

Why repeal Juvenile Justice Act, ask activists

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New Delhi: Child rights activists and other stakeholders have wondered out loud why the new government wants to repeal and re-enact the Juvenile Justice Act, 2000. The women and child development ministry announced its decision to repeal the Act and put up a draft Bill on its website on June 18, seeking suggestions and comments within 15 days.

Before sending in its comments, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights held a two-day discussion with various stakeholders that ended on Friday.

NCPDR chairperson Kushal Singh told TOI, "The draft Bill has several positive aspects like facilitating adoption and the proposal to make CARA (Central Adoption Resource Authority) a statutory body. But, there is no justification for repealing the entire JJ Act without any study."

Activists and other stakeholders, too, shared similar opinions. Enakshi Ganguly of Haq Centre for Child Rights said, "We are intrigued why the new government wants to repeal the entire JJ Act when some amendments to correct the flaws be enough. Besides, important amendments have already been drafted after consultations in 2011 and are sitting with the WCD ministry."

Those who attended the meeting said that 15 days were too short a time for suggestions for change in such a massive Act. One of the contentious issues in the draft is age of the child in conflict with the law.

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