



National Commission for Protection of Child Rights

Government of India



New Delhi,
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NCPCR LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN AGAINST CHILDREN BEING USED FOR BUYING, SELLING AND SMUGGLING OF TOBACCO AND OTHER INTOXICATING SUBSTANCES

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has started a campaign against abuse of tobacco, tobacco products and other intoxicating substances by children as well as misuse of children in selling, buying and smuggling of these products.

As part of this, NCPCR has launched a campaign over FM Rainbow and Vividh Bharati channels of All India Radio (AIR) against misuse of children in selling, buying, and smuggling tobacco and its products. The radio campaign has been launched in Hindi language and is going to be broadcast in 11 other Indian languages including Bengali, Telugu, Odia and Marathi over these channels of AIR in the coming days.

Meanwhile, NCPCR Chairperson, Ms. Stuti Kacker has written letters to all the Chief Secretaries of the States and Union Territories requesting them to take appropriate actions to keep children away from these activities. In separate letters addressed to the Directors General of Police of all States also, she has requested them to sensitize the Police Force to strictly enforce Sections 77 and 78 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act which forbids the use of children in these activities. They have also been advised to discuss the enforcement of these Sections of Law in their monthly meetings with the senior police personnel.

Ms. Kacker has also written to the Secretary, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Shri Tapan Roy to direct companies involved in the business of manufacturing these products, not to employ children in their units. She has also sought the cooperation of the Secretary, Information and Broadcasting Ministry in creating awareness on these issues in the Media. Besides, the Commission has issued advisories to Tobacco manufacturing companies and alcoholic beverages companies to ensure implementation of the provisions of the Juvenile Justice Act.

Tobacco consumption is a major cause of preventable deaths in the world particularly, in developing countries. According to a study published in April, 2011 in Indian Journal of Medical Research, nearly 1 in 10 adolescents in the age group 13-15 year in India have ever smoked cigarettes and almost half of these reported initiating tobacco use before the age of 10.

According to the study, the tobacco situation in India is unique because of availability of a vast spectrum of tobacco products for smoking as well as smokeless use. Smoking of cigarette particularly beedis and chewing tobacco (smokeless use) is an age-old practice in the country. The risks of tobacco use are the highest among those who start early and continue its use for a long period. The early age of initiation underscores the urgent need to intervene and protect this vulnerable group from falling prey to tobacco addiction. The most common reasons cited for children to start using tobacco are peer pressure, parental tobacco habits and pocket money given to children.

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