक्षक को देने का निर्देश दिया गया। क्योंकि आगे चल कर योजनाओं में लाभार्थियों का चयन इसी आधार पर होगा।

एक तरफ जहां अब तक संचालित हुई इंदिरा आवास, बीपीएल सूची, वृद्धा-विधवा पेंशन, साधिली बाई फूलें बालिका समृद्धि योजना, छात्रवृत्ति समेत कई योजनाओं में घोघली सामने आई है वहीं तमाम जरूरतमंद लोग पात्र रहते हुए भी इन जनकल्याणकारी योजनाओं के लाभ से वंचित रह गए। इस जनगणना के साथ पात्र की श्रेणी स्पष्ट हो जाएगी। गरीबों को मिलने वाले लाभ पर अमीरों के डाके नहीं पड़ेंगे।

प्रशिक्षण के दौरान जिलाधिकारी आर रीफिन ने भी कहा कि इस बार की जनगणना में शामिल होने वाले लोग यदि पूरी निष्ठा और ईमानदारी से काम करते हैं, तो इंदिरा आवास, बीपीएल सूची और पेंशन आदि योजनाओं में काफी सुधार दिखाई देगा।

Jansatta, June 1, P.15

NSSO survey to cover entire India

Organization Plans To Cover Inaccessible Parts in Fresh Round In July

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: No survey official had visited the village of Phisami, not far from India's border with Myanmar in Nagaland, or parts of the Andaman and Nicobar islands as the sheer remoteness of these areas made them off limits for enumerators.

This will change in July, when the 69th round of the National Sample Survey Organization's (NSSO) enumeration of socio-economic indicators gets under way as all of India will be covered for the first time after entire Jammu & Kashmir was brought under the survey map last year.

In the case of Nagaland, NSSO will relax a rule not to cover villages that lie more than 5km beyond a bus route on an experimental basis to push its coverage to areas that it have not been on its map previously. This will



BRIDGING THE GAP: The previous NSSO survey had not covered the entire Andaman islands because of its remoteness, but things will change in July

mean Phisami, with a population of some 1,200 people, could receive visitors. As could Tsatrapel and Tsaphami villages.

"In case of rural sectors of Nagaland and Andaman and Nicobar islands, the coverage has been extended to the entire state or UT from this round. A separate stratum will be formed for all interior and inaccessible villages

not covered in previous rounds," a note on the 69th round states.

Official sources said some parts of J&K could not be covered due to logistics as also unsettled security conditions until a decision was taken during last year's survey of household consumer expenditure to push into districts largely outside the NSSO net.

Success in covering all parts

of J&K meant that the sample, although random and intended to account for only a fraction of habitations, was more complete than has been the case before. Similar was the case with Andaman islands, where some areas were earlier simply ruled out of the survey sample.

Nagaland was the last frontier both in terms of the logistical challenge as also presence of militant groups. With the security situation improving, NSSO is prepared to dispatch surveyors to villages that often have a limited, self-sufficient agrarian economy.

Previous surveys have been incomplete with regard to certain Union Territories and states as parts of Leh and Kargil in J&K and villages in Nagaland and Andaman and Nicobar were seen to be inaccessible throughout the year. Parts of Doda, Poonch and Rajouri were outside the surveys.

Times of India, June 14, P.19

Split city into **nine zones**, HC tells govt

PIL The move will help in speedy disposal of criminal cases; Aug 31 deadline given

HT Correspondent

#htreporters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court on Friday asked the Delhi government to divide the national Capital into nine areas to deal with criminal cases. The decentralisation will facilitate speedy disposal of criminal cases, the court said.

"The respondent (Delhi government) is directed to implement the judgment of the Supreme Court before August 31 this year," a bench of acting chief justice AK Sikri and justice Rajiv Sahai Endlaw said.

The high court also gave Dwarka Court Bar Association (DCWA), which had filed the Public Interest Litigation (PIL), the liberty to get the case revived if the government fails to divide the national Capital into nine metropolitan areas for dealing with criminal cases.

The court then disposed of the PIL filed by bar leaders, including DCWA secretary Avnish Rana, PS Singh and

Sunil Sehrawat.

The Dwarka bar association had moved the court seeking a direction to the city government to issue a notification for dividing the national capital into nine separate metropolitan areas.

The PIL, said Delhi, which has already been divided into nine civil district courts in 2000, has so far not been divided into nine metropolitan areas.

"That it may not be out of place to state that despite the directions of the Supreme Court to carry out necessary amendments in the statutes in a time bound manner for the purpose of the creation of the separate sessions divisions in Delhi as provided in the judgement, it took more than 11 years to make the necessary amendments in Section 8 of the CrPC for enabling bifurcation of the Metropolitan Area of Delhi into nine separate Metropolitan Areas and the consequent creation of nine separate sessions divisions in Delhi," it said.

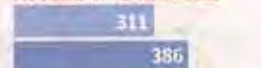
DELHI'S CRIME CHART

Here are Delhi's crime figures from the last two years

MURDER



ATTEMPT TO MURDER



KIDNAPPING



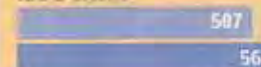
DACOITY



ROBBERY



RAPE CASES



The respondent (Delhi government) is directed to implement the judgment of the Supreme Court before August 31 this year.

A BENCH
Delhi high court

HYGIENE AND SANITATION

With toilets in place, brides return home

MAHARAJGANJ: No toilet at home, no marriage - this had been the position of three would-be brides. Now that their demand has been accepted, and each one of them were rewarded with a cash award of Rs 2 lakh on Wednesday by Sulabh International, an organisation in the forefront of the sanitation movement.

Jyoti of Sant Kabir Nagar and Priyanka Rajbhar of Kushinagar, who were also felicitated by Sulabh, promised to make women conscious of the need for a toilet at home.

Hindustan Times, June 28, P.15

Hindustan Times, June 28, P.3

The science behind Total Sanitation Campaign

Minister Jairam Ramesh is a man with a mission. Stung by the fact that over 626 million Indians do not have access to toilets, he has initiated the *Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan* (NBA) or Total Sanitation Campaign, which would attempt to banish open defecation within a decade.

To ask why and how much it costs would be churlish. Open defecation and open urination are national shames – not just from the aesthetic, human dignity and cleanliness angles, but from the health angle as well.

Where do these refuses end up ultimately? As Sunita Narain of the Centre for Science and Environment points out: “rapidly modernizing India is drowning in its own excreta” (see her commentary in the 14 Jun 2012 issue of *Nature*;

<http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v486/n7402/full/486185a.html>)

And it is this ocean of excreta that our rural (and urban slum) children are being raised in. What are the health consequences of such a sit-

uation? Minister Ramesh is right in quoting Dr. John H. Humphrey of Johns Hopkins University, who has published a “viewpoint” in the 19 September 2009 issue of *The Lancet*.

What does Dr. Humphrey say? He points out that of the 555 million pre-school children in developing countries, 32 per cent have stunted growth and 20 per cent are underweight.

These two conditions together cause the death of one in every five children before they turn 5 years of age. For those alive, the long-term consequences are severe poor

performance in school, dropping out, intellectual deficits and therefore lower economic productivity as adults.

Before Humphrey, doctors and public health specialists assumed that such stunting, underweight, and lower cognitive abilities in children are due to lack of enough nutrition or bouts of diarrhoea, or both.

However, data from various studies show that con-

trolling either or both, while helpful, does not always lead the child becoming heavier and taller. Other factors appear involved.

Dr. Humphrey has suggested another culprit, which is the major cause behind stunted growth and underweight in children in their pre-school years.

This is referred to as tropical enteropathy. This is a condition which affects the intestines (hence entero-) by killing or disabling the villi and microvilli covering the surface of the small intestine,

and helping the absorption of the digested food into the blood and lymphatic systems.

It also leads to inflammation and mal-absorption. The benefits of whatever the child eats are not being transferred and utilised in the system for growth and development.

And the cause of tropical enteropathy is infection by the bacteria found in faeces. Children (and adults) living in conditions of poor sanitation are affected in great measure by such faecal bacterial infection leading to enteropathy.

As evidence, Humphrey points out to several studies done mostly in the 1960s in Asia, Africa and Central

America, which showed a large number of adults and children living in poor sanitary conditions suffering from tropical enteropathy.

That the environmental sanitation is responsible is also suggested by studies on American soldiers in Vietnam and Peace Corps volunteers in Pakistan, who contracted tropical enteropathy while there, but recovered soon after returning to the U.S. Thus, NBA has a scientific basis behind it.

Actually, the move is such an obvious no-brainer. And many non-governmental organizations have been at it with varying degrees of success.

Sulabh Shauchalaya, (www.sulabhinternational.org) initiated in many cities by Mr. Bindeshwar Pathak, has been a boon to hundreds of thousands of people.

The *Gramalaya* group in Tiruchi has now gone beyond towns and helps Anganwadis in some parts of Tamil Nadu. Another notable effort is that of the renowned nutrition scientist Dr. Mahtab Bamji and the gynaecologist Dr. Devyani Dangoria, both of Hyd-

erabad, have been working with several villages in the Narsapur area in Medak district.

They work with the women there on matters of maternal and child health, nutrition, kitchen gardens for vegetables and greens, education of children and adults, and sanitation.

They have helped the villagers make safe and usable latrines by stacking up 4-foot wide cement rings, and digging pits underneath. A bit of the cost is shared by the owner and the rest by the *Nirmal Gram Abhiyan* programme of CAPART.

They can make over 600 of

them within the much talked about Rs. 35 lakhs. Thus NBA has several models to think about and improve upon.

What have been some of the issues in constructing such toilets? Bamji and Sunita list several. Water will of course be the major one; recall hand-washing alone can solve half the problem of infection.

Second, the type of soil is an issue. Use of night soil as manure apparently depends on the type of soil into which the waste goes. There is thus a practical problem here that needs to be addressed as NBA helps build toilets across In-

dia. Third is a matter of what and how the users would like the toilet. It appears that several of them feel “claustrophobic” in an enclosed space. NBA might want to take the help of land/building designers on this issue.

Could they announce a national region-wise competition for designing rural toilets suited to the local conditions of soil, water, population density, micro-environment and other relevant features? As Sunita Narain has said, out-of-the-box thinking is needed here.

Ultimately, it is mindset that needs to change. Habits have to change. If Sikkim can do it (it is the first *Nirmal Rajya* – 100 per cent open defecation-free), the rest of us can do it too!

Let us move from being burdened by the ‘dreamy desert sands of dead habit’ and move to an India where every child and adult is assured of good sanitation.

The body, mind and well-being of future Indians are at stake without it. The accomplished actress Miss Vidya Balan, whom Minister Ramesh has recruited to help in this noble cause, has her role cut out.

Hinder, June 21, P18

Are you prepared for the Floods this season?



*Assam Tribune,
June 29, P.16*

Be prepared... stay safe!
Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA)

Debt worries rise for students eyeing foreign schools

Though students are not deferring plans to go abroad, they are now left with no choice but to borrow more

By Prashant K Nanda & Remy Nair

Mint Column

As the rupee's slide continues unabated, Nausha Kumar knows she'll need to take on a larger debt burden to achieve her dream of going to Singapore for her master's degree.

Kumar, currently a B. Tech student at the privately run Amity University in Noida, will have to pay around ₹18 lakh for her course at Nanyang Technology University (NTU) in Singapore.

"I am suffering for non-academic reasons. Had I done the course a year earlier, I would have paid some 20% less than now," said Kumar.

Kumar, who has a 50% merit scholarship at Amity, said she won't abandon the plan as NTU is a globally recognized institute.

"I cannot hold my plan for a year or so. Now I have no choice but to take more loans," she said. In April 2011, one Singapore dol-

lar was around ₹36; now it's more than ₹43.5.

Studying abroad has always been a costly affair, with US universities charging \$15,000 to \$50,000 (approximately ₹16 lakh to ₹28.21 lakh on Thursday) for a year. In the UK, course fees range between £7,000 and 25,000 a year (approximately ₹6.11 lakh and ₹21.84 lakh on Thursday). While some payments such as lodging and boarding are made in advance, tuition fees have to be paid every semester. Thus students who have already got admission also feel the pinch.

The rupee, which touched a record low of 56.515 to the dollar in intra-day trade on Thursday, has depreciated by more than 23% against the US currency in the last one year. It

MINT SERIES III

May alone, the rupee has declined by around 6.51% on account of the uncertainty in global markets.

The rupee's decline is especially nerve-wracking for those seeking a mid-career improvement in qualifications.

"The depreciating rupee is going to have a huge hole in our savings," said Maya Nair. Her son, who's in the merchant navy, plans to get a master's degree in a related field from City University London.

"My son is 37 and married, and perhaps wants to settle down with a more secure job than what he is doing now. A masters degree will help his career path," said Nair, a senior citizen in Delhi. "We are worried it's going to have an impact on his plan."

Over 100,000 Indians go abroad every year to study. While the US continues to be the leading choice in this respect for Indians, Australia, the UK, Canada and Switzerland are some of the other key destinations.

According to the US-based Institute of International Education, there were some 103,895 Indian students in the US in 2010-11, down 1% from the previous year. This

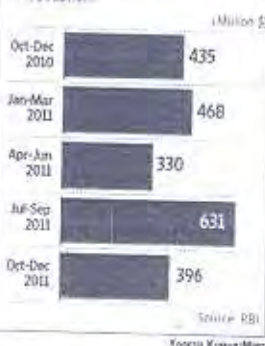
number includes new and old enrolments. More than 27,000 Indian students went to Australia last year and some 12,000 to Canada, according to official statistics.

"When the dollar is strengthening against the rupee, it's bound to affect the cost of education, especially stay and other expenses," said Vineet Gupta, managing director of Lamboree Education Pvt. Ltd., an education company that helps students who want to study abroad with international entrance coaching and consulting. "When the course fee goes up, let's say 10 or 15% because of non-academic reasons, it definitely hurts students."

While aspirants are worried about the rupee decline, "we

SPIRALLING COSTS

Outflow from India on account of education



Source: RBI

Yoshitaka Kawanishi

have not seen students dropping the plan if they have a good offer. The (decline) has happened quickly in the last three months or so. Hence, its impact will be seen in the next few months."

Costs vary across courses, with an international MBA about 25% more expensive than a regular master's degree, he said.

The weaker rupee may make students more choosy, said Amit Agnihotri, who runs management education website MBAUniverse.com.

"It may not affect the Ivy Leagues because of their pedigree but it will certainly hamper tier-II foreign colleges that get the bulk of the Indian students," he said.

Conversely, Indian business schools that have foreign guest faculty will also be feeling the pain. "When the rupee depreciates, Indian business schools have to pay more," he said.

Some countries see opportunity in the currency fluctuation—Canada for instance.

"In Canada, the institutes are publicly funded (hence relatively less costly), the cost of living is cheaper and they can work while studying," said Simon Girdland, counsellor and head, advocacy programme, Canadian high commission in New Delhi.

Gupta of Lamboree said though that the Canadian dollar, too, has appreciated in the last five or six years, so the advantage may not be that decisive.

The rupee's slump is forcing students to be more hard-nosed about what to study and where, says Paroma Bhatt, who has

got admission to the World Trade Institute in Switzerland for a master's degree in international law and economics.

"Serious students are looking for courses which will give returns on investment. So, people are opting for less costly countries and for sure courses with a better shelf life," she said.

Opinion among officials at banks and other lenders is mixed about whether the rupee's slide will lead to a drop in loans, as students forego plans to study abroad, or a rise in loans, as aspirants go forth regardless.

"If the rupee continues to trade above 52 to a dollar for the next few months, the demand for foreign study loans will start reducing," said a senior official with a Delhi-based public sector bank.

An executive at the country's largest lender State Bank of India said loans may rise "the admission season for foreign universities will start in a few months. Students will start applying for study loans from next month. Only then we will know if there is a dip in demand," he said. "But given the depreciating rupee, students may go in for higher loan amounts."

Prashant Bhoonsle, country head, Credila Financial Services Pvt. Ltd, a unit of HDFC Ltd, said that with the rupee depreciating, the loan application amounts have seen an increase. If students are getting into the university of their choice, they are going ahead with the enrolment even if their fees are seeing an increase because of the rupee's movement.

On the other hand, students who aren't getting into institutions of their choice may choose to wait for another year, he said.

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Amit Ranjan Mishra contributed to this story.

This is the third in a five-part series on living with a weak rupee. Next: The luxury market

WWW.LIVEMINT.COM

To read the earlier stories in this series, go to www.livemint.com/fallingrupee

Indian business schools that have foreign guest faculty will also be feeling the pain

Seen Age, June 22, P.5

Govt plans credit guarantee fund for education loans

BY PRASHANT K. NANDA &
REMYA NAIR

NEW DELHI

India is setting up a ₹5,000 crore credit guarantee fund to facilitate easy education loans to needy students by providing protection against defaults to banks.

The move was endorsed at a meeting of the Central Advisory Board on Education (CABE), the highest education advisory body to the government that comprises academicians, industry experts and state education ministers, human resource development (HRD) minister Kapil Sibal told reporters Wednesday.

"CABE members endorsed the initiative to create the fund to ensure better flow of credit to deserving students. It will be worth ₹5,000 crore," Sibal said.

The move comes after finance minister Pranab Mukherjee mentioned such an initiative in his March budget

speech. Both HRD and finance ministries have discussed the measure once and further talks are going to take place soon to finalize "structural issues and final modalities".

According to the HRD ministry, banks will give 1% of the loan amount to the fund and if a student defaults, the fund will ensure that 75% of the loan amount is returned. "Besides, once this is in place, we need not require any collateral security for availing loans up to ₹750,000." Currently, it's ₹4 lakh for students whose family income is less than ₹4.5 lakh per year.

A finance ministry official said that given the fiscal constraints, a 1% contribution

from banks to build up the corpus may not be sufficient. "It will mean more sponsorship from central government," said a finance ministry official requesting anonymity. "During the finalization of the modalities, we hope to solve these is-

sues."

In 2011-12, India had a fiscal deficit of 5.76% of gross domestic product (GDP) and aims to reduce this to 5.1% in the current fiscal.

Several banks under the umbrella of the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) started education loan schemes in 2001. The risky nature of educational loans has made banks wary of approving such loans though.

R.P. Sisodia, joint secretary with the HRD ministry, told CABE that banks are worried about non-performing assets (NPAs) rising. Hence, only 3% of Indian students pursuing higher education have availed education loans in the country. The HRD ministry did not give any specific time limit for implementing the scheme.

An IBA official who is part of the discussion said the ₹5,000 crore corpus will be built over a period of time.

"The government will start with an initial corpus of ₹1,000 crore, which will guarantee loans five times that amount. So, for the first year, around ₹5,000 crore of education loans will get a credit guaran-

tee," he said, requesting anonymity. The government will subsequently release ₹1,000 crore every year to build the corpus, he said.

"However, a cabinet note has not been finalized. It is possible that banks may be expected to contribute to the corpus of the fund along with the central government since the 1% fee will only cover the administrative expenses of the fund," he added.

Bankers questioned the benefits of such a fund if banks have to contribute towards the corpus. "Where is the question

of risk mitigation then," said a banker with a Delhi-based public sector bank, who declined to be named.

While Sibal said banks need to provide education loans at lower rates of in-

terest than those prevailing as education is a priority sector, some authorities don't feel this will necessarily act as a roadblock during discussions.

The HRD ministry believes the interest subvention scheme of the central government takes care of the interest on such loans for poor students and banks should feel secured over this.

prashant.n@livemint.com

Mint, June 7, 2014

Govt hikes funds for key social schemes

Saubhadra Chatterji and Prasad Nichenametla

at letters@hindustanimes.com

NEW DELHI: With two years to go for the next Lok Sabha elections, the UPA government has decided to focus on quality assurance, instead of meeting quantitative targets, in key social sector schemes.

Two important programmes — houses under the Indra Awas Yojna (IAY) and toilets under the Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) — are set to witness a major hike in per unit cost of construction.

Finance minister Pranab Mukherjee has reportedly agreed to rural development minister Jairam Ramesh's proposal to increase the IAY per unit cost to ₹75,000 from the existing ₹45,000. Cabinet clearance will be sought soon.

Meanwhile, a proposal to increase the construction cost of each rural toilet to ₹9,900 under the TSC is on the agenda of the cabinet meeting on Thursday. At present, the per unit allocation stands at ₹4,500.

Ironically, the proposal to increase the construction cost of rural toilets comes after the Planning Commission, a key body in formulating these schemes, spent ₹35 lakh on renovating toilets in its office.

Top government sources admitted that the increased per unit cost may take a toll on the number of households proposed to be covered under the two schemes. "But it would ensure quality in construction, and we have received several complaints that it is impossible to build houses and toilets through the current allocations as there has been a manifold rise in the cost of material," said an official.

Alex Paul Menon, the collector of Naxal-affected Sukma district of Chhattisgarh, had recently suggested to Jairam

INCREASED FUNDING



• IAY is the government's flagship housing scheme, which provides grants to BPL families for house construction.

• Though the assistance was revised to the ₹45,000 per unit in 2010 from the earlier figure of ₹35,000, it was still felt to be insufficient — with BPL beneficiaries taking huge loans to complete half-built houses.

• The main goal of the TSC is to eradicate the practice of open defecation by 2017.

• The allocation for rural drinking water and sanitation for 2012-13 is ₹14,000 cr, up from ₹11,000 cr in 2011-12.

Ramesh that resources under various heads may be utilised to develop select villages, instead of catering to more areas.

As many as 27 crore houses were constructed (up to 2011-end) under IAY, incurring an expenditure of ₹78,986 crore. In 2011-12, only 11.07 lakh houses were constructed against the target of 27.27 lakh houses.

Against the approved target of 12.5 crore household toilets, 8.7 crore have been achieved till now under TSC, data from the ministry showed.

Hindustan Times, June 7, 12

WHY IS YOUNG INDIA SUICIDAL?

Suicide is the second-most common cause of death among young Indians, says a new London-based medical study. The research, based on UN figures and published in the Lancet medical journal, says that the suicide rate is highest among well-educated young people from India's richer, southern states.

"Young, educated Indians from the richer states of India are killing themselves in numbers that are almost the highest in the world," said the report's lead author Vikram Patel, a psychiatrist with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

Indian docs cite many reasons for it. "One of the main reasons is that when young people start working and move to bigger cities, situations like uprooting, loneliness and sudden changes in lifestyle crop up. You might see people having fun at a party, but at the end of the day, these people feel alone," says psychiatrist Avdesh Sharma. Pulkat Sharma, clinical psychologist, VIMHANS, says, "Our society is becoming very achievement-oriented, and when people don't achieve their goals, they go into depression." Broken personal relationships add to the

phenomenon. "Depression, frustration and soured relationships are making the youth take such drastic steps," says psychiatrist Deepak Raheja, adding that better mental health facilities and emotional counselling are needed to bring down these astounding figures.

1,90,000 suicides were reported in India in 2010 - second only to China, with 200,000 cases per year



WHAT'S MAKING US SO UNHAPPY?

- Work-related troubles
- Loneliness
- Excessive ambition
- Sudden, drastic changes in lifestyle
- Unsuccessful relationships
- Academic pressure
- Family problems

FEELING LIKE GIVING UP? DO THIS INSTEAD

- Call a close friend or family, even if you don't wish to tell all
- See a counsellor. It's nothing to be embarrassed about
- Google up common-interest groups. Join one, make friends, do what you love
- Take a break. Life is precious
- Don't mourn an ex. Date again!

BUT DIDN'T THEY SAY WE'RE A HAPPY LOT?

Contradictory to this study, there was good news in February this year. A survey by Ipsos Global said that Indians are among the happiest people in the world, and Europeans, the unhappiest. It said men and women are equally happy, and married, educated couples are happier.

GET CONNECTED

Have you ever felt suicidal? How did you get over it? Help others cope on www.facebook.com/hctity

Hindustan Times, June 25, P. 1

Lancet warns India on suicides

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JUNE 21

Suicide is the second-most common cause of death among young people in India, *The Lancet* has revealed.

According to the British medical journal, India has one of the highest suicide rates in the world.

"Suicide kills nearly as many Indian men aged 15-29 as transportation accidents and nearly as many young women as complications from pregnancy and childbirth," said the study's lead author Vikram Patel, of London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine.

Transport accidents are the leading cause of deaths in men (about 14 per cent) in India while maternal disorders are the main cause of deaths among women (about 16 per cent), the study added.

According to the study, suicide is the second leading cause of death of young people in India — 13 per cent in men and 14 per cent in women.

Experts say that with decline in maternal death rates, suicide could soon become the leading cause of

death among young women. Noting further that public health interventions such as restrictions in access to pesticides might prevent many suicide deaths in India.

"In India, suicide is the cause of about twice as many deaths as is HIV/AIDS, and about the same number as maternal causes of death in young women," *The Lancet* states.

Urging further research into the causes behind the trend, the report said the suicide rate was highest among well-educated young people from India's richer, southern states. "Young educated Indians from the richer states of are killing themselves in numbers that are almost the highest in the world," added the author.

The research is based on the Registrar General of India's first national survey of the causes of death, conducted in 2001-03, and the researchers applied the age-specific and sex-specific proportion of suicide deaths in the 2001-03 survey to the 2010 UN estimates of absolute numbers of deaths (and age-specific risks) for all causes in India.

Asian Age, June 27, P.5

WORLD POPULATION MONTH


27th June to 24th July

WORLD POPULATION MONTH

 **Mobilisation Fortnight-** from 27th June to 10th July

The activities to be taken up by health department:

Awareness meeting at block level | intensive miking to be carried out to create awareness on the available family planning methods | house to house visits by ANM and ASHA workers | counselling with eligible couples

 **Population Fortnight-** from 11th to 24th July

Always Remember:

- Pregnancy before 20 years of age is dangerous
- There should be a gap of minimum three years between the first and the second child
- After two children think to limit your family by adopting permanent methods of family planning

Come let's ensure our family's overall development by adopting family planning methods

Small family, prosperous family



National Rural Health Mission. Assam

*Assam
Tribune,
June 27, 2014*

SCHEMES AND PROGRAMMES RELATED TO
WOMEN AND CHILDREN
GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH

- BICYCLE SCHEME

BICYCLES FOR MINORITY

GIRL STUDENTS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 2

The state government has decided to distribute free bicycles to nearly 27,000 girls from minority communities studying in government schools in the ensuing academic year 2012-13.

The scheme, sponsored by the Centre,

attempts to check the school dropout rate among the girls from minority communities.

Moreover, nearly 75 per cent of the free textbooks will be distributed to students by June 2, and the remaining 25 per cent by June-end. There is also a proposal to distribute free shoes to students.

Deccan Chronicle, June 3, p.5

ADARANI

under *Janani Sishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK)* is a scheme which ensures safe conveyance of Mother and her Child after delivery from Hospital to Back Home

Just Dial 108 to avail ADARANI ambulance service. It is operational during day time from 8 am to 6 pm.

The driver of ADARANI ambulance cannot honour direct request from any person. 108 response centre only can assign vehicle for conveyance of mother and her child after delivery.

After getting confirmation regarding the time of discharge from hospital, one may book ADARANI vehicle in advance, finish all formalities and packing before hand, to avoid wastage of time.

Availing the services of ADARANI does not make a mother and her child ineligible from the benefits of any other Government scheme like JSY, Majoni, JSSK etc.

The driver is not to be paid any money for the service. ADARANI is a completely free of cost service to drop back mother and her child after delivery.

For any information, complaint or suggestions call 108 or 104. Do not fall prey to any rumours.



National Rural Health Mission, Assam



Revised/2012

Assam Tribune, June 26, p.12

मनरेगा मजदूरों को मिलेगा स्वास्थ्य बीमा योजना का लाभ

जागरण ब्यूरो, चंडीगढ़ : केंद्र सरकार ने अभिवन राष्ट्रीय स्वास्थ्य बीमा योजना का विस्तार करते हुए इस योजना का लाभ मनरेगा के अंतर्गत काम करने वाले मजदूरों के परिवारों को भी देने का निर्णय लिया है। अब तक योजना का लाभ बीपीएल परिवारों तक ही सीमित था।

एक सरकारी प्रवक्ता ने बताया कि गरीबी रेखा से नीचे रह रहे परिवारों की सूची में शामिल न होने के कारण गावों के गरीब मजदूरों को इस योजना का लाभ नहीं मिल पा रहा था। ऐसे परिवारों को योजना का लाभ देने के लिए सरकार द्वारा मनरेगा के तहत काम करने वाले मजदूरों के परिवारों का कंप्यूटरीकृत आंकड़ा तैयार किया गया है और ऐसे सभी परिवारों के सदस्यों का व्यक्तिगत डाटा बेस तैयार किया है। इनके लिए सरकार द्वारा स्मार्ट कार्ड भी तैयार किए हैं। अब ऐसे परिवार अपने जिले में चयनित सरकारी और गैर सरकारी अस्पतालों में निःशुल्क इलाज की सुविधा प्राप्त कर सकते हैं।

**सरकारी और
गैरसरकारी
अस्पतालों में
करा सकेंगे
इलाज**

अभिनव राष्ट्रीय स्वास्थ्य बीमा योजना के तहत चयनित सरकारी तथा गैर सरकारी अस्पतालों में ऐसे परिवारों के सदस्यों की 600-650 बीमारियों एवं चोटों का इलाज मुफ्त में किया जाता है। इसके अलावा, उन्हें अस्पताल तक जाने के लिए एक जार रुपये तक की सहायता भी दी जाती है। लाभार्थी को इलाज के लिए अस्पताल में नकद भुगतान नहीं करना पड़ता, क्योंकि यह भुगतान स्मार्ट कार्ड के जरिए अनुबंधित बीमा कंपनी द्वारा अस्पताल को किया जाता है। योजना के तहत मनरेगा जॉब कार्ड वाले परिवार के पांच सदस्यों का इलाज निःशुल्क होगा। काम करते समय मजदूरों एवं उनके बच्चों को चोट लगने की स्थिति में उपचार की सुविधा दी जाती है, लेकिन ऐसे परिवारों के योजना में सम्मिलित होने से उन्हें काफी लाभ होगा।

Dainik Jagaran, June 20, P.4

- FOSTER CARE SCHEME

Scheme for abandoned children yet to take off

NEW DELHI: Not having benefited a single child, the Delhi Government's ambitious Foster Care scheme brought in under the Juvenile Justice Act-2009 has remained on papers for more than three years now.

"This scheme, which seeks to keep abandoned children away from institutions and in homes, was introduced three years ago. The Delhi Government seems to develop cold feet whenever we talk about implementation of the programme. Not one child has been rehabilitated under the Foster Care scheme," said Child Welfare Committee (CWC) chairperson (Lajpat Nagar) Raaj Mangal Prasad.

Women and Child Welfare Department director Rajiv Kale said: "The project was introduced with the hope that it would offer to abandoned children a chance to live a normal childhood which is very important for their overall well being and development. However, there is some

apprehension about children being subjected to abuse (mental, physical and emotional) which has caused us to pause and relook at the scheme. We can't afford to go wrong with our rehabilitation work with children."

"Not practical"

Section 42 of the Juvenile Justice Act defines foster care as a temporary placement of children who are ultimately given for adoption or children being placed in another family for short or extended period of time till they are rehabilitated permanently.

"The Delhi Government has elaborate rules for providing foster care to children in need of care and protection. However, the project is yet to take off and has faced resistance from Delhi's Finance Department, though the Department of Women and Child Welfare is very keen on seeing this project through. We had obtained file notings that point to the fact that the Planning and Finance Departments had cho-

sen to ignore the proposal stating that it was not practical and unworkable," said Mr. Prasad. "After non-government organisations and people working in the area of child rights put pressure on the Government to implement the project, senior officials sought to know if any such project has been initiated in other States in India. However, what we are protesting about is the fact that the Government is not even ready to try out the project," said Mr. Prasad.

"Delhi receives one of the highest number of abandoned children from across the country and it is important to ensure that they are rehabilitated into an environment as close to a normal home as possible. Foster care programme is aimed at giving the child an opportunity to stay integrated with society until the child can either go back to his family or is suitably rehabilitated," said Sanjay Gupta of non-government organisation Childhood Enhancement Through Training and Action.

*Hindu
June 4
P. 4*

- PRE-MATRIC SCHOLARSHIP

Pre-matric Scholarship for SC Students

New Delhi: The Centre on Thursday approved introduction of a new pre-matric scholarship scheme for Class IX and X students belonging to the Scheduled Castes.

The meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh approved the proposal of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment to implement pre-matric scholarship scheme for students belonging to Scheduled Castes from July 1.

However, the meeting preferred to defer a decision on



THE EXPENDITURE ON THE SCHEME WILL BE APPROXIMATELY ₹6,500 CRORE

the ministry's proposal on enhancing the income ceiling from ₹4.5 lakh per annum to ₹6 lakh for the

creamy layer OBC candidates for the government jobs and admission into premier educational institutions.

Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee in his Budget speech for 2011-12 had announced introduction of a new pre-matric scholarship scheme for needy students belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes studying in Class IX and X.

The scheme is expected to benefit about 42 lakh SC students.

In 12th Five-year Plan, the expenditure on this pre-matric scholarship scheme would be approximately ₹6,500 crore.

*New Indian
Ex press
June 15, P. 7*

New Central scheme for women to be launched in Haryana

Special Correspondent

CHANDIGARH: A new Central scheme, 'Swadhar Greh', is being launched in Haryana to protect destitute women, including those suffering from HIV/AIDS, prisoners released from jail and those who are without family so that they could "lead their life with dignity".

It would also cover women who are under social and economic family tension or discord, are made to leave their homes without any means of subsistence and have no special protection from exploitation or facing litigation on account of material disputes.

It would also safeguard trafficked women besides girls who are rescued or run away from brothels or other places where they face exploitation.

Women & Child Development Minister Geeta Bhukkal told *The Hindu* that the endeavour is to "protect women who are deserted and without any family support, widows and survivors of natural disasters who are home-

It will also cover women who are under social and economic family tension

less and without any social and economic support".

Assistance would be given to various agencies or organisations having proven track record of working in the field of women welfare and registered under the Indian Societies Act, 1860, and Orphanages & other Charitable Homes Act, 1956, to run 'Swadhar Greh' on a non-profit basis.

Women affected by domestic violence could stay up to one year while other categories could stay up to three years.

Older women above the age of 55 could be accommodated for a maximum of five years after which they would have to be shifted to old age home or such other institutions.

Senior officers said girls up

to the age of 18 and boys up to the age of 12 would be allowed to stay in the 'Swadhar Greh' with their mothers.

Meanwhile, another scheme, "Rehabilitation of Rescued Children Working in Circuses", has been implemented to protect children working in circuses in the State against neglect, maltreatment, injury, trafficking besides sexual and physical abuse of all kinds, said Director-General (Women & Child Development Sumita Misra).

The scheme has been launched in compliance of orders of the Supreme Court under "Bachpan Bachao Andolan" to fulfil the Constitutional mandate to provide safety and security to children, she added.

According to norms, no child below the age of 14 is allowed to work in a circus and for those above 14, basic minimum living conditions have to be maintained. Moreover, each child working in a circus should complete at least matriculation by the age of 18, she added.

Hindu, June 17, P.5

Is the rural job scheme really behind Punjab's labour pains?

Supply of migrant workers is drying up because of NREGS, say babus, industrialists and farmers. But workers themselves say this is not the case

Rukmini Shrinivasan | TNM

Patiala/Sangrur: Everyone agrees that the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) is causing a shortage of agricultural labour. Everyone, except the workers themselves.

For the last two years, the "success" of NREGS in reducing the number of men migrating out of India's poorest states has become something of a truism. In Punjab, this has resulted in dozens of news articles about the shortage of migrant labour from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar during peak agricultural seasons. Bureaucrats, industrialists and some farmers, all agree with this assessment. However, an in-depth look at the situation during the paddy transplantation season — the most labour-intensive operation in Punjab's agriculture — shows that NREGS is a minor, if not insignificant, component of the changing landscape.

The Union ministry of labour and employment says that it has no evidence of a shortage of farm labour, and no evidence of any impact of NREGS. At the data level also



DEMAND-SUPPLY ISSUE?

In Punjab, there is no evidence of any slowdown in the number of agricultural migrants who come at the peak season. While the Punjab government says that it does not maintain data on the number of migrants coming to the state, economist Ranjit Singh Ghuman, the Nehru SAIL chair at the Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development in Chandigarh, has studied the issue. "Eight lakh migrant workers come to Punjab during the peak seasons. There is little or no change in this number," Ghuman says.

Even at the statistical level, NREGS as a factor in any "labour shortage" seems like a stretch given how poorly the scheme performs in Bihar, the source state for the maximum number of migrant labourers at this time. In 2011-12, just 9% of Bihar's households accessed the scheme. Further, the average participant got only 38 days of work against the statutory maximum of 100 available days, making it one of India's worst performing states for NREGS.

Unsurprisingly, over 100 migrants that TOI spoke to in Punjab's rice belt of Patiala

and Sangrur districts said that the scheme was not enough to keep them from migrating for paddy transplantation work. Misri Lal has been coming to Punjab from Bihar's East Champaran district every year, for the last 22 years. "I have a job card (for NREGS) but I haven't sought work under the scheme. Most people get their wages for NREGS work very late. I will keep coming to Punjab every year," said Lal, while working on a rice field in Patiala district's Gajju Majra village.

Working alongside him was Babu Lal Sahni, who was part of a group of 18 men from the same village, and has been coming to Patiala for the last four years. "We will get paid around Rs 1,800 per acre that we sow. We will work for several farmers, so by the end of the sowing season, we can each earn up to Rs 8,000. Every few days, we wire the money home. Compare this with doing NREGS work, where you will get just a few thousand rupees for the whole year, and that too much delayed," said Sahni.

In the adjoining Khedi Malan village, Lakhon Singh has come from UP's Bijnore district. "I got only 3 days of work last year in NREGS. Less than half of our village has got job cards. A few days of work is no reason for any sensible person to stop coming to Punjab," he laughed.

While it is conceivable that those who choose to migrate may not be in a position to speak of those who decided not to migrate this year, the workers TOI spoke to said that no one in their family or village who migrated in previous years has chosen to stay back since the advent of NREGS.

Resting under a tree dur-

ing their post-lunch break from work on the fields of Patiala's Sanserwal village was a group of workers from Bihar's Saharsa district. "We came by the Janseva Express and there were fights at many stations because the train was packed with workers like us while more wanted to get on," said Mohammed Sanjur. "Anyone who thinks there are fewer workers coming should go and count the number of tickets being sold," said Rajendra Sharma, a worker from Bihar's Supaul district.

Many farmers agree that the number of migrant workers has not reduced; it's just that they aren't available at the right time.

GSSandhu, Punjab's financial commissioner (development), however, believes that there is a shortage of migrant agricultural labour and that part of the solution is a ban on NREGS during peak agricultural seasons. The migrants TOI spoke to though said that they only seek NREGS work during the lean season.

If NREGS has had some impact, it appears to be in two ways. One, some migrant workers say that if a child or parent was to fall ill, the scheme might allow them to stay back in their village and still get some work. Second, the scheme might have had an impact in raising the base wage rate, says the CRRID's Ghuman. "The farmers' lobby has opposed the raising of the minimum wage in Punjab for the last three years. Bureaucrats are also opposed to the implementation of NREGS in Punjab. I think this bias is part of the reason they blame NREGS in Bihar for this non-existent shortage," he added.

Times of India, June 29, 2015

Helping girls 'ride' the wave of academic success

"It is difficult to quantify the impact of schemes on student enrolment and retention."

Muthi-ur-Rahman Siddiqui

In the 1999-2000 academic year, nearly 13 lakh students were enrolled in high schools (Class 8-10) in Karnataka. In the subsequent academic year, at least 10.53 lakh children, aged between five and 14, dropped out of schools in the State.

Cut to 2011-12. The number of students in high schools stood at 26.04 lakh. And Karnataka had just 65,000 children, aged between five and 14, who did not go to school that year.

The turnaround appears impressive. It indeed is, affirms the State Government. But what brought this about? The government employed a slew of schemes and incentives to attract students to classrooms. Two of them stand out.

The free distribution of bicycles, initially to class 8 students and then to class 9 pupils, is one of the populist schemes aimed at improving high-school enrolment. The scheme was launched by the then Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy in 2006.

In the first year (2006-07), the government spent Rs 85.32 crore on distributing 4,20,323 bicycles to poor girl students across the State, except in Bangalore. The next year, 4.35 lakh bicycles were distributed at a cost of Rs 89.18 crore.

Slur of corruption

Boys began receiving the freebie in 2008-09 when 6,66,222 bicycles were distributed for Rs 159.67 crore. The scheme went well until Congress leader V S Ugrappa alleged, on the floor of the Legislative Council in 2009, large-scale corruption in purchase of the bicycles. He even charged the then Chief Minister B S Yeddyurappa's son B Y Raghavendra with pocketing Rs 20 crore under the scheme.

The government was forced to take the allegation seriously. A House Committee inquiry was ordered, which, in its report on December 31, 2010, ab-



Former chief minister H D Kumaraswamy (Centre) pioneered the free bicycle scheme for girl students in Karnataka.

solved Raghavendra of any wrongdoing. Meanwhile, the scheme had been stopped but was restarted in 2011-12.

That year, the government distributed 11,27,376 bicycles at a cost of Rs 248.02 crore to wipe out the backlog. Class 9 students also got the bicycles that year.

The scheme continues in the current academic year (2012-13). A top official in the Department of Primary and Secondary Education confirmed that the entire process, from approval of the technical specifications, release of funds to floating of the tender, is complete. The bicycles will be distributed "very soon", he said.

But has the scheme yielded the intended results — facilitating girls to ride to school? Or more importantly, has it improved the enrolment of girls in high schools?

Empowerment, the key

G Kumar Naik, Secretary, Primary and Secondary Education, says: "From distribution of free uniforms, textbooks, notebooks to grant of monthly scholarship to improving facilities in government schools, many factors spurred an increase in enrolment. It is very difficult to say which scheme contributed how

much. We simply don't have the luxury to study the exclusive impact of a scheme on enrolment or retention of schoolchildren."

The government, nonetheless, is evaluating the effectiveness of each scheme meant to attract students to classrooms. But will such a study be able to produce accurate results? K P Hanumantharayappa, Director, Secondary Education, is not convinced.

The general perception, however, is that the scheme has helped many girls continue to study. "It's mainly for their empowerment. Other benefits are secondary," Naik explained.

The free distribution of laptops to top three scorers in SSLC examination in each educational district and taluk is another populist scheme. First launched in 2009-10, the scheme was limited to toppers in each district. It was extended to taluk-wise toppers in the 2011-12 academic year.

D Venkateshaiah, Director, Karnataka Secondary Education Examination Board, says at least 708 students will get laptops this year. The process, however, appears long drawn and the students might not get the laptops anytime soon.

Dessan Herald, June 10, 17

-PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY

4 Years

Unprecedented
Growth, Peace,
Progress and Prosperity

WOMEN AND CHILDREN WELFARE

- 11.82 lakh Bhagyalakshmi bonds distributed.

HEALTH

- Infant Mortality Rate decreased from 41 to 38 per thousand.
- Mother Mortality Rate decreased from 213 to 178 per thousand.
- 16 lakh precious lives saved under Arogya Kavacha 108 scheme.



*Hindustan Times,
June 29, p.23*

 **karnataka information**

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

- NOON MEAL SCHEME

3% QUOTA FOR DISABLED IN RECRUITMENT FOR NOON-MEAL SCHEME

Chennai: The State government will continue to provide three per cent reservation for differently abled persons in the recruitment of nutritious noon meal organisers, the Social Welfare department informed the Madras High Court on June 4. A copy of the GO dated May 25 this year was produced before the first bench in response to a public write petition by S Namburajan. The bench observed that it was fully satisfied with the reservation given.

*New Indian Express,
June 6, p.2*

जननी के हक पर भी डाका!

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जननी की सुरक्षा योजना में जहां लापरवाही बरती जा रही है, वहीं जन्म कर लूटखसोट भी मची हुई है। प्रसूताओं की राशि से कुछ कार्मिक अपनी जेब भरने से नहीं चूक रहे हैं। लापरवाही और भ्रष्टाचार शिकायतों के दर्जनों पुलिनदे सरकार तक पहुंचे। इस पर कुछ दौमियों के खिलाफ तो कार्रवाई शुरू हुई, लेकिन अधिकारों का मामलों में जांच लंबित ही है। गड़बड़ी की सर्वाधिक शिकायतें अजमेर, अलवर, नागौर, जयपुर, दौसा, सीकर, झुंझुनू, कोटा, बांग, झालावाड़, बूंदी, सवाईमाधोपुर, भरतपुर, भीलपुर, करौली, चूरु, बीकानेर, हनुमानगढ़, श्री गंगानगर, उदयपुर, डूंगरपुर,

सिरोही, जालौर और जोधपुर जिलों की है। वर्ष 2008-09 में भीलवाड़ा के महात्मा गांधी चिकित्सालय में जननी सुरक्षा योजना में 15 लाख 45 हजार रुपए का गबन सामने आया था। इसमें चिकित्सक, लिपिक, नर्सिंगकर्मों और लेखकर्मों सहित 9 सदस्य शामिल थे। यह मामला भी अब तक उच्च स्तर पर लंबित नृतया जा रहा है।

ये है लापरवाही और भ्रष्टाचार की बानगी

* 2008 में अजमेर जिले के चिकित्सालय स्थित चक्रवर्त्य चिकित्सालय में डॉ. पंडी गुप्ता, चक्रवर्त्य परिवार, दोहरी और सीकरों पर प्रत्येक वर्षों में लापरवाही बरतने व पैसे लेने का दोष साबित हुआ।

* जोधपुर में सिद्धमन्धर के उपचारक केन्द्र में महिला स्वास्थ्य कार्यकर्ता

कमलेका देवी और राजू सुरेश चिकित्सकिकरी के विरुद्ध योजना में फर्जी मुद्रागत उठाने की शिकायत सामने आई। जांच में दोषी पाए जाने पर उन्हें 15 सीडीए के नोटिस दयाए गए।

* अजमेर में टेरिस्ट राजी (हृदय कला) तहसील-बदरग ने माण्डल में कार्यरत चिकित्सकिकरी व रक्त के शिलाका गलात तरीके से पैसे उठाने की शिकायत की। जांच में दोषी पाए जाने पर डॉ. विरोडिंगल, प्रसाधिका सेमरी व अजितदेवी के खिलाफ अनुशासनत्मक कार्रवाई शुरू हुई।

* जालौर में रामधुस के उपचारक केन्द्र की प्रसाधिका ओमना ने जेबखुई चक्र देने के लिए 500 रुपए की मांग की। जांच में ओमना को दोषी पाई गई। जालौर के ही सुदरकरडीली उपचारक केन्द्र पर प्रसाधिका एलकुटी ने तंत्र में प्रत्येक वर्षों

लाभार्थियों को फर्जी प्रविष्टि कर कई गैंग अटीकयुक्तार द्वारा सारे उठाने के मामले की जांच सीएमएचओ पास लंबित है। डूंगरपुर के भीलूडा चिकित्सालय के डॉ. योगेश शर्मा, अनुप्राय गौगा व स्वास्थ्य केंद्र रामगढ़ के डॉ. गौरीदेवकर काउच के खिलाफ अनियमितता की शिकायत की जांच सीएमएचओ के पास लंबित है।

मेजा है प्रकरण

यहां से सति लेने वाले प्रकरण नहीं थे। एक प्रकरण लापरवाही का था, वह सरकार को भेजा दिया है। निर्दिष्ट आने के उपरान्त ही नियमानुसार कार्रवाई होगी।

डॉ. आर.सी. सगरिया
मुख्य चिकित्सक एवं स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी

के लिए पैसे लाने। जांच में सक्ने अया कि एलकुटी पर पर होने वाले प्रसवे को संस्थानगत प्रत्येक वर्षों जेबखुई में सति मगारी थी।

* सिरोही में डॉ. उमंग उपचारक के शिलाका जेबखुई में अनियमितता और कटाव की शिकायत पर हुई। जांच में उन्हें दोषी पाया गया। बाद में उन्हें मिलिकित कर विभागीय कार्रवाई की अनुप्राय की गई।

* डूंगरपुर के टमरिया में डॉ. विरोड अग्रवाल ने जेबखुई में फर्जी मुद्रागत उठाना। जांच में डॉ. विरोड व मेलास लईर घोषित दोषी पाए गए। अनेक पर लेटर कार्रवाई प्रस्तावित। डूंगरपुर के ही आसपुर में डॉ. प्रत्येक बरतने को जेबखुई सति उठाने के मामले में दोषी पाया गया। अनेक पर निर्दिष्टालय भेजे जा रहे हैं।

* दौसा में लोचड़ा स्वास्थ्य केंद्र पर

Rajasthan Patrika
June 8, 2010

MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS
- ACHIEVEMENTS

National Conference of State Ministers
for Minority Welfare

Achievements during 11th Five Year Plan

- Prime Minister's New 15 Point Programme was successfully implemented.
- Scholarships to more than 1.41 crore minority students awarded and Online Scholarship Management System (OSMS) for Merit-cum-Means Scholarships was operationalized.
- Priority sector lending for minorities increased from 10.60% to 14.83% with lending of ₹ 154790 crore by 2011.
- Percentage of recruitment of minorities in Central Government increased from 6.93% to 11.99%.
- ₹977.21 Crore disbursed by National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC) to 4,67,909 minority beneficiaries under Lending and Promotional Schemes
- GOI equity in NMDFC has been increased from ₹ 375 Crore to ₹ 875 Crore.
- Corpus of Maulana Azad Educational Foundation has been increased from ₹ 200 crore to ₹ 750 Crore.
- 4.5% Reservation for OBC Minorities in Central Government Jobs and admissions has been notified.

Highlights of 2012-13 Plan

- Expansion of Prime Minister's New 15 Point Programme.
- Restructuring of MsDP for sharper focus on Minority Concentration Districts, towns and villages for area development.
- Scholarships for more than 0.85 crore minority students and operationalization of Online Scholarship Management System (OSMS) for Post-matric Scholarships.

Ministry of Minority Affairs
Government of India

*Hindustan
Times, June 7,
p.9*

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