
23 Arrested for Trafficking: NHRC

Recommends anti-human trafficking nodal officer for every state

Our Political Bureau

New Delhi: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on Friday said that its intervention led to the arrest of 23 accused persons in Rajasthan for allegedly selling girls, mostly minors on stamp papers for physical abuse and sexual assault in various parts of the country and abroad.

The NHRC observed that given the registration of cases involving the selling of girls in some communities in the recent past, it appears that the practice is still con-



GETTY IMAGES

tinuing unabated.

It has said that this practice requires to be curbed forthwith in totality and stringent steps be taken by all the stakeholders.

The commission's observations have come in the wake of its findings in a case registered suo motu by it on October 27, 2022, based on a media report alleging that girls were being sold on stamp paper in half a dozen districts of Rajasthan and sent to UP, Mp, Mumbai, Delhi and foreign countries and subjected to physical abuse, torture and sexual assault in slavery.

NHRC Recommends States Appoint Anti-Human Trafficking Nodal Officers

<https://www.oneindia.com/india/nhrc-urges-anti-human-trafficking-officers-in-states-011-3838847.html>

In a significant move to combat human trafficking, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has issued a directive for the appointment of anti-human trafficking nodal officers across all states. These officers, mandated to be of significant rank within the state government or police department, are tasked with coordinating efforts to eliminate the trafficking menace. This recommendation follows alarming reports of girls being trafficked for sexual exploitation across various Indian states and even internationally. The NHRC's decision came after a suo motu case was registered in October 2022, spotlighting the distressing sale of girls on stamp paper in Rajasthan, followed by their trafficking to Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Mumbai, Delhi, and abroad. Victims were subjected to severe physical abuse, torture, and sexual assault.

Additionally, the plight of women dancers from Mumbai bars, trafficked from Rajasthan and coerced into prostitution, was highlighted in a report by the Commission's Special Rapporteur. To address these grave concerns, the NHRC has directed Rajasthan's chief secretary and Director General of Police (DGP) to deploy an investigative team to Mumbai. This team is to assess the situation of girls in dance bars and is led by an officer not below the rank of Inspector General of Police. Furthermore, the DGP of Maharashtra has been requested to assist in this investigation, aiming to prevent such incidents and facilitate the victims' repatriation and rehabilitation.

The NHRC's observations reveal that the selling of girls, particularly within certain communities in Rajasthan like the Kanjar community, persists as a deeply entrenched issue. Despite previous interventions and legal actions against perpetrators, this practice continues unabated. In response to these findings, the NHRC has outlined a comprehensive strategy involving the establishment of District Anti-Human Trafficking Units (DAHTUs). These units are to be spearheaded by gazetted officers (not below the rank of Deputy SP) and will include representatives from various departments and local NGOs.

Their primary role will be to monitor incidents of trafficking closely and oversee the rehabilitation of victims. The Commission has issued notices to chief secretaries across all states and Union Territories, demanding reports on compliance with these recommendations within eight weeks. The emphasis is on preventing such practices from prevailing and eradicating child prostitution through effective rehabilitation measures. Moreover, state and UT governments are urged to raise awareness about constitutional prohibitions against child prostitution and educate communities about the illegality of selling minor girls for marriage. Despite stringent laws and judicial rulings aimed at curbing human trafficking, the NHRC notes that much remains to be done to achieve desired outcomes. This initiative by the NHRC underscores a critical step

towards dismantling networks of human trafficking in India. By appointing dedicated nodal officers and establishing DAHTUs, there is a renewed hope for making significant strides in protecting vulnerable populations from exploitation.

India: Daud Seikh's death in police custody highlights police torture

<https://www.omct.org/en/resources/statements/india-daud-seikhs-death-in-police-custody-highlights-police-torture>

The World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) and its SOS-Torture Network member, Banglar Manabadhikar Suraksha Mancha (MASUM), are gravely concerned about the death in police custody of Daud Seikh in India in April 2024 and call for immediate investigations.

On 7 April 2024, the Samshergunj Police apprehended 27-year-old Daud Seikh, a day labourer, father of two small children and member of the Muslim community from West Bengal. While the circumstances of his arrest are unclear, it was reported that the police attempted to recruit Daud as an informant, which he refused. While detained, he was allegedly subjected to torture and verbal abuse.

Daud's family was not informed about his arrest and detention and only learnt about it on 13 April 2024 when a civic volunteer of the police came to the family and informed them that Daud had committed suicide in the Jangipur Sub Decisional Correctional Home. They were further informed that his body was in the mortuary of the Jangipur Sub Divisional Hospital. At the hospital, the family inquired about Daud's death and was informed by the attending doctor that the marks on his neck rather point to an unnatural death than suicide. Moreover, once the family was able to see the corpse, they found many black bruise marks all over Daud's body.

Sadly, deaths in custody are not rare events. Despite official claims of torture being "alien" to India's culture, police in India routinely use torture and disregard arrest protocols without consequences. There are, unfortunately, no comprehensive and up-to-date statistics as to the number of custodial deaths in India. Having said this, it was reported that data from the Ministry of Home Affairs and the National Human Rights Commission indicate an increase of 300% in deaths in police custody between 2022 and 2023. It was further reported that over five years (2018-2022), the National Human Rights Commission recommended compensation in 201 cases and that disciplinary action was initiated in one case. There are no indications that any criminal actions were taken which speaks volumes of the authorities' indifference.

It is little surprise then that during India's last Universal Periodic Review (UPR) at the United Nations Human Rights Council in 2023, 31 countries called on India to ratify the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

We ask the Indian authorities to immediately:

Conduct a prompt, impartial, and thorough investigation into the death of Daud Seikh, as well as the ongoing pattern of torture and custodial death in custody

Ratify the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and its Optional Protocol

Arrange an official country visit by the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

Implement the Minnesota Protocol on the Investigation of Potentially Unlawful Death and the Manual on Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Istanbul Protocol).

'Subjected To Physical Abuse, Torture': NHRC Raises Concern Over Recent Reports Of Minor Girls Being Sold In Rajasthan To Different States

<https://www.freepressjournal.in/india/subjected-to-physical-abuse-torture-nhrc-raises-concern-over-recent-reports-of-minor-girls-being-sold-in-rajasthan-to-different-states>

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India has observed that given the registration of cases involving the selling of girls in some communities in the recent past, it appears that the practice of selling the girls, many of whom are minors, is still continuing unabated and prevailing undeterred.

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India has observed that given the registration of cases involving the selling of girls in some communities in the recent past, it appears that the practice of selling the girls, many of whom are minors, is still continuing unabated and prevailing undeterred. It has said that this practice requires to be curbed forthwith in totality and stringent steps be taken by all the stakeholders.

The Commission's observations have come in the wake of its findings in a case registered suo motu by it on 27th October, 2022 based on a media report alleging that girls were being sold on stamp paper in half a dozen districts of Rajasthan and sent to Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Mumbai, Delhi and foreign countries and subjected to physical abuse, torture and sexual assault in slavery.

The Commission had sought reports from the Chief Secretary and DGP, Rajasthan besides its Special Rapporteur in the matter. The State Government confirmed the incident and said that a chargesheet was filed against the 23 accused and the 7 girls, who are the victims of trafficking, have been rehabilitated in Nari Niketan Girl's Reform Home, Ajmer and Nati Niketan, Ajmer, respectively.

From the report of the Special Rapporteur, the Commission noted that the selling of women on stamp papers is a prevailing practice in the male-dominated Kanjar Community and the immoral practice of trafficking the girls is rampant in certain communities residing in various parts of Rajasthan. The young daughters and sisters have been forced into the sex trade.

Therefore, to stop this menace, the Commission has recommended that every state must have a State Anti-Human Trafficking Nodal Officer, who shall coordinate with the government by taking effective steps and measures through the District Anti-Human Trafficking Units (DAHTU) and State Government concerned. He should not be below the rank of the Secretary to the State Government or Inspector General of Police.

The Commission has also recommended that the DAHTUs, which were to be set up under a comprehensive scheme, as notified by the Union Home Ministry vide circulars dated 27th December, 2019 and 1st December, 2020, should be headed by a Gazetted officer not below the rank of Deputy SP. He should be effectively monitoring such

incidents with the help of representatives from the Departments of Women and Child Welfare, Health & Family Welfare, Labour & Employment, Reputed local NGOs & experts in the field of Human Trafficking and Legal Counsellors in the District.

Recommending various functions of the DAHTUs including checking human trafficking and the rehabilitation of victims, the Commission has issued notices to the Chief Secretaries of all the States and Union Territories to submit reports on compliance within eight weeks.

It is thus enjoined upon the State/ UT Governments to initiate all effective measures to prevent such practices prevailing in some communities and to eradicate child prostitution but also for effective and adequate rehabilitation and reintegration of the sexually ravaged minor girls by integrating them with the society by providing adequate relief and rehabilitation available under various schemes of the States.

The State/ UT Governments, through local staff government, as recommended by the Commission, are duty-bound to spread awareness about the constitutional prohibition preventing child prostitution and educate people about the selling of minor girls on stamp papers and their illegal marriage to eradicate such practices.

The Commission has also noted the plight of Mumbai bar dance girls trafficked from Rajasthan and forced into prostitution as pointed out in the report of its Special Rapporteur. Accordingly, it has directed the Chief Secretary and Director General of Police of Rajasthan to send a team, headed by an officer not below the rank of Inspector General of Police, for investigation to Mumbai to find out the plight of girls in dance bars.

The Commission has asked the DGP, Maharashtra to extend help to Rajasthan Police in this regard with a view to taking effective steps to prevent such incidents and ensure their repatriation to their original places and the State and District level Committees ensure their rehabilitation in accordance with the directions issued by it.

The Commission has also observed that despite stringent provisions in the law and the judgments of the Supreme Court and the Madhya Pradesh High Court in different cases having reference to human trafficking, it cannot be said that the desired result has been achieved. In this context, the Commission has noted in its proceedings the specific references from the Supreme Court orders in the cases of Budhadev Karmakar Vs. State of West Bengal (2011), Bachpan Bachao Andolan Vs. Union of India (2011)5SCC 538, and Vishal Jeet vs. Union of India, AIR 1990 SCC 1412, as well as from the order of the Madhya Pradesh High Court in Nihal Singh Vs. Ram Bai (AIR 1987 Madhya Pradesh 126) expressed hope and trust that the courts' directions would be implemented in the letter and spirit towards eradicating the menace of child prostitution and selling of minors for various evil purposes.

23 arrested for human trafficking: NHRC

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/23-arrested-for-human-trafficking-nhrc/articleshow/110603668.cms?from=mdr>

New Delhi: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on Friday said that its intervention led to the arrest of 23 accused persons in Rajasthan for allegedly selling girls, mostly minors on stamp papers for physical abuse and sexual assault in various parts of the country and abroad.

The NHRC observed that given the registration of cases involving the selling of girls in some communities in the recent past, it appears that the practice is still continuing unabated.

It has said that this practice requires to be curbed forthwith in totality and stringent steps be taken by all the stakeholders.

The commission's observations have come in the wake of its findings in a case registered suo motu by it on October 27, 2022, based on a media report alleging that girls were being sold on stamp paper in half a dozen districts of Rajasthan and sent to UP, Mp, Mumbai, Delhi and foreign countries and subjected to physical abuse, torture and sexual assault in slavery.

Open Statement by Former Civil Servants on Post-Election Scenario

https://peoplesdemocracy.in/2024/0602_pd/open-statement-former-civil-servants-post-election-scenario

Below we publish an open statement issued by the Constitutional Conduct Group comprising former civil servants, on May 25, 2024. The statement was signed by 98 signatories. Some of the signatories include Shivshankar Menon, former foreign secretary and former national security adviser; K Sujatha Rao, former health secretary, GoI; Maxwell Pereira, former joint commissioner of police, Delhi; Satya Narayan Mohanty, former secretary general, National Human Rights Commission; Sajjad Hassan, former commissioner (planning), Govt of Manipur; Ravi Vira Gupta, former deputy governor, Reserve Bank of India; Vibha Puri Das, former secretary, ministry of tribal affairs, GoI; FTR Colaso, former director general of police, Govt of Karnataka & former director general of police, Govt of Jammu & Kashmir; Rana Banerji, former special secretary, cabinet secretariat, GoI; HS Gujral, former principal chief conservator of forests, Govt of Punjab and Aftab Seth, former ambassador to Japan.

WE are a group of former civil servants who have served the central and state governments in various capacities. We have no affiliation with any political party but are strongly committed to the ideals enshrined in the Constitution of India.

June 4, 2024 will be the final chapter of the eighteenth general elections to the parliament of the world's most populous country; the largest democratic contest that the world has ever witnessed. During this massive exercise, more than anyone else, it is India's working poor, its farmers, its women and its youth who have affirmed their abiding faith in India's democracy by queuing up in large numbers even in the searing heat of summer.

Elections are a particularly testing time for institutions that are constitutionally vested with the responsibility of ensuring the integrity and fairness of elections. These include the higher judiciary, the Election Commission, chief electoral officers in every state and returning officers in every district.

To retain the faith of the ordinary citizen in these constitutional institutions vested with the onerous responsibility of the free and fair conduct of elections, it is necessary that these institutions not only be fair but also appear to be fair. They must reassure the citizens of the fairness and integrity of the process through their consistently transparent and accountable functioning, and by continuously sharing information with the electorate.

During the 2024 general elections, concerns have been raised at many points about the fairness of the elections. These relate to fears that the EVM and VVPAT machines can be tampered with, instances of single persons unlawfully voting on behalf of many voters (some videos of this are in circulation), of many people, especially of vulnerable groups, finding their names missing from the voters' lists, of the inexplicable refusal of

the Election Commission of India to disclose the exact numbers of votes cast in each constituency, and of little visible action against hate speech targeting both minorities and the opposition parties by senior leaders of the ruling party. It would have been fitting for the Election Commission to publicly explain actions taken, and not taken by the commission to address these problems and allay the fears of the electorate. They should still do this without further delay and in a transparent manner.

It pains us to say that no Election Commission in the past has been as reluctant as the present one to discharge its duties, despite violations being repeatedly brought to its attention by responsible organisations and respected members of society. We hope they will not continue to show this disregard in the time that is remaining.

In the run-up to the counting, immense care needs to be taken for the safe custody of the EVM machines in ways that involve all the competing candidates and parties. Returning officers need to commit themselves to announcing the results of the counting of votes in every case without any delay.

In the event of a hung parliament, onerous responsibilities will be placed upon the shoulders of the president of India. We are sure that she will follow the established democratic precedent of first inviting the pre-poll alliance that garnered the largest numbers of seats. Also, that she would endeavour to preempt the possibilities of horse-trading.

On behalf of the citizens of India, we seek in humility to remind each of the authorities and institutions charged with the integrity of the process of democratic government formation of their paramount duty to abide and uphold the Constitution of India. We would like to remind them of the oath they have taken in this regard at the time of their assumption of office.

We bring forth the luminous pledge that India's first citizen, the president of India, takes to " preserve, protect and defend the constitution and the law " and to devote herself " to the service and the well-being of the people of India ". We are sure that this will be her guiding light.

NHRC : सभी राज्यों में हों मानव तस्करी विरोधी नोडल अधिकारी; मानवाधिकार आयोग ने इस वजह से की सिफारिश

<https://www.amarujala.com/india-news/nhrc-recommend-anti-human-trafficking-nodal-officers-all-states-after-rajasthan-stamp-paper-selling-girls-case-2024-06-01?src=top-subnav-amp>

राष्ट्रीय मानवाधिकार आयोग ने सभी राज्यों में मानव तस्करी विरोधी नोडल अधिकारी रखने की सिफारिश अक्टूबर 2022 में प्रकाशित एक मीडिया रिपोर्ट का संज्ञान लेने के बाद की, जिसमें लड़कियों को राजस्थान के आधा दर्जन जिलों में स्टॉप पेपर पर बेचने का आरोप था।

राष्ट्रीय मानवाधिकार आयोग (एनएचआरसी) ने प्रत्येक राज्य में एक 'मानव तस्करी विरोधी नोडल अधिकारी' रखने की सिफारिश की है। एनएचआरसी ने यह भी कहा कि यह अधिकारी राज्य सरकार के सचिव या पुलिस महानिरीक्षक के पद से नीचे का नहीं होना चाहिए।

आयोग ने ये सिफारिश अक्टूबर 2022 में प्रकाशित एक मीडिया रिपोर्ट का संज्ञान लेने के बाद की, जिसमें लड़कियों को राजस्थान के आधा दर्जन जिलों में स्टॉप पेपर पर बेचने का आरोप था। जिन्हें उत्तर प्रदेश, मध्य प्रदेश, मुंबई, दिल्ली और विदेशों में भेजा जा रहा था। जहां उन्हें शारीरिक शोषण, यातना और यौन उत्पीड़न का शिकार होना पड़ता है।

राजस्थान से मुंबई जांच टीम भेजने का निर्देश

अधिकार पैनल ने कहा कि आयोग ने राजस्थान से तस्करी करके लाई गई और वेश्यावृत्ति में धकेली गई मुंबई बार की महिला नर्तकियों की दुर्दशा पर भी ध्यान दिया है। राजस्थान के मुख्य सचिव और पुलिस महानिदेशक को नृत्य में लड़कियों की दुर्दशा का पता लगाने के लिए मुंबई में जांच के लिए एक टीम भेजने का निर्देश दिया है, जिसका नेतृत्व पुलिस महानिरीक्षक स्तर से नीचे का न हो। वहीं, आयोग ने इस संबंध में डीजीपी, महाराष्ट्र से राजस्थान पुलिस को मदद देने के लिए कहा है, ताकि ऐसी घटनाओं को रोकने के लिए प्रभावी कदम उठाए जा सकें। लड़कियों के मूल स्थानों पर उनकी वापसी सुनिश्चित की जा सके और राज्य और जिला स्तरीय समितियां जारी निर्देशों के अनुसार उनका पुनर्वास सुनिश्चित करें।

आयोग ने विशेष प्रतिवेदक से मांगी थी रिपोर्ट

एनएचआरसी ने पाया कि हाल के दिनों में कुछ समुदायों में लड़कियों को बेचने की प्रथा अभी भी निरंतर जारी है। इससे जुड़े मामलों के पंजीकरण से लगता है कि यह प्रथा बिना किसी डर के प्रचलित है। कहा कि इस पर अंकुश लगाने के लिए सभी हितधारकों को कड़े कदम उठाने चाहिए। इस संबंध में आयोग ने पिछले दिनों अपने विशेष प्रतिवेदक के अलावा राजस्थान के मुख्य सचिव और पुलिस महानिदेशक से रिपोर्ट मांगी थी। राज्य सरकार ने घटना की पुष्टि की। कहा कि 23 आरोपियों के खिलाफ आरोप पत्र दायर किया गया है। तस्करी की शिकार सात लड़कियों को क्रमशः नारी निकेतन बालिका सुधार गृह, अजमेर और नाटी निकेतन, अजमेर में पुनर्वासित किया गया है।

महिलाओं को बेचना कंजर समुदाय में प्रचलित प्रथा

विशेष प्रतिवेदक की रिपोर्ट से, आयोग ने कहा कि स्टॉप पेपर पर महिलाओं को बेचना राजस्थान के पुरुष-प्रधान कंजर समुदाय में एक 'प्रचलित प्रथा' है। लड़कियों की तस्करी की अनैतिक प्रथा विभिन्न हिस्सों में रहने वाले कुछ समुदायों में व्याप्त है। इसलिए, इस खतरे को रोकने के लिए, आयोग ने सिफारिश की है कि सभी राज्यों में एक मानव तस्करी विरोधी नोडल अधिकारी होना चाहिए, जो जिला मानव तस्करी विरोधी इकाइयों (डीएचटीयू) और संबंधित राज्य सरकार के माध्यम से प्रभावी कदम और उपाय करके सरकार के साथ समन्वय करेगा।