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Prof. Nishith Rai
Director

FROM THE DESK OF CHIEF EDITOR

About 20 per cent of World's Children population lives in India. Children play a significant role in nation building and thus it is imperative to focus on the integrated development of children as a whole. It is only by ensuring that India's children are well cared, well protected and well supported that India can attain the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 and be counted in the league of developed nations. Prevention from abuse, neglect and exploitation of children has been universally recognized as essential for child's well being and for the growth and development of the family, the community and the nation. However, millions of children are living in difficult circumstances and thus they are most vulnerable. The budgetary support for the care and protection of children is also meager while the governance of child development schemes and programmes is found to be poor. Urban India poses different types of problems for children. The problems of neglect, exploitation, delinquency, trafficking, victimization of domestic violence, HIV/AIDS, natural disasters, labour etc. are significantly higher in urban areas. There is also lack of proper coordination and community participation in implementation of schemes and programmes for the welfare and development of children and women in India. Thus, urban administration needs to be oriented towards the care and protection of disadvantaged children in urban India.

In view of the need and relevance of child care and protection in urban areas, a national seminar was organized in November, 2006 by the Regional Centre for Urban & Environmental Studies, Lucknow. The seminar focussed on different dimensions and issues of child care and protection and brought out concrete policy measures for proper implementation, delivery of services and administration of children's rights acts, legal provisions, programmes and schemes in India.

This issue of the Journal focussing on 'Child Care & Protection', is indeed thought provoking and has brought out the ideas and concerns from the different parts of the country. The issue is based on the seminar proceedings and the papers presented so far. I am hopeful that the issue will be highly useful in understanding the dynamics of the social issues and evolving action plan for the remedy of the problem.

With best wishes

February, 2008

NISHITH RAI

FROM THE DESK OF THE EDITOR

Children are first priority in development agenda in India. They are treated as foundations for life long learning and human resources development. However, they are most vulnerable and need care, access to nutrition, basic social services, such as health, education and protection from neglect, abuse and exploitation. India has a long history of legal and policy framework for the welfare and development of children, however, the status of children in India is grim. The share of resources for child protection was reported abysmal i.e. 0.034 per cent during 2005-2007. A majority of the children are out of the ambit of programmes, schemes and projects oriented towards care, protection, welfare and development of children. Thus, we need special attention for the policy makers and administrators so that India may achieve the millennium development goals by 2015 and ensure the realization of child rights as per international and national conventions and Indian constitution as well as legal and policy framework.

A two-day National Seminar on Care & Protection of Disadvantaged Children in Urban India was organised by Regional Centre for Urban & Environmental Studies, Lucknow on 17th & 18th November, 2006 at RCUES Conference Hall, Lucknow University, Lucknow. The Seminar was sponsored by Planning Commission, Government of India, New Delhi. The Seminar was inaugurated by Prof. R.P. Singh, Vice Chancellor, Lucknow University, Lucknow while key note address was delivered by Mrs. Jayanti Chandra, IAS, Principal Secretary, Deptt. of Agriculture & Food processing, Govt. of U.P. and Former Joint Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice, Govt. of India, New Delhi.

Prof. Nishith Rai and Dr. Awadhesh Kumar Singh in their paper on 'Care and Protection of Disadvantage Children in Urban India' have analysed the current status of children, their problems and reviewed the policies, programmes and schemes oriented towards care and protection of disadvantaged children in India. They talked about the policy framework for child care and protection in India.

Dr. R.V.P. Singh in his paper titled *Child Care and Protection During Plan Periods in India* said that there are about 120 schemes and programmes for women and children run by 13 deptts. and Ministries, however, there is lack of coordination and integration among these Deptts. and Ministries. The draft policy on Integrated Child Protection Scheme is likely to provide a policy frame work and action plan for child development in a holistic way.

Mr. Kelvin Symon in his paper on *Child Protection in the Eleventh Plan: Inputs for 11th Plan* highlighted the role of Childline India Foundation in Child line services. Childline looks at the development of children within the system of relationship that forms their environment. He stated that Government should define minimum level of basket of goods and services that child is entitled to until 14 years of age. Cross sectoral convergence and the need for joint action for building capacity and encouraging dialogues on children's rights are called for. He also called for the need to integrate the juvenile justice mechanism with the police, and residential services to create a national tracking system for missing children.

Prof. G.S. Bajpai in his paper on *Making It Work : Juvenile Justice in India* mentioned that about 30 million children in India belonged to families living in conditions of extreme distress and

deprivation. According to Prof. Bajpai violence against girls, child labour, children living on the threats, trafficking, violence in schools, and violence in conflict situations have all been reportedly on the rise. He primarily concentrated on the problems and issues affecting the effective enforcement of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2000.

Prof. K.S. Pandhy in his paper on *child Abuse: An affront to Humanity* said that child abuse is a threat to human dignity. He attempted to analyze the dimensions and dynamics of child abuse in India. He was of the view that education is most important instrument for promoting development of children.

Ms. Roli Mishra in her paper on *Giving Hope-Enabling the Disabled* talked about the status of disabled person and role of state in prevention and rehabilitation of disabled in India. She said that about 10 percent of children suffer from some impairment or disability. Thus institutional and non-institutional services are to be promoted in order to ensure proper rehabilitation of disabled children in India.

Dr. A.K. Singh and Dr. Nimish Gupta in their paper on *Social Rehabilitation of Disabled Children in India* said that physically and mentally challenged persons are most marginalized and suffer from social deviance, stigma and social exclusion and oppression. According to authors there are about 70 million disabled persons in India and roughly 40 percent of them are children. Out of total physically and mentally challenged children only 5 percent have access to social welfare services. Thus, according to them it is imperative to enlarge the reach of disabled children to the programmes and schemes of social rehabilitation.

Dr. A.K. Singh and Dr. Sonika Khanna in their paper on *Trafficking of Young Women and Children in India: Emerging Perspective and Remedial Measures* maintained that trafficking of young women and children for flesh trade has emerged as one of the most profitable illegal trades, next to illegal trades in arms and narcotics. According to authors a large number of young women and children are being trafficked from Nepal, Bangladesh and former Soviet Republic to India and they are thrown into brothels, situated in metropolitan cities and towns. They assess that there are about 8 million prostitutes in India and most of them are less than 20 years of age. Authors find that socio-cultural values prevailing in specific castes and communities such as **Matang, Mahar, Bedia, Kolta, Sansi, and Nut** etc. also promote trafficking and child prostitution. The **Devdasi** system has also exploited sexually the neglected and deprived women.

Dr. Sanjay Pandey in his paper on *Socio-economic Status of Women Offenders and Their Young Children* maintained that imprisonment of mother with dependent young children is a problematic issue. He feels that the effects of incarceration can be catastrophic on the children and costly to the state in terms of providing for their care, and because of the social problems arising from early separation. According to Dr. Pandey children's should not be allowed to stay in jails, because jails are not place to bring up children. He is of the view that young children of women prisoners may be included in the Juvenile Justice Act, 2000 so that these neglected children can derive benefits of the Act for their care, protection, development & rehabilitation.

Dr. S.P. Pandey, Mr. Saurabh Pandey, and Ms. Preeti Yadav in their joint paper on *Reproductive Health Status of Married Adolescent Girls* maintained that one fifth of the world's population is of

adolescents. In India too there are about 230 million adolescents in the age group of 10-19 years. The adolescent girls suffer the problems of early marriage, pregnancy, child birth, high fertility, maternal mortality etc. Thus the adolescent girls need specific policies to address their problems.

Ms. Akanksha Srivastava, Mr. Rajendra P. Mishra and Mr. Saroj K. Mohanty in their paper on *Child Health in U.P.* maintained that the meeting the MDG's for reducing child mortality becomes imperative and National Rural Health Mission envisages reduction in infant mortality, maternal mortality, access to integrated primary health care and revitalizing local health traditions and mainstreaming AYUSH.

Dr. O.P. Shukla in his paper on *Nutritional and Health Determinants in India* stated that nutrition and health status of children have several dimensions that can not be adequately captured by indicators currently in vogue; namely, calorie intake, mortality rates, literacy, doctor-population ration, etc. He said that socio-cultural values and indicators are to be explored to measure nutritional and health status of children.

Ms. Amrita Rai and Dr. D.K. Singh in their paper on *Female Foeticide in India* highlighted the issue of declining sex ratio due to sex related abortions. Presenting the paper Ms. Amrita Rai maintained that modern technology and cultural preference for sons rather than daughters have led to the mushrooming of neo-natal clinics across India where parents may check the gender of their unborn child. The developed states like Haryana, Rajasthan, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh and Western Uttar Pradesh have witnessed a large scale of female infanticides. This has resulted in decline in child sex ratio. This is violation of human rights and a serious crime. The implementation of Prenatal Diagnostic Technique (Regulation and Prevention) Act, 2002 is to be enforced in order to prevent sex determination and female foeticides.

Dr. Padma Iyer in her paper on *Street Children of India* raised the problems of street children in India. She also presented a brief profile of street children. She was of the view that community based programmes for rehabilitation of street children are essential.

Dr. M.M. Verma in his paper on *Planning Social Work Intervention for the Children in the Slum Area of Varanasi* maintained that sweepers are the most disadvantaged communities in India and their children are even more vulnerable. Illiteracy, poverty, low health status and consumption of liquor and other narcotics etc. add the vulnerability of slum children. The children have low access to child health care, education and recreation. Therefore, a strong need is felt for planning for the care, protection and development of slum children.

Mr. Saroj Mohanty, Mr. Rajendra P. Mishra, Ms. Akanksha Srivastava, Ms. Nupur Mishra and Ms. Kanchan Srivastava in their paper on *Urban Child Health in Uttar Pradesh* highlighted Government initiatives for promoting child health. Ms. Nupur Mishra presenting the paper said that in U.P., mortality rates among children are higher than the national average. The need of hour is to focus on the specific intervention to reduce these mortality rates.

Dr. Aishwarya Awasthi and Dr. U.P. Singh in their paper titled *An Evaluation of Nutritional Status of ICDS Children in Lucknow City* focused the research findings of survey conducted in Lucknow city. Dr. Awasthi while presenting the paper lamented upon the poor nutritional status of non-institutional children. She said ICDS programme is significantly contributing in the nutritional

development of disadvantaged children.

Mr. Rajendra P. Mishra et al. in their paper on ***Community Based Child Survival Programme in India*** discussed health situation in India. He maintained that about 26 million infants are born in India and around 10 percent of them do not even survive to five years of age. India contributes to 25 percent of the 10 million under five deaths occurring world wide every year. The community based child survival programmes are likely to promote child health and reduce neo-natal mortality rates.

Dr. S.P. Pandey and **Ajay Kumar Pandey** in their paper on ***Educational Development Among Muslim Girls*** highlighted the educational status of Muslim girls in India. Dr. Pandey on his presentation said that the economic prosperity does not seem to have made positive impact on the Muslim female education. According to Dr. Pandey the centrally sponsored scheme for education has empowered Muslim girls in their educational achievements. He felt that Madarsas and Maktabas are also providing education to Muslim girls, along with religious teaching to them. Under Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, Madarsas have been supported, while Urdu medium schools are promoting Urdu and Islamic culture among girls.

Prof. S.C. Arora in his paper on ***Child labors and Their Plight*** conceptualized child labour and described measures for combating child labour. According to him the European Social Charter of 1961 and Convention on Rights of Children, 1989 made obligatory on the part of the state to ensure the protection of all rights in the best interest of the child. He was of the view that quality education will reduce the proportion of child labour.

Dr. Ravindra Sharma, Mrs Kamal Tiwari and Mr. Ashok Sharma in their paper on ***Bharat Me Wiklang Balakon Ki Pramukh Samasyaen*** maintained that accidents, disasters, conflicts etc. have caused the increasing trend of disability in India. They also discussed the main problems of disabled children and the prospects for their rehabilitation.

Mr. Neeraj Kumar Singh and Mr. Apporva Joshi in their paper on ***Bal Deh Vyapar*** maintained that prostitution in India is an age old trade while trafficking has increased the social problem of children. Child prostitution has caused concern in India while the proportion of missing girls in cities is gradually increasing. Thus they feel the need of adoption of an integrated and holistic approach for combating the child trafficking. Similarly, strict enforcement of laws is to be ensured.

The papers would reveal the ground realities of child care and protections in India and particularly in urban area. The papers would certainly be useful in understanding the dynamics of social issue and evolving action plans for remedial measures.

With regards and best wishes

February, 2008

Dr. A. K. Singh

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Nishith Rai

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