

Minutes of the Inter- State Meeting held between the Government of Meghalaya and the Government of Karnataka on 18th February, 2010 at NCPCR Office from 11:30 a.m. to 03:00 p.m. on the Large Scale Migration of Children from Meghalaya to the Residential Institutions in Karnataka.

An Inter- State Meeting was held between the Government of Meghalaya and the Government of Karnataka on 18th February, 2010 at NCPCR Office from 11:30 a.m. to 03:00 p.m. on the large scale Migration of Children from Meghalaya to the Residential Institutions in Karnataka.

2. The following attended the Meeting:-

Government of Karnataka

- (i) Mr. D.S. Ashwath, Secretary, Department of Women and Child Development, Government of Karnataka, Bengaluru.
- (ii) Shri Ramesh B. Jelke, Secretary, Department of Labour, Government of Karnataka, Bengaluru.
- (iii) Ms. Nina Nayak, Chairperson, Karnataka Commission for Protection of Child Rights, Bengaluru.
- (iv) Shri Javed Pasha, Secretary, State Human Rights Commission, Karnataka, Bengaluru.
- (v) Shri Jayprakash Nagule, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Karnataka, Bengaluru.
- (vi) Shri Sumeda R Desai, Director, Social Health and Family Welfare Department, Karnataka, Bengaluru.
- (vii) Ms. Narmada, Deputy Director, Department of Women and Child Development, Government of Karnataka, Bengaluru.

Government of Meghalaya

- (i) Shri Arindam Som, Commissioner and Secretary Department of Social Welfare, Government of Meghalaya, Shillong.
- (ii) Smt. M.N. Nampui, Labour Commissioner, Government of Meghalaya, Shillong.
- (iii) Shri B.R. Rana, Inspector of Police, Meghalaya.
- (iv) Mr. C.C.M. Mihsill, Director of Social Welfare, Government of Meghalaya.
- (v) Shri Widrickson Lyngdoh, Joint Director of Higher and Technical Education, Meghalaya.

Ministry of DONER, GOI

P.R. Meshram, Director, M/O DONER, Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

National Commission for Protection of Child Rights

- (i) Prof. (Ms.) Dr. Shantha Sinha, Chairperson, NCPCR, New Delhi.
- (ii) Ms. Dipa Dixit, Member, NCPCR, New Delhi.
- (iii) Mr. Lov Verma, Member Secretary, NCPCR, New Delhi.
- (iv) Shri B.K. Sahu, Registrar, NCPCR, New Delhi.
- (v) Shri M.S. Gill, D.S.P., NCPCR, New Delhi.

The Meeting was presided over by Dr. Shantha Sinha, Chairperson, NCPCR.

3. **Prof. Shantha Sinha** welcomed the officers of Meghalaya and Karnataka. She stated that the current meeting was a follow-up of the enquiry conducted by NCPCR regarding

complaints received by it about a large number of children being sent from Meghalaya and Karnataka for purpose of education and visits to respective States. She mentioned that many parents in Meghalaya and Karnataka are anxious about the well being of their children studying in Karnataka, as they had no information or knowledge about their whereabouts. In fact, she said that children whom the Commission contacted in Jaintia Hills returned home after a gap of four to five years. They were changed having forgotten their language completely. She felt that this is incorrect. There are reports that the schools in Karnataka are not being monitored; there is no transparency and accountability in the manner in which the homes are run. There is a role for the Child Welfare Committees, Department of WCD, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Police and Departments of Home and Labour in this regard.

The outcomes of this Meeting should therefore be to arrive at a protocol of activities to monitor the migration of children from Meghalaya to Karnataka and evolving transparency in the entire process and a joint review of both the States at the end of two months on the steps taken, she said.

4. She also raised the issue that all the reports concerning the large number of children from Nepal and Bengal who were working in the coal mines in Jaintia Hills are to be examined. She said that if the reports were true, steps are to be taken to rescue all the children from work and repatriate them to their own State/ Country.

5. **Mr. C.C. Mihsill** said that parents of the children consented to their education in Karnataka and that there was no force involved in sending children from Meghalaya to Karnataka. He also mentioned that these parents are happy with the education system in Karnataka.

6. **Ms. Dipa Dixit** said that the problem to be addressed was the issue of transparency in the process of transfer/migration of the child from Meghalaya and his/her education in the schools in Karnataka. She mentioned that the parents were not kept informed about the children after they left home in Meghalaya and there was lack of transparency in the schools in Karnataka. Therefore, the issue of transparency and accountability at every step should be the foremost on all sides, she said.

7. **Shri Arindam Som** mentioned that the Department of Social Welfare will initiate the process of registration of the agents involved in mobilizing children to join school in Karnataka. He also mentioned that they would talk to the agents and work out modalities for transparency. He said that many of the parents may not know that their children are being educated in the Kannada medium in schools. They will have to be informed regarding the same. He said that it is quite possible that the parents have the information that their children will be studying in English medium schools.

8. **Shri Javed Pasha** said that many children from Meghalaya are being sent to Karnataka because there are no proper schools in Meghalaya. He said that the Government has to strengthen the capacities of the schools in Meghalaya to prevent such large number of children coming to Karnataka.

9. **Ms. Nina Nayak** elaborated the entire process of a child being mobilized from the villages of Meghalaya to study in Karnataka. She said that the parents of these children are charged anywhere between Rs. 14000/- to Rs. 16000/- for transporting them to Karnataka and locating them in the schools, as per the investigation conducted by the State Commission. She said that there were varieties of residential schools that have come up to take care of such children while there are small families who have 10 to 15 children from Meghalaya being funded by the agents. There are instances where children are sent to ashrams/mutts which provided for board and lodging as well as education. There are also instances where children are located in hostels but are studying in the Government Schools. She mentioned that all these

arrangements are to be mapped and the data base has to be created by the Karnataka Government on this issue. She mentioned that the Meghalaya Government has constantly been given information by the Karnataka Government on the number of children with names who have left for Karnataka from Meghalaya. She advised that the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) should deeply look into the long term impact on children of Meghalaya studying in Karnataka.

10. **Shri Jaiprakash Negule, I.G.I., Karnataka** mentioned that the Police Department could prepare a report of all the institutions, homes and schools where children from Meghalaya and North-East are studying at the moment and submit to NCPCR within 02 months time.

7. **Mr. Meshram** from DONER informed that proposals for setting up all residential schools with estimates drawn up for infrastructure may be sent to DONER for consideration for funds. He stated that so far no proposal for residential hostels and schools for children has come forward to the Ministry of DONER from North East States.

12. The following decisions were concurred upon:

(a) Government of Meghalaya

- (i) The Meghalaya Government will form a Coordination Committee with all the Secretaries of concerned Departments to examine and address the issue of children being sent to Karnataka for pursuing education.
- (ii) The Coordination Committee will evolve a Terms of Reference to monitor such children and establish processes for transparency and accountability while children are being sent to study in other States.
- (iii) The Department of Social Welfare will evolve procedures for the parents seeking to contact their children and being informed periodically about their children's welfare in Karnataka.
- (iv) The Government will evolve transparent procedures for parents of children to give a complaint and contact the homes where children have been sent to.
- (v) A detailed household survey of children who are not in the villages and have been sent to Karnataka or any other place either for study, for work or for any other purpose will be conducted by the Social Welfare Department in coordination with Meghalaya Police and a Report on the same will be sent to NCPCR and Government of Karnataka, containing the particulars of the children and the information about the schools or mutts in Karnataka with their addresses wherever available where children have been sent for study.
- (vi) A Survey Report of child labour in coal mines of Jaintia Hills has to be submitted to NCPCR with clear estimates of the numbers of children involved in each site/area and their origins as well as the particulars of each child, including his/her socio-economic and educational profile as well as an Individual Care Plan for each child by the Social Welfare Department in collaboration with the Labour Department, Mines Department and Meghalaya Police within 02 months.
- (vii) The Meghalaya Government (the Line Department through the Department of Planning) may submit a comprehensive proposal to the Ministry of DONER for assistance/support, including for children's education, hostels and other infrastructure/ requirements for consideration.

(b) Government of Karnataka

- (i) The WCD Department will share an updated report with Government of Meghalaya and NCPCR within 02 months on the number and particulars of children (from outside the State) who are living in mutts, community/family care centers, other Institutions for Child Care (district wise), with focus on children from Meghalaya.
- (ii) Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) in each District must review the status of children in the residential educational institutions/hostels/other Institutions for Child care and their well-being on a regular basis. The process is to be facilitated by the Department of WCD.
- (iii) The Education Department must present a Report on the status of children from Meghalaya and other States who are living in the residential Educational Institutions/ Hostels as well as those who are studying under the Asha Kiran Programme of SSA. It will also evolve a transparent procedure and mechanism for the easy access/ interfacing of parents/relatives/ guardians with the children from outside States living in the Institutions in the State. It will issue a Circular to this effect within 02 months to all the residential educational institutions/hostels/mutts, etc. and mark a copy to all the District Collectors, District Education Officers of the State as well as to the Government of Meghalaya, NCPCR, KSCPCR and KSHRC.
- (iv) State Human Rights Commission and Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (KSCPCR) may carry out periodic investigations and regular follow up on the issue. Their periodic Reports may also be shared with NCPCR.
- (v) The Health Department will carry out a detailed health check among the children living in the residential educational institutions, hostels, mutts and other Institutions for Child Care and provide proper treatment as well as a Health Card to each and submit an interim report to NCPCR within 02 months regarding the same.
- (vi) The Karnataka Police is to present an alternative status report on the magnitude of the problem and modus operandi of children being admitted into schools, mutts and community/ family centers.

(C) NCPCR

SCPCR, Karnataka, will submit a proposal to NCPCR relating to a Study by NIMHANS, Bengaluru, on the psycho-social impact of the separation of children, especially younger ones (0-6 years) from their family/homes.

(D) Ministry of DONER

The Ministry of DONER will consider the proposals received from the Government of Meghalaya in due course for the benefits of children including for construction of more residential educational institutions/hostels under its non-lapsable Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS).

13. It was decided to have a follow-up/review meeting after two months.

The Meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to the Chair.