

Minutes of the 'Open House Discussion' on 'Rising Incidents of Sexual Violence against Children' held on 15 May 2018 at NHRC, Manav Adhikar Bhawan, Delhi

An 'Open House Discussion' on 'Rising Incidents of Sexual Violence against Children' was held by the National Human Rights Commission on 15 May 2018 which was **chaired by Justice Shri H.L. Dattu, Chairperson, NHRC** and attended by **Justice Shri P.C. Ghosh, Justice Shri D. Murugesan, Smt. Jyotika Kalra, Members of NHRC, Shri Ambuj Sharma, Secretary General** and other senior officials of NHRC, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development, NCPDR, NCM, DCW, DCPCR, Police Officers, UN Bodies, academia and civil society organizations/NGOs, etc., The complete list of participants is **annexed**.

2. After a warm welcome address by **Dr. Ranjit Singh, Joint Secretary (P&A), NHRC**, the **Hon'ble Chairperson (Justice Shri H.L. Dattu)** apprised the participants that the objective of the open-house discussion is to provide a platform for a free and fair expression of views on significant human rights issues, from a diverse cross section of the stakeholders, to dwell deep into the problem, to analyse the underlying reasons/ causes, and to find possible solutions so as to make meaningful recommendations to the concerned stakeholders, including the Government. **Justice Shri H.L. Dattu** expressed his concern on the increasing cases of sexual violence against children that has shaken the conscience of the society. He further stated that in order to end sexual violence against children, we need to change the mindset of the people, and all efforts need to be made by all the stakeholders so that India remains a safe place for people to live.

3. **Shri Ambuj Sharma, Secretary General, NHRC** opened the discussion, mentioning the need for discussing the following major points:

- a) Reasons for the rising incidents of sexual violence against children.
- b) Preventive measures required to be taken by all the stakeholders in order to eliminate sexual violence against children and to change the mindset/ attitude of the people.

- c) Discussion on the pros and cons of capital punishment as a deterrent to sexual violence against children.
- d) Declining conviction rate of the perpetrators of the rape crimes in India.

4. **Smt. Enakshi Ganguly, Co-founder HAQ: Centre for Child Rights**, initiated the discussion by mentioning that the society wakes up every time there is a gruesome case reported, and demands more and more stringent punishment. There is a 'mass awakening' and pouring out of public outrage. However, she expressed her concern that in this shrill display of outrage, somewhere the everyday abuse that children experience in their homes gets 'normalised', goes unnoticed and unreported which we must be cognizant of. She further highlighted that after enactment of 'Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012', the reporting of cases pertaining to sexual violence against children significantly increased as all concerned feel empowered to come out and speak about it. She added that in our public outrage for justice against growing crimes, we must not place police and government on the back foot where, just to appear efficient, they stop registering the cases and the children once again have nowhere to go. She emphasized that we need to work towards providing an enabling environment to encourage children to overcome their fear and report cases of sexual abuse and to create a support system for the children. She also mentioned that 'children' are growing adolescents who are growing up with an awareness of their own sexuality. There are a large number of cases in the adolescent age group. Often, there are cases of exploratory or experimental sexual behaviour among adolescents and children. Since the enactment of POCSO, all sexual activity below the age of 18 is now treated as rape or sexual assault. And so, when disapproving parents of the girl complain, the boys are arrested (some of whom may be over 18 years, but still young). Prior to the law, the age of consent was 16 years and all such activities would not be recorded as rape. This too adds to the rising numbers. She further stated that another reason for rise in incidents of sexual violence is that children now-a-days are more exposed to the unprocessed information.

5. Moving to the point on capital punishment as deterrent, Smt. Enakshi Ganguly stressed that the decision is worrying **as capital punishment would reduce disclosure of cases**. She informed that HAQ does not believe that capital punishment or for that matter having the proposed sex offender's registry will be an appropriate and effective deterrent. If anything, it will reduce disclosures, just when children and families have started to break the silence. She apprised that the studies have shown that most cases of sexual abuse against children involve a close family member or relative or friend or a known person. The child would not want to disclose as it might lead to death of the known person if convicted. She added that HAQ believes that imposition of 'death penalty' is not the correct antidote for child sexual abuse and neither does it ameliorate the situation of the victim / survivor of rape. In a situation where child sexual abuse is under reported and most perpetrators are 'known' to children, it will only prove more disastrous. Accordingly, HAQ believes that the retention of death penalty by India is against human rights and is deeply agonized by its recent introduction for rape of children below 12 years. Such amendments are disproportionate, reactionary, and contrary to international and domestic standards on human rights. As individuals and organisations who have been working towards protection of children's rights, they believe that 'Child Rights' falls within the framework of 'Human Rights', and the same cannot be infringed upon in the name of 'child protection'. She concluded by stressing that the declining trend in the conviction rate is actually related to the very issues highlighted above. And **unless those are addressed, convictions will decline**. She informed that studies have revealed that a high percentage of victimised children in all States turned hostile when the accused was the child's father or step-father, brother, or related to the child. Consequently, the conviction in these types of cases was also exceedingly low.

6. **Smt. Shivani Wazir Pasrich, Chairperson of Commonwealth society of India and Founder of Commonwealth Cultural Forum**, while agreeing with Smt. Ganguly, said that **certainty of conviction is needed**. She shared her experience about exploitation of children in the sports scenario and even though the event was brought to the notice of police, FIR was not registered. She opined that of such reported offences

to unstill confidence amazing citizens. The police should be responsible and must take immediate cognizance of such reported offences to instill confidence among citizens.

7. **Prof. Sanjoy Hazarika, International Director, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative**, brought to the notice of the Commission that now-a-days there is more visibility of the cases of sexual exploitation because of more media coverage. However, he pointed out that better reporting is required in also bringing together all stakeholders. He further added that the **NHRC should take a major leadership role** in organizing regional conferences by bringing the State Human Rights Commissions on a single platform to address various human rights violations in different parts of the country. Prof. Hazarika emphasized that the discussion on sociological issues must involve sociologists who can render meaningful insight into the underlying sociological causes etc. Prof. Hazarika also raised his concern over **lack of counselors, specialized child psychologists**, etc., who can help children to deal with such trauma. He opined that the State Governments should be pressed and encouraged to create a large cadre of child counselors. He suggested that counselors should be there at each school and they also should provide legal aid with the help from National Legal Service Authority (NALSA). He also suggested that 'young men clusters' should be formed which will be useful for the purpose of bringing change in the mindset of the people. He concluded by agreeing with the chairperson of NHRC that behavioral change is the major challenge and for that we all need to work towards creating positive participation and leadership across caste, community and region.

8. **Shri Ambuj Sharma**, while agreeing with Prof. Hazarika's suggestion regarding formation of 'young men clusters', stated that the unemployed young men and boys, who otherwise loiter and indulge in mischief, must be engaged in some constructive programmes. He cited the case of Tamil Nadu, where there is a 'boys club' project of state police which enroll young men (mostly in urban slums) and engage them in professional counseling, make them aware about the legal provisions, encourage sports, music talent, utilize them for local information on antisocial elements for

preventive action, etc. He suggested that a template of the said programme may be shared with other States to follow.

9. **Smt. Esha Pandey, Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP)/ Special Police Unit for Women and Children (SPUWAC), Delhi Police**, elucidated that Delhi Police has taken several measures for safety programmes for women and children. The reasons for increasing number of cases of child sexual abuse, according to Smt. Pandey, are migration/ anonymity of immigrants and greater accessibility to pornography. She added that the **major initiative of Delhi Police is the programme called 'Nirbheek'**, which aims at gender sensitization through different methodologies including documentary film 'Komal' and *Nukkad Nataks* to reach a wider audience. The Delhi police also organizes school and hospital visits for self defense training and to sensitize children for **'good' and 'bad' touch**. She apprised the participants about the 'Yuva' Programme which is similar to Tamil Nadu's 'Boys Club' and gives vocational training to young boys. Upon being enquired by the Chairperson of NHRC for rising incidents of sexual violence against children, Smt. Pandey stated several reasons viz. no shame attached to the boys, more objectification of women, the general moral values have gone down and there is much more exposure to unprocessed information through internet. The **Secretary General, NHRC requested Smt. Pandey to share the good practices**, findings of their report and films with the NHRC and also on the social media platforms like the YouTube, for the benefit of the larger audience.

10. **Dr. Ranjana Kumari, Director, Centre for Social Research**, raised a very important concern of profiling the criminal as an immigrant or a person coming from poor, urban slum or rural background etc. She explained that crimes are being committed both in public domain and in the private sphere. Therefore, **labeling the criminals is dangerous**. She stated that correct application of the law is to be ensured and capital punishment is not a deterrent or magic bullet. She stressed that attention is always given to action post crime but it is **important to focus on prevention of crime**, and what needs to be done to prevent the crime. She added that though the people now are more educated and modern but little has changed in the mindset inside the homes. Lot of abuse against children happens at home, much of it undetected, unreported. Dr.

Kumari, expressed concern as to how we are letting the institutions fail. The offences against children committed within the schools are getting coverage through media, but the institutions that were created to protect the children did not take action before or after the event. Therefore, she emphasized, the **accountability of the educational institutions needs to be fixed**. Schools should not be spared at any cost and no child abuse in educational institutions should be tolerated. Further, she realized that the resources are limited and thus, the existing mechanism needs to be improved. The police have to be made efficient in terms of training and investigation. For this, she suggested that we as community should take steps like conducting these open house discussions for every important issue where there is violation of human rights and institutions like NHRC, NCPDR should send their teams for investigation. Students should be taught **gender sensitization** through school curriculum, the teachers need to be trained and we should strive to become a part of the solution rather than the problem.

11. **Shri Ambuj Sharma** suggested that a **small strategy group** could be set up by the Government for suggesting ways and means to ensure security and safety of children within the school premises (including transport by school buses etc.) to ensure prevention of such incidents.

12. **Smt. Maja Daruwala, Special Monitor, NHRC** highlighted the fact that different bodies like the NHRC have their own individual mandates but the problem is that there is no collaboration/ coordination between them. She emphasized the need for better public education, as a proactive measure and instant and sure punishment in such cases.

13. **Smt. Neelam Narang, Legal Advisor on POCSO and JJ Act, Delhi Commission for Women** raised the concern that, in many cases, the witnesses are turning hostile at the point of identification which becomes a major barrier in final conviction, especially under the POCSO cases. In order to tackle this issue, there has to be a person appointed who needs to support/guide the child throughout the entire process of investigation and court.

14. **Smt S. Jalaja, Special Rapporteur, NHRC** suggested setting up of **fast track courts** to deal with the cases involving sexual violence against children, and also suggested that **a code of conduct of political parties** may be formulated to make them sensitive towards these issues.

15. **Mr. A. Javier, UNICEF**, during the discussion, shared light on the sad and tragic events which have taken place in the past few months referring to the cases of Kathua, Unnao and Surat. Mr. Javier shared his major concerns and talked about five points which need to be discussed when talking about sexual violence against children or providing a safe space for the children in India. The points discussed were as follows: a) **Rehabilitation of the victims** is extremely important and it is crucial that they are provided with support persons to help in their psycho-social well being. b) One of the major problems which the social programs have faced till now with regard to the empowerment of adolescent girls is complete ignorance of the boys. It is crucial **to focus on the boys as well** and include them in social programs. c) **Prevention has to start from the family level. Schools, parents and teachers need to be involved** as there is evidence that abuse happens mostly at school and also at home. d) It is often understood that families do not discuss about sexuality or give any form of sex education as it is forbidden in most of the households in India. There is a **need to promote sex education** within families as well as at school level and to create families that are supportive. e) **Evidence based data is extremely crucial** and the data provided by NCRB doesn't provide with a holistic information. In conclusion, Mr. Javier, on behalf of UNICEF, stated that Capital Punishment is not a deterrent and it is crucial for us as the stakeholders to focus on the children and not the perpetrators.

16. **Shri. Kulbir Krishan; Advisor (POCSO) NCPDR** mentioned that the incidents of child sexual abuse have been occurring but we do not have any empirical facts and data as the actual cases are more but the reporting is very less. NCPDR has established a POCSO box as an enabling step to encourage better reporting of the cases. It is also evident that in almost 90% of the cases, the abuse is perpetrated by someone familiar to the child. Therefore, it becomes extremely pertinent to include boys

also in the debate of gender sensitization, especially when we talk about child sexual abuse. The police force also suffers from the lack of resources; it is recommended that 25% of the fund from Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) should be allocated to the police. A special unit should be formed based on the model of 'Bharosa', in Telangana. Shri Krishan also focused that the Interim Compensation to the victims must be given on time and the medical reports should not be delayed.

17. **Shri Ajoy Kumar, Additional Secretary, National Commission for Minorities**, put forward an idea that a scheme may be formulated to prevent child sexual abuse especially for the awareness and sensitization of the people in rural India across India.

18. **Smt. Soha Moitra, Regional Director (North Region), CRY**, stressed that while we as a country must work towards strengthening the criminal justice system and effective implementation of protective legislations, the focus of our efforts should also be towards preventing such crimes from occurring in the first place. The closer the proximity of the offender to the child, the lesser is the chances of the family reporting and offender's conviction. Thus, the most effective way to address the issue is by **empowering children, educating parents and creating a vigilant community**. She recommended improvements in areas of prevention, response and rehabilitation. The main points suggested by her are as follows:-

- (i) Development of age appropriate programmes to empower children regarding personal safety and sex education and programmes aimed at parental capacity building to encourage free and frank discussion on personal safety, sex and sexuality at the family and school level.
- (ii) Creation of **comprehensive child protection policy** at school level with accessible and confidential reporting mechanisms
- (iii) **Enhancing community vigilance** by forming Village Child Protection Committees mandated under ICPS to create awareness and report cases of child sexual abuse, child marriage, child labour and child trafficking to the concerned authorities for timely remedy.

- (iv) **Create greater vigilance mechanism** for timely reporting of missing children to break the chain of missing child and probability of sexual exploitation
- (v) **Adequate investment in Training / refresher training** of all stakeholders who come across children viz Child Welfare Committee members, juvenile justice board members, police, medical professionals, para-legals, doctors, mental health professional, lawyers and judges on their role in investigation and prosecution.
- (vi) **Creation of a separate cadre of support persons** for child survivors and her family to support them through the prosecution
- (vii) **Ensuring speedy release of interim and final compensation.**

19. In addition to the points that were raised, **Smt. Julie Thekkudan, Lead Specialist Gender Justice, OXFAM India** suggested that there is a need to consider bringing about changes to the existing social norms around children, particularly girls and by extension, women. The existing social norms describe what children are expected to do. There are ongoing efforts to change these social norms under '**Beti Bachao Beti Padhao**' but that needs to go beyond the current focus states/districts. She informed that Oxfam India is working on this strand of work through its campaign '*Bano Nayi Soch: Buno Hinsa Mukh Risthey*' in 5 states of Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha and Uttar Pradesh.

20. **Dr. Vagheshwari Deswal; Assistant Professor, Faculty of Law, Delhi University** shared her opinion with regard to the Criminal Law Ordinance and opined on the futility of the capital punishment. Death penalty will not deter the crimes, instead it is a strategy to satisfy public opinion. The ordinance should not get transformed into the Act. NHRC is an appropriate place to highlight these issues. Dr. Deswal recommended that advance **Forensic Kits** must be placed at the Police Stations which could be mandated to fasten the investigation.

21. **Smt. Astha Saxena Khatwani, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD)** opined that Death Penalty is important and will act as a

deterrent in order to reduce extreme crimes. It should be seen as a prevention step, where communities are involved to take ownership of the crimes. MoWCD has initiated various outreach programs such as Child line; which is functional and registers substantial number of complaints. They are committed to deliver help within 60 minutes. In another outreach initiative, MoWCD has printed about the **Child Line** information on the backside of the NCERT books; which is estimated to reach around 24 crore children. Professional capacity builders and Counselors are not there, we **need to build a cadre of professional support persons.**

22. **Dr. Helen R. Sekar, Senior Fellow (Faculty) and Coordinator, National Resource Centre on Child Labour, V.V.Giri National Labour Institute,** acknowledged that, in addition to the children in schools and in homes, focus is also needed on protection of children who are out of school and are grazing cattle, collecting forest produce, working in agriculture farms and the children who are left alone when their parents go for work, etc. Dr. Sekar further suggested that the existing structures and mechanisms which are in place at the national level, state level, district level and at the sub- district levels including the Child Protection Committees, School Management Committees, Anganwadis, Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTU), etc. should be effectively utilized for protecting children from abuse. Different sections of the population should be made aware of the existing legislative provisions, particularly the penal provisions in various laws, relating to children through mass awareness generation programme across the country. The Government officials as well as the Civil Society Organization should be sensitive to the issue of child protection so that they can act with a lot of urgency in prevention of offences against children and take immediate necessary action in case of violation of any of the legal provisions. The V.V.Giri National Labour Institute, which is an autonomous body of the Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India, can play a vital role in Training of Trainers and Capacity Building of individuals and Institutions so that there is adequate manpower to cater to the needs of Orientation, Awareness Generation, Sensitization of different stakeholders and social partners across the country. She further mentioned that there is a need for documenting area-specific strategies adopted on child protection, methodologies in overcoming

challenges at different stages from the time of receiving a complaint, Identification of the victims, challenges in filing cases under various Acts, investigating offences, launching prosecutions and resultant convictions. The outcome of such Systematic Documentation should be widely disseminated for widespread replicability.

23. **Smt. Anju Pandey, Program Officer, UN Women** addressed about the **sexual violence** which takes place **at the workplace** which also needs to be included in the debate of sexual violence as 92 % of workers are in the unorganized sector. It is pertinent to understand the idea of space and how there is a continuum between public space and private space. Smt. Pandey further shed light on the representation of violence in our socio-cultural setting by pointing towards the intergenerational transference of violence and how violence is getting normalized. Smt. Pandey recommended that there should be a **harmonization of legal provisions across all laws** because there exist many conflicting provisions and it is crucial to fill that gap. It is also crucial to include the private sector and make those voices visible in the public spectrum. Children should also be invited in these forums to talk about violence as it is evident that minor incidents, which do not get reported, lead to larger ones. Smt. Pandey also proposed that a **National Action Plan in collaboration with UN Women and NHRC must be made** on ending the violence against children. UN Women will collaborate in working towards this National Action Plan.

24. **Prof. Renu Addlakha, Professor, Centre for Women's Development Studies** shared her findings from the ongoing research project undertaken by her in collaboration with the NHRC titled *'Interrogating Violence Against Women from the Other Side: An Exploratory Study into the World of Perpetrators'*. She explained that major reason remains the faulty socialization and upbringing process of the children, especially the boys. While interviewing a juvenile to understand their view for indulging in a crime, she learnt that there were few boys who admitted of committing the crime as they could not 'control' their lust. Dr. Addlakha pointed out that acceptance of such behavior from the boys is a matter of concern. Therefore, she stressed that it is critical to look into the content of 'what we need to tell our boys'. She further stated that while

understanding the underlying reasons, it is important to study it along with the prevalent social context. Referring to the problem in another social context, using data or alternatives from international studies doesn't help us to understand the problem in entirety. Therefore, we need to make a conscious effort for not 'othering' and locating it in the local context. She added that we also need to address extreme idea of retribution that exists in the public and has resulted into demand for capital punishment. She concluded by stating that our focus should also be on the immediate survivor and mechanism for their protection and develop a methodology to understand/study their reaction. She also mentioned that we need to address the existence of active sexuality among the young people, and the gap between what is being promoted through the media and what is being practiced at 'home' is widening. Therefore, it is essential to think about what we want to change and how to do it.

25. **Shri Sudhir Kumar, Special Rapporteur, NHRC** stated that the decision regarding capital punishment is unwarranted, unthoughtful and goes against the Verma Committee recommendations. Commenting on the declining conviction rate of the perpetrators of the rape crimes, Shri Kumar mentioned that in case of violence against children, one aspect where there has to be a slight shift is the burden of proof as far as the law is concerned. He suggested, regarding the timing of taking cognizance by the police, it should be made compulsory for the police to report to the Magistrate all cases when there is such a complaint.

26. **Smt. Bulbul Das** stated that most reporting happens from people belonging to the lower strata of the society and middle class and upper-middle class do not report cases out of fear. She agreed that the 'out of the school' children are particularly vulnerable when their parents are working as labourers. She also raised concern regarding the inadequate strength of judicial officers due to lack of resources, both human and economic. She mentioned about the data of the unreported cases.

27. **Smt. Jyoti Duhan Rathee, Member (POCSO), Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR)** stated the low level officers (of level of SI, IO

etc) are the first line of contact whenever a victim enters the police station. Victims hardly even get an opportunity to contact the higher police officials because of which the lower level staff must be sensitized and trained at regular intervals on POCSO and JJ Acts. Furthermore, every police station must have a counsel to help victims approaching the police stations for help. She added that lower level functionaries of Childline must also be trained in similar fashion and, additionally, their concerns must be addressed. She further added that in-service & pre-service programme of educating teachers must have a component on child rights especially on POCSO & JJ Act. Teachers must also be trained on how to tackle with children reporting the occurrence of such cases.

28. **Prof. Hazarika** further pointing out that we need to build a cadre of 'care-givers' by training and sensitizing them. Further, we should uphold the duty holders and their mandate and they should be made accountable. He emphasized that we need to improve upon what already exists first before going on to create new structures and mechanisms.

29. The following are the major points that came out of the discussion:

1. A **National Action Plan**, in a mission mode, needs to be drawn up to address this grave and serious issue in a time bound manner. Such an action plan should clearly lay down the rules and responsibilities of each stakeholder including Central and State Govts., law enforcing agencies, district administrations, panchayat raj bodies, schools, colleges, universities, media, parents etc., based on proper scientific planning and collaboration between all concerned agencies. **(Action: M/o WCD, NCPCR, NCW, NHRC).**
2. Need to have a systematic evaluation and monitoring of critical legislations impacting or concerning children including JJ Act, POCSO, IPC, Cr.PC, Indian evidence Act etc., so as to remove any contradictory / ambiguous provisions which might be hampering their proper implementation. Proper harmonization of

- legal provisions across different laws is urgently needed. **(Action: M/o WCD, NCPCR, NCW, NHRC, M/o Law).**
3. An analysis needs to be done regarding the issue of burden of proof in such cases as it is seen that nearly 60-70 per cent of the cases end up in acquittal mainly because of main witnesses turning hostile, particularly in cases involving close relatives / friends which may be due to societal / family pressure. **(Action: M/o Law, M/o WCD, NHRC, NCPCR,).**
 4. The legally required steps with regard to appointment of support persons, provision of child remand / detention homes etc. under POCSO may be followed up in a time bound manner and hundred percent progress achieved within one year, i.e. by end of 2019. **(Action: M/o WCD, NCPCR, MHA, State Governments).**
 5. Appointment of fast track courts and code of conduct for police personnel in the matter of proper scientific investigation and review of monitoring of cases involving sexual violence against children. **(Action: MHA, M/o Law, State Governments).**
 6. Government may set up a strategy group for school children to come up with a comprehensive set of guidelines, within a fixed time frame, which would lay down the details of security and safety parameters/protocol to be observed within school premises (both Govt. & private alike) to ensure prevention of such incidents within the school premises. This would include technology interventions (e.g. CCTVs, bio-metric identification, etc.), provision of socio-psycho counselors, proper complaint redressal mechanism, early detection and warning system, close liaison with the law enforcement agencies, sensitization of teachers and staff, inviting cooperation of parents/guardians etc. **(Action: M/o HRD, M/o WCD, MHA, NCPCR).**

7. Similar to Sl. (i) above, action to be taken to come up with a set of comprehensive guidelines for the transport sector for school children, women and children travelling by public mode of transport (metro, buses, taxis, autos etc). as this sector is frequently facing incidents of harassment, molestation, etc. **(Action: M/o HRD, MHA, M/o WCD, M/o Transport, NCPCR).**
8. A suitable scheme at national level for the rehabilitation of victims as different States have varying level of resource constraints etc. **(Action: M/o WCD, NCPCR, State Governments).**
9. The experiment of `Bharosa', a special one-stop centre at Hyderabad is deemed to be a success story. Other one or two similar experiments (e.g. Women Power Help Line 1090 in U.P) may be studied and a comprehensive One Stop Centre Policy/Scheme for children related issues may be drawn up at the national level. **(Action: M/o WCD, NCPCR, State Governments).**
10. The appropriate use of technology for detection, investigation, conduct of cases, follow up of victims' rehabilitation etc., needs to be drawn up and implemented uniformly across the country instead of having just one or two good examples here and there. **(Action: MHA, State Governments).**
11. A nation wide awareness scheme in a campaign mode, particularly in rural areas, is required to create widespread awareness about this issue as well as remedial measures being taken/proposed to be taken by different agencies as well as to garner support from critical stakeholders like NGOs and civil society, media, panchayat raj bodies etc., which can go a long way in improving the current situation. **(Action: M/o WCD, NCW, NCPCR, M/o HRD, State Governments).**
12. While NCRB data shows approximately 40,000 cases per year, it is widely believed that a large number of cases of sexual violence against children go unreported, particularly those involving close relatives / friends, upper class urban

families etc. Therefore, appropriate measures need to be taken to devise ways and means to get maximum number of unreported cases also within the system. **(Action: NCRB, MHA).**

- 13.** Extensive capacity building / training and orientation at regular intervals of critical police personnel such as Constables, ASIs, SIs and Inspectors at the police station level is needed as the investigation and filing of cases etc., is done at this level which is often found to be shoddy ending up in high rate of acquittals. **(Action: MHA, State Governments).**
- 14.** Appropriate norms should be drawn up on a scientific basis for creation of new/ additional forensic science laboratories across the country so as to ensure that all forensic samples are analyzed and reports given within a maximum period of 30 days as this step alone will go a long way in expeditious disposal of such cases. Till the new FSLs are created, priority needs to be given to cases involving sexual violence against children, particularly those involving murder. **(Action: MHA, CFSL, State Governments)**
- 15.** Greater involvement of grass-root level staff including Asha workers, ANMs, Health workers, education department and extension staff of development wing, agriculture department, extension staff etc., for creation of awareness and early detection and reporting of cases at the village level. **(Action: M/o WCD, NCW, NCPDR, NHRC, State Governments).**
- 16.** Based on proper scientific planning and estimation, the requirement of funds in real terms (may be as percentage of GDP/ Per Capita Government spend) may be calculated for a higher level of law and order maintenance regime. This should be done on the basis of clear cut, tangible outcomes and a 5-10 year improvement scheme / plan drawn up. Efficient basic law & order set up throughout the country is a basic minimum requirement of high GDP growth rate and general well-being of the population. **(Action: MHA, M/o Finance, NHRC).**

List of Participants

I. Ministry of Women and Child Development, GoI

1. **Smt. Astha Saxena Khatwani**
Joint Secretary to the Government of India
Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD)

II. National Commissions

1. **Shri Ajoy Kumar**
Additional Secretary, National Commission for Minorities
2. **Shri. Kulbir Krishan**
Advisor (POCSO), National Commission for Protection of Child Rights

III. Delhi State Commissions

1. **Smt. Jyoti Duhan Rathee**
Member, Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR)
2. **Smt. Neelam Narang,**
Legal Advisor on POCSO and JJ Act, Delhi Commission for Women
3. **Smt. Varnika Singh**
Lawyer working with Delhi Commission for Women

IV. Delhi Police

1. **Shri David Lalrinsange**
Joint Commissioner Police,
SPUWAC, Delhi Police
2. **Smt. Esha Pandey,**
Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP)/ Special Police Unit for Women and
Children (SPUWAC), Delhi Police

3. **Shri Omvir Singh**, Delhi Police

V. UN Bodies/International NGOs

1. **Mr. Javier Aguilar**, Chief- Child protection, UNICEF
2. **Ms. Rineeta Naik**, UN Resident Coordinator's Office
3. **Ms. Salina Wilson**, UN Women
4. **Dr. Julie Thekkudan**, Lead Specialist Gender Justice, OXFAM
5. **Ms. Anju Pandey**, Program Officer, UN Women

VI. Civil Society Organizations/Academicians

1. **Prof. Sanjoy Hazarika**, International Director, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI)
2. **Dr. Ranjana Kumari**, Director, Centre for Social Research
3. **Smt. Enakshi Ganguly**, Co-Director HAQ: Centre for Child Rights
4. **Dr. Helen R. Sekar**, Senior Fellow (Faculty) and Coordinator, National Resource Centre on Child Labour, V.V.Giri National Labour Institute
5. **Smt. Bulbul Das**, Advocate, AIWC
6. **Smt. Shivani Wazir Pasrich**, Chairperson of Commonwealth Society of India and Founder of Commonwealth Cultural Forum, T.V. Anchor
7. **Prof. Renu Addlakha**, Professor, Centre for Women's Development Studies (CWDS)
8. **Smt. Razia Ismail**, CSO Coalition to End Child Marriage, India Alliance for Child Rights
9. **Smt. Chaital**, JAGORI

10. **Smt. Soha Moitra**, Regional Director (North Region), CRY
11. **Smt. Shreya Ghosh**, Senior Manager (Policy), CRY
12. **Ms. Anshu Singh**, CWDS
13. **Shri J.B. Oli**, Butterflies
14. **Smt. Sapna Yadav**, Bachpan Bachao Andolan
15. **Smt. Niharika Chopra**, Bachpan Bachao Andolan
16. **Shri Bidhan Chandra Singh**, Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation
17. **Dr. Vagheshwari Deswal**, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Law, Delhi University

VII. Special Invitees, NHRC

1. **Smt. Maja Daruwala**, Special Monitor, NHRC
2. **Shri Sudhir Kumar**, Special Rapporteur, NHRC
3. **S. Jalaj**, Special Rapporteur, NHRC

VIII. National Human Rights Commission

1. **Shri Gurbachan Singh**, Director General of Police
2. **Shri Surajit Dey**, Registrar
3. **Dr. Ranjit Singh**, Joint Secretary (P&A)
4. **Ms. Sumedha Dwevedi**, SSP-III
5. **Dr. M. D. S. Tyagi**, Joint Director (Research)
6. **Shri Sasidharan C.P.**, Consultant (Research Officer)
7. **Ms. Surabhi Awasthi**, Junior Research Consultant
8. **Ms. Samra Irfan**, Junior Research Consultant
9. **Ms. Vartika Anand**, Junior Legal and Research Consultant
10. **Mr. Mujtaba Hussain**, Junior Legal and Research Consultant
11. **Mr. Jitamanyu Sahoo**, Junior Legal and Research Consultant