



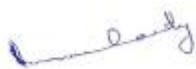
From Chairperson's Desk

There's no doubt that COVID-19 has left millions of children vulnerable, both mentally and physically. There are new risks that results in negative outcomes for children. These outcomes can be multilayered, such as being orphans, risks of child labour, domestic work, early marriages, adolescent pregnancy, discrimination and stigmatization.

Children who live in an over crowding setting are already vulnerable to socio-economic exclusion. These children are at even higher psychosocial risk during this pandemic.

We have witnessed cases of child abuse, neglect, violence, exploitation, psychosocial distress, so much more happening to our children in India and in other countries as well.

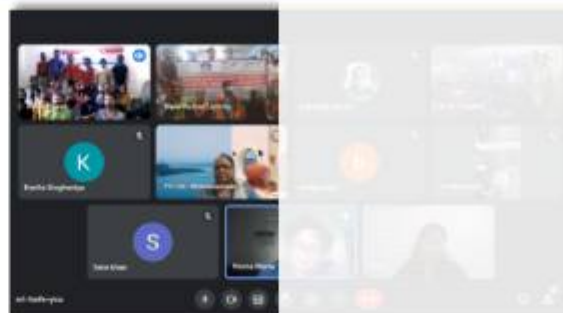
Working in collaboration with the government, collaboration with the civil society organisations and community needs to be the key priorities during a COVID response, to help these children get out of the vicious circle of exploitation. In addition to risk mitigation, we all must try to build on the strengths and positive coping mechanism of families, caregivers, children and community. Protecting the children from any form of abuse, whether mental or physical, needs a holistic approach.



Ranjan Kumar Mohanty
Chairperson, NACG EVAC India

Editorial Board – Aditi P Kaur, D.Roshan Kumar & Dr.
Indrani Bhattacharya

Delhi State Level Consultation of Children



A one day Consultation with children of Delhi was organized virtually on 28th July 2021 with 109 children (G-74 & B-41) participants along with 20 participants from NACG EVAC India, DCPCR and CSOs. The children with their physical presence at four different places, maintaining the COVID19 protocols participated in this consultation. A preparatory meeting with the children attending the consultation was held earlier by the respective partners namely *Dr. A.V. Baliga Memorial Trust, SPID, ABHAS, and Asha Deep Foundation.*

Mr. Ranjan Kumar Mohanty, Chairperson NACG EVAC India gave the welcome address and Ms. Nidhi Dwivedi, Member, Delhi Commission for protection of Child Rights, (DCPCR) inaugurated the consultation.

Mr. Mohanty briefed about the importance of the Consultation with children on Child Sexual Abuse and exploitation. He further stated that the Children from different districts including the vulnerable children will come together to contemplate and deliberate on CSEA issue and draft a children's charter/manifesto by using the score card on CSEA & SDGs to come-up with a plan to address the issue. Later they will present their charter to the government stakeholders in an interface meeting.

Ms Nidhi Dwivedi interacted with the children and listened to their issues related to abuses. Many children shared their views and the member ensured to resolve the issues. She also shared some important and need-to-know information about child sexual abuse.

The children were given orientation on United Nation convention on Child Rights, Sustainable development goals, Child sexual abuse and exploitation, and online sexual abuse, to prepare a base for them to discuss...

Consultation on Strengthening the State Chapters by NACG EVAC, India



NACG EVAC India organized a consultation on Strengthening State Chapters on 10th Sept 2021. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Ranjan Kumar Mohanty, Chairperson, NACG EVAC India, and the attendee members were Mr. D. Roshan Kumar, Vice-Chair, NACG EVAC India, Mr. Sanjay Gupta, Vice-Chair, NACG EVAC India, Mr. Sanjay Ku Mishra, Treasurer, NACG EVAC India, Ms. Aditi P Kaur, Thematic Head - Child Participation, Mr. Prakash Rath, Thematic Head - Disability, Mr. Mikhael Pradhan, Thematic Head - Child Sexual Abuse, Mr. Manabendranath Mandal, Member, & Dr. Indrani Bhattacharya, Member.

Mr. Mohanty shared the NACG's membership status report. NACG has a total of 557 members and with highest count from Delhi, i.e. 51 and lowest from Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Madhya Pradesh with 1 members each. States and union territories like Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Goa, Daman, Diu, Dadra and Nagarhaveli, Ladakh and Lakshwadeep have currently no members. NACG has representatives in 29 states and Union territories and National Board Members from 23 states and UTs. NACG has also received 16 Annual membership form and 1 life membership within 1st April to till date.

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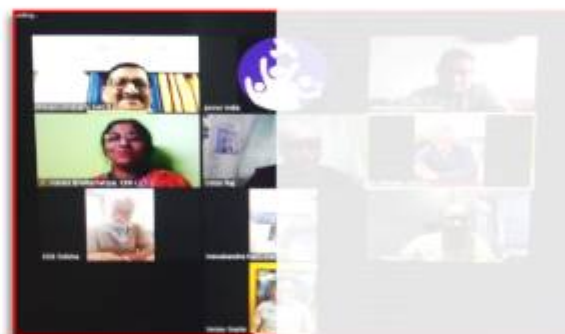
the issues and recommendation. Later, Scorecard activity was held in groups & the children discussed the questions/situation given and score them with the reasons and recommendations.

After the consultation, the team with the support of children prepared a manifesto which would be shared to different stakeholders by the

The following decisions were taken in the consultation:

- ▶ Revising the membership list and contacting the 557 members to know about their status in the NACG
- ▶ Constitution of Core Team in each state
- ▶ Election of State Convenors in all states
- ▶ Election of National Board Members
- ▶ Each present member will take the responsibility of his/her state and finish the process of core team formation and selection of Convenor within 2 to 3 months

Meeting of Thematic Leaders - NACG EVAC, India



NACG EVAC, India organised a meeting of Theme Leaders on the virtual platform on 26th August 2021. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Ranjan Kumar Mohanty, Chairperson, NACG EVAC India, and the attendee members were Mr. D. Roshan Kumar, Vice-Chair, NACG EVAC India, Mr. Sanjay Gupta, Vice-Chair, NACG EVAC India, Mr. Sanjay Ku Mishra, Treasurer, NACG EVAC India, Ms. Aditi P Kaur, Thematic Head - Child Participation, Mr. Prakash Rath, Thematic Head - Disability, Mr. Mikhael Pradhan, Thematic Head - Child Sexual Abuse, Mr. Manabendranath Mandal - Child Trafficking, Mr. Joseph Victor Raj - Child Labour, & Dr. Indrani Bhattacharya - Child Marriage. Dr. Rinchen Chopel, Director General of SAIIVAC also attended this meeting.

Dr. Chopel expressed his grave concern over the happenings in Afganistan and he mentioned that the world community & UN system need to see that the children & women are protected. Planning to hold regional conference on Child Marriage and Child Labour in Bhutan was further stated by him.

The discussion focused on thematic wise activities by the respective theme leaders, planning for each thematic issue till December 2021 and also aligning NACG's activities with ECSA project activities.

Child Labour: Global Estimate and trend

Child labour remains a persistent problem in the world today. The latest global estimates indicate that 160 million children (63 million girls and 97 million boys) were in child labour globally at the beginning of 2020, accounting for almost 1 in 10 of all children worldwide. Seventy-nine million children (nearly half of those entire in child labour) were in hazardous work that directly endangers their health, safety and moral development. Global progress against child labour has stagnated since 2016. The percentage of children in child labour remains unchanged over the four year period while the absolute number of children in child labour increased by over 8 million. Similarly, the percentage of children in hazardous work was almost unchanged but rose in absolute terms by 6.5 million children.

Continued progress was registered over the last four years among children aged 12 to 14 and 15 to 17. Child labour in both age groups declined in percentage and absolute terms, continuing a consistent downward trend seen in previous estimates. Child labour rose among young children aged 5 to 11, however, after the 2016 global estimates signaled slowing progress for this age group. There were 16.8 million more children aged 5 to 11 in child labour in 2020 than in 2016.

The COVID-19 crisis threatens to further erode global progress against child labour unless urgent mitigation measures are taken. New analysis suggests a further 8.9 million children will be in child labour by the end of 2022 as a result of rising poverty driven by the pandemic. Other key results from the 2020 global estimates include:

- Involvement in child labour is higher for boys than girls at all ages. Among all boys, 11.2% are in child labour compared to 7.8% of all girls.
- Child labour is much more common in rural areas. There are 122.7 million rural children in child labour compared to 37.3 million urban children.
- Most child labour – for boys and girls alike – continues to occur in agriculture. Of the 70% of all children in child labour, 112 million children are in agriculture.
- The largest share of child labour takes place within families. 72% of all child labour and 83% of child labour among children aged 5 to

11 occurs within families, primarily in family farms or family microenterprises.

- Child labour is frequently associated with children being out of school. A large share of younger children in child labour is excluded from school despite falling within the age range for compulsory education.

The Road Forward

The 2020 ILO-UNICEF global estimates indicate a critical juncture in the worldwide effort against child labour. Global progress has come to a halt over the last four years. The ongoing COVID-19 crisis threatens to further erode past gains. While there are nearly 86 million fewer children in child labour now than when it began measuring global levels in 2000. Recent trends suggest that we are falling far behind on the collective commitment to end child labour in all its forms by 2025.

Action ahead of pandemic:

The pandemic has clearly heightened the risk of child labour, above all through a sharp rise in poverty that may increase families' reliance on child labour, and through school closures that deny families the logical alternative to sending children to work. To reduce these risks, it will be important not to lose sight of broader policy imperatives for ending child labour. Measures like extending social protection for children and their families, ensuring free and good-quality schooling at least up to the minimum age for entering employment, guaranteeing that every child's birth is registered so that children have a legal identity, promoting decent work that delivers a fair income for young people, promoting adequate rural livelihoods and resilience, ensuring that necessary laws and regulations are in place to protect children, backed by enforcement machinery and child protection systems, and the services required to apply them, addressing gender norms and discrimination, etc.

The COVID-19 crisis has served as an important reminder of the need for international cooperation and partnership in overcoming global challenges. Alliance 8.7 plays an important role in facilitating cooperation on child labour among governmental and non-governmental actors.

Alliance 8.7

A global partnership launched in 2016, Alliance 8.7 groups governments, multilateral

organizations, workers' organizations, employers' organizations, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and think tanks to find ways of accelerating action on target 8.7. The alliance focuses on three strategies: conducting research and sharing knowledge, driving innovation, and increasing and leveraging resources and also accelerating progress towards SDG Target 8.7 that calls for the elimination of child labour, forced labour, human trafficking and modern slavery.

8.7 Alliance Meetings were attended by Mr. Ranjan Kumar Mohanty, Chairperson NACG and Mr. P. Joseph Victor Raj, Thematic Head NACG, Child Labour.

Building Capacity of Different Stakeholders in Odisha on Preventing Child Sexual Abuse

District Level Training for Police on Laws, Policies and Standard Operating Procedures in dealing with Child Sexual Abuse Cases



A District Level Workshops on prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation for the police personnel of Khordha district was organized by People's Cultural Centre (PECUC) in collaboration with BMZ Germany, World Vision Germany and WVI India on 18th August, 2021 at the Conference Hall of Superintendent of Police, Khordha. The Superintendent of Police Shri Rajkishore Dora officially inaugurated the programme. The programme was conducted in Cooperation with District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) Khordha. Total 50 participants attended this training programme.

Ms. Anuradha Mohanty, Executive Director of PECUC briefly shared about the objective of programme and said "The effects of child sexual abuse can include depression, post traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, complex, and propensity to further victimization in adulthood and physical injury to the child among other problems". The guest speakers were Mr. Raj Kishore Dora, Superintendent of Police, Khordha, Mr. Suresh Kumar Das, Additional

Superintendent of Police, Khordha, Ms. Banishree Pattnaik, District Child Protection Officer (DCPO), Khordha & Resource Person, Laxmidhar Biswal, Law Advisor, Retd District Judges.

Programme started understanding the magnitude of crime status in India and status of children in Odisha context was also discussed. During this training programme, laws, legislations, policies and standard operating procedures in dealing with child Sexual Abuse cases were discussed in detail.

District Level Sensitization program for Doctors and Medical Practitioners on Reporting and Referral of Child Sexual Abuse conducted in Ganjam



District Level Sensitization program for Doctors and Medical Practitioners on Reporting and Referral of Child Sexual Abuse & Exploitation was organized at hotel Bhuvaneshwari Premium, Berhampur on 12th September 2021 by PECUC in cooperation with VHAI, Ganjam and World Vision Germany, World Vision India and BMZ Germany. Mr. Debanand Mahant, Regional Representative VHAI shared the objective of the program and how sexual abuse cases are being addressed with appropriate legal procedures with mandatory reporting with other modalities looking at the best interest of the child.

31 Doctors and medical practitioners (F- 3 and M-29) participated in the training. Dr Shankasan Patra, President Doctors Forum, Ganjam, Prof. Dr. P.K. Pathy, Dr. Ramakrushna Sahoo, Senior Medical practitioner and eminent writer, and Shri Brindaban Panda, Social activist joined as guest speakers and shared their view points on role of doctors and medical practitioner on Reporting and Referral of Child Sexual Abuse & Exploitation.

Dr. Sunil Agarwal, Professor SCB medical college, Cuttack highlighted the important of having a deep understanding of the understand the JJ Act and

POCSO Act, and Standard Operational Procedure in order to deal with the child sexual abuse cases. This is because doctors are also often the first point of reference in confirming that a child has indeed been the victim of sexual abuse or not. It is very important to update them on case investigation, management, legal procedures, SoPs compliances, psycho-social/mental health services to the victim, monitoring and accountability as per the JJ Act & POCSO Act including the ethical rights-based approach.

Shri T.K. Reddy, Senior advocate and ex-member DALSA, Shri Debananda Mohanta, State Coordinator, VHAI facilitated the sessions and discussed on different topics like what is child sexual abuse, cause and effects, and provisions for medical.

District Level Media Round Table Sensitization Programme for Ending Violence against Children in India



A District level sensitization programme for Media on Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation was organized by People's Cultural Centre (PECUC) in cooperation with ADARSA, Sambalpur in collaboration with World Vision Germany, BMZ Germany and World Vision India. Addressing the training programme as Chief Guest the Chairperson CWC, Mr. Bajendra Kishore Panda expressed his concern regarding the rise of child sexual abuse cases and mentions it as a persistent problem that affects physical, social and psychological wellbeing of children with serious life-long impacts. He focused on how to prevent those if media and community work hand in hand. He also discussed about various provisions under POCSO Act 2012. The training programme started with the discussion on the situation of children by Ms. Jharana Mishra, child rights expert. As per the NCRB Report

a total of 6,872 cases have been registered against Juveniles during 2019, showing a small increase of 1.1% over 2018 (6,798 cases). Mrs. Bani Tripathy, trainer showed her concern with regard to increase in Child Sexual Abuse during COVID Pandemic and lockdown situation. She said that 53% of children in India face some form of child sexual abuse. The growing complexities of life and changing social & economic conditions have exposed the children to new and different forms of abuse.

It is the moral responsibility of all key stakeholders and service providers including govt., civil society organisations, school authorities and private sector to be vigilant for reporting of cases and creating awareness was emphasised in this training programme.

Summarising the programme, Mr. Pradeep Kumar Behera, Secretary ADARSA said protection of children from all types of violence and abuse cannot be achieved alone with just having stringent legislations & numerous guidelines but there needs to be commitment in cultivating a culture of zero tolerance for violence against children, building the capacities of duty bearers to equip them in assessing and eliminating the barriers to provide justice. Trusting our children, breaking down gender stereotypes, providing honest and open spaces to discuss gender issues, and facilitating age-appropriate sex education will indeed take us a long way forward in the ending violence against children.

News from States

Combating COVID19 Pandemic – TDH_NL

Heroes without Capes:

Superheroes have always been a fascinating figment of our imagination, crossing mountains, rivers and skies just to save the world. But what if we told you that this need not be mere fiction, but very much a fact too!

This can be proven by Terre des Hommes Netherlands' very own superheroes, i.e. the project officers, ASHA (Accredited Social Health Workers) workers and volunteers, who travelled to extremely remote villages via a 2-hour boat ride and a long walk through the forest to help vaccinate those living

in isolation. In today's times, there's no better way to save the world than to help people fight COVID-19.



Situated in the district of East Godavari, Andhra Pradesh, lies a cluster of 5 villages. These villages are one of the most isolated villages in India, inhabited by around 2000 migrant tribals from nearby states, Odisha and Chattisgarh. The lack of electricity, road travel and mobile network makes it difficult for the villagers to access basic healthcare facilities, let alone getting the COVID-19 vaccines.



As the team reached the banks of the river Godavari, they saw several villagers fishing. The team, accompanied by Primary Healthcare Centre (PHC) workers, started vaccinating the villagers by the river banks. They then moved into the villages, going inside tiny huts made of bamboo to vaccinate the rest. The volunteers and ASHA workers played an important role in interpersonal communication, speaking to the villagers in their local language and convincing them to get the vaccine by addressing their fears and clarifying their doubts.

Around 400 people were vaccinated in this cluster and the TdH-NL team plans to vaccinate the whole

population within the next four months. These villages come under the governance of Thummileru Panchayat that TdH-NL in India has collaborated with to carry out this vaccination drive effectively.

“We are so delighted that we could reach out to the most inaccessible villages. It makes us happy to help them be safe and protected. I am truly grateful to be a part of this team”, says Subrat Kumar Panda, a TdH staff member who leads the vaccination drive in the state.

As more and more people get vaccinated, the team is hopeful that these small steps with great efforts will truly make a change. The collective efforts of the TdH-NL team in India has helped vaccinate close to 32,000 people across 400+ villages so far.

Ensuring Awareness that Protects:



In India, a major challenge in vaccinating people has been the lack of awareness about the importance of the COVID-19 vaccination. People from rural areas have been fearful of taking the vaccine doses due to the misinformation around getting the jab.

Most of the rural population has been living under the lie that taking the COVID-19 vaccine will harm them and cause further complications. Moreover, seeing people follow COVID-19 protocols like wearing masks and maintaining social distance has been a rare sight in these areas. This makes the rural population not only vulnerable to the existing coronavirus but also a breeding ground for the virus to form newer mutations.

The staff first conducted an in depth research to understand peoples' media consumption patterns and the specific fears, doubts and ignorance that stop people from getting vaccinated and following effective COVID-19 protocols. With the findings from the research, the team worked on a strategy to counter the specific negative practices and bring out necessary behaviour change among the target population.

To protect the people from further infections, Terre des Hommes Netherlands in India has been running an extensive awareness campaign on COVID-19 vaccination and its protocols. To achieve this, the TdH-NL team worked on creating a number of Information Education and Communication (IEC) Materials to bring about positive behavioural and social changes in the rural population of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Telangana, Jharkhand, Bihar and Odisha. These IEC Materials were created in 6 different languages for the target population- Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Oriya and Hindi. The materials have been installed in public places like community centres, street walls, outside grocery shops and other places which people in the rural areas visit frequently. The flyers are being given to people in person as the team encourages them to get their families vaccinated. So far, the IEC material for COVID-19 and vaccination-related awareness has reached out to 418 villages and close to 12 lakh people. The success of these IEC materials can be seen in the fact that TdH-NL in India has managed to ensure the vaccination of close to 32,000 people so far across these villages.

Observation of World Day against Child Labour



Open Learning Systems observed "World Day Against Child Labour" on 12th June 2021 under the Community Based Inclusive Development (CBID) project in Puri district. One of the objectives of the project is to create awareness among the communities on child labour and campaign against practicing of child labour.

The members of the inclusive children's clubs are actively involved in propagating against the engagement of children in work and promoting children's education. OLS organized community level awareness meetings on child labour at Kothakusanga, Bayabara, Rencha, Alandaand Dhaleswar Gram panchayats. OLS staff focused on defining child labour, legal provisions to protect children from child labour and the reporting mechanism, what are the provisions for protecting the children in distressed condition who fall into the trap and are exploited, neglected and abused, etc.



The important role of Childline and the telephone number 1098 were also discussed. The roles of Police, Judiciary, PRI members, CWC, DCPU, SJPU etc. were also discussed briefly. The most important role was of the Village Level Child Protection Committee that was discussed at length. Some of the children were also part of the committees who shared their experiences. Finally, the children and other community members present on the occasion pledged to fight against child labour and report any case of child labour, if it comes to their notice, to the VLCPC, Childline, the Police, the concerned block level officer of the Labour Department by taking the help of the PRI member and local volunteers/CBOs.

Protecting children in COVID19

Children have borne the harshest brunt of the Covid-19 pandemic in the last 14 months. Over 1.2 lakh children in India have lost their parents due to the pandemic. Globally, over 15 lakh children are estimated to have experienced the death of at least one parent or a custodial or a co-residing grandparent, or other older relative. As per Bal Swaraj, an online tracking portal of National commission of Child Rights (NCPDR), 6115 children have lost their parents in Odisha since April 1, 2020 and of them 753 have lost both parents.

Their childhood which meant to be full of happiness and laughter suddenly plunged into deep abyss of sorrow and darkness. The story was same for all the children who have lost their parents at such a tender age.



Chinmaya, Jena aged 10 of Anturai village of Balim panchayat of Bhograi block was living happily with his parents Deelip Kumar Jena (38) and Sandhya Rani Jena (27). But destiny has planned otherwise for him. He lost his father, the only earning member of his family in the month of May 2021. Along with his mother, he was left helpless without any source of income. The future was uncertain for them. During this period, Chinmaya was identified by PECUC's volunteer working in this area and immediately received dry ration support for 15 days. Chinmaya was linked with Ashirbad Jojana of Govt. of Odisha and her mother was linked with Widow Pension and PMAY jojana.



The story of Lija, aged 9 is also very shocking. This little girl of Manunagar village of Aruhabruti GP of Bhograi block lost her mother on August 30th and her father died earlier. Lija was staying with her grandparents with her mother. After her mother's death Lija was left alone with her aged grandparents. After receiving the news PECUC volunteer reached the village and identified her for the dry ration support and also facilitated the linkage to Ashirbad Jojana and also to Basundhara Jojana for her education in Govt. residential school.

The losses these children have suffered can never be filled with any amount of consolation, help or support but they have to live their life no matter what the situation is. It is the responsibility of all to see that they are well cared for and their rights are not violated.

Supreme Court's Judgement

Supreme Court to State: Ensure the studies of orphan due to COVID19 are not hindered

The Supreme Court on 26th August 2021 directed the State Governments to ensure that the education of children, who became orphans after the onset of COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, in private schools continue without disruption at least during the present academic year. This can be done by asking schools to waive fee or state bearing the fee for such children, the Court suggested.

The States were directed to act in cohesion with Child Welfare Committees & District Education Officers in having dialogue with private schools where these children are studying to ensure their

education this year is not disrupted. A bench comprising of **Justices L Nageswara Rao and Aniruddha Bose** passed this direction in the suo moto case taken to deal with the issue of children affected by COVID (*In Re Contagion of COVID Virus in Children Protection Homes*).

Although the bench started the dictation of the order for the State of Andhra Pradesh, it later said that it is making the above order applicable to all states. The bench said that states must take "pro-active steps" in this regard.

"For children who have lost either parent or both parents after March 2020, the State Governments shall confer with private schools to waive the fee of the distressed children for the current academic year. In case, the private institutions are unwilling to effectuate such waiver, the State Governments shall shoulder the burden of the fee", the Court ordered.

In respect of those children amongst the 2600 registered under the PM CARES For Children Scheme, it is open to the State Governments to request the Government of India to bear the fee and other expenses pertaining to their education, for the current academic year.

The bench underlined that the delay in uploading the information of children who lost one or both the parents during COVID in the 'Bal Swaraj Portal' of the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights "would be detrimental to interest of distressed children".

On last occasion, Supreme Court had directed the States and Union Territories to take assistance from several agencies at the grass-root level for completing the process. The Bench had noted that the identification of children who have lost both or one parent after March 2020 cannot afford any further delay.

The Court had ordered the District Magistrates to issue necessary instructions to the Child welfare & protection Officers to take assistance of the Police, DCPU, Civil Society Organisations, Gram panchayats, Anganwadi and Asha networks for identification of orphans.

The District Magistrates were directed to provide necessary information till stage 5 as it appears on the

Bal Swaraj portal to enable NCPCR to monitor implementation of schemes.

The Court had directed that the Child Welfare Committees to complete inquiries within the time limit specified in the act and provide required assistance and rehabilitation to orphans.

All State and Union Territories have been directed to file status report giving following particulars:

- Number of children who have become orphans or lost one parent after March 2020
- Number of children produced before CWC
- Children who have been provided with benefits of schemes announced by States.
- Information regarding payment of amount of 2000 provided under ICPS scheme to needy children.

The bench was considering the suo moto case *In Re Contagion of COVID Virus in Children Protection Homes*. The suo moto case was initiated in March 2020 to address the issue of COVID spread in juvenile homes, child care centres etc. This year, during the second wave, the Court took note of the issue of children who became orphans during the COVID pandemic period.

On May 28, the Court directed the Union and States to identify children who have become orphans post March, 2020, whether it be due to the pandemic or otherwise, and upload their information in the 'Bal Swaraj' portal of National Commission for Protection of Child Rights. The bench has also passed directions to control illegal adoption of such orphans.

PM CARES for Children Scheme

The PM CARES for Children Scheme was launched by The Hon'ble Prime Minister of India on 29th May 2021 for the Children. It aims to support children who have lost both the Parents or legal Guardian or Adoptive Parents or Surviving Parent to COVID-19 pandemic during the period starting from 11th March 2020. The objective of the Scheme is to ensure comprehensive care and protection of Children in a

sustained manner, and enable their well being through health insurance, empower them through education and equip them for self-sufficient existence with financial support on reaching 23 years of age.

Ministry of Women and Child Development shall be the nodal Ministry for execution of the scheme at the central level. Department of the State/UT government dealing with the Juvenile Justice set up in the State shall be the nodal agency at State level. The District Magistrates shall be the nodal authority at District level for execution of the scheme.

The scheme provides support for education and health and will create a corpus of Rs 10 lakh for each child when he or she reaches 18 years of age. This corpus will be used to give a monthly financial support/ stipend from 18 years of age, for the next 5 years to take care of his or her personal requirements during the period of higher education and on reaching the age of 23 years, he or she will get the corpus amount as one lump-sum for personal and professional use.

The scheme is accessible through an online portal i.e. pmcaresforchildren.in. The portal has been introduced to all the States and UTs on 15th July 2021 and the States/UTs have been asked to identify and register eligible children on the portal. Any Citizen can also inform the administration regarding a child eligible for support under this scheme through the portal.

CRC Asia Coalition (CRC Asia) Partnership Meeting

Child Rights Coalition Asia (CRC Asia), a network of child rights organizations working together to be a strong voice for child rights in the region, strives to strengthen child rights movements by creating alliances with stakeholders, as well as building the capacity of child rights groups and partners. Since 2015, CRC Asia has been organizing the *Asia-Pacific Partnership Meeting of Child Rights Coalitions and Networks* (APPM) to contribute to improving the understanding of emerging child rights issues and situations, develop ideas to strengthen child rights advocacy, and engage with child rights stakeholders

at the national and regional levels, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) and South Asia Initiative to End Violence against Children (SAIEVAC). The meeting also served as a platform to gather the recommendations from the region to inform the work of the CRC Committee.

Civil society plays an important role in ensuring that the rights of children are upheld. Whether operating at the local, national, regional, or international levels, civil society organizations (CSOs) working on children's rights contribute in providing services, raising awareness, conducting research, and performing advocacy and other efforts to support and monitor the implementation of the UN CRC.

Aside from having allies in the advocacy, CSOs need to have the expertise on their specific child rights issue, as well as a firm grasp on its link with the other emerging issues and actions. Like other human rights concerns, however, child rights issues are continuously evolving and require incessant discussions. In this regard, child rights organizations need regular capacity building to keep up with these developments. For instance, the health and socioeconomic impact brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic on children is among the emerging issues that child rights organizations grappled with.

2021 Asia-Pacific Partnership Meeting of Child Rights Coalitions and Networks started on 4th Aug 2021 on virtual platform and it continued till 15th Sept 2021. A total of 7 thematic meetings were held to build the capacity of the coalition members. Mr. Ranjan Kumar Mohanty, Chairperson NACG EVAC, India attended the meetings.

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