



National Commission for Protection of Child Rights

Government of India



New Delhi,
June 01, 2017

Justice A.K. Sikri Releases Report on Child Marriage in India

A report on child marriage in India consisting of statistical analysis of prevalence of such marriages, their genesis and geographical spread was today released at a function in New Delhi. Judge of the Supreme Court, Hon'ble Justice Shri A.K. Sikri released the report in presence of NCPCR Chairperson, Smt. Stuti Kacker, Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Shri. Rakesh Srivastava and Country Director, Young Lives India, Dr. Renu Singh. The report has been prepared by Young Lives India, an NGO researching in international childhood poverty, in collaboration with NCPCR.

Justice Sikri said that child marriage violates the dignity of the child and is a major human rights violation. Pointing out the incongruities in different laws of the country dealing with child marriage, he urged the lawmakers to address these disparities so that the social evil of child marriage is curbed. He further suggested that NCPCR should tie-up with National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) to conduct seminars in the Target States with the help of Para Legal volunteers.

Shri. Rakesh Srivastava said that National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-4 reported decline in child marriage from 47% in NFHS-3 to 26% and hoped that NFHS-5 will find further decline in such marriages. He informed that recently the Karnataka State has amended the Prevention of Child Marriage Act, 2005 to make child marriage void and hoped that other States will follow suit. Shri. Srivastava asked NCPCR to conduct seminars and workshops in collaboration with State Governments in the 13 States where child marriage is markedly prevalent.

NCPCR Chairperson, Smt. Stuti Kacker informed that her Commission has held several State Level Consultations in States having high incidences of child marriage. She said that a good preventive strategy is required to contain child marriage in the country.

Speaking at the launch, Dr Renu Singh, Country Director, Young Lives India said, despite the decline in child marriage, particularly in the age group of 10-14 years, there are 1.1 million boys and 1.8 million girls who were reported married in the mentioned age group.

According to the report, out of 640 districts in India, 70 districts have emerged with high incidence of child marriage. These 70 districts together had 14% of India's population below the legal age but contribute to 21% of child marriage in the country. 16 urban and rural districts of Maharashtra feature in the list of districts that have shown an increase in the incidence of child marriage for both boys and girls between 2001 and 2011 (Ahmednagar, Bhandara, Chandanpur, Dhule, Pune, Sangli, Jalgaon, Jalna, Kolhapur, Latur, Mumbai, Mumbai Suburban, Prabhani, Satara, Sindhudurg and Thane).

The report highlights both increasing and decreasing trends in population as well as in the incidence of child marriage across these 70 districts. According to the report, while 13 districts in Rajasthan continue to figure prominently among the highest incidence districts with respect to child marriage of girls and boys, all the districts except Banswara for girls, showed a positive declining trend in child marriage over the decade (2001-2011).

The report also identifies the causes, drivers and triggers of child marriage in India. Best practices in curbing child marriage from States as well as civil societies have also been highlighted in the report.

The full report can be downloaded from www.ncpcr.gov.in and www.younglives-india.org

