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CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND CHILD WELFARE

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Abstract: *Children constitute principle resources of any state. Children's Growth is as significant as the development of material means and the best way to develop national human resources is to take care of children. India has the biggest child population in the world. All out efforts are being made by India for the growth and well-being of children. Important improvement has been made in many fields in promising children their basic rights. Though, much remains to be done. The country reintroduces its promise and purpose to give the maximum importance to the basic needs and rights of all children. Children are most susceptible to exploitation and abuse. A portion extra has to be done for the health, nutrition and education of children. It is unlucky that girls in particular face debilitating discrimination at all stages. Thus, particular concentration is being assumed to the efforts to recover the life and chances of the Girl Child.*

Keywords— *Policy, Children's Development, constitutional provisions, schemes and programmes*

INTRODUCTION

The National Policy for Children was implemented on 22nd Aug.,1974. This Policy lays down that the State shall be responsible for adequate services towards children, both before and after birth and during the developing stages for their full physical, mental and social growth. The measures recommended contain amongst others, a complete health programme, additional nutrition for mothers and children, free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14 years, advancement of physical education and recreational activities, special consideration for children of weaker sections like SCs and STs, prevention of exploitation of children, etc. The Government of India accepted the National Charter for Children which has been arranged after obtaining the comments and suggestions of the State Governments/UT Administrations, concerned Ministries and Departments and experts in the field. The

National Charter is a statement of determined exemplifying the Government's program for Children. The document highlights Government of India's promise to children's rights to survival, health and nutrition, standard of living, play and leisure, early childhood care, education, protection of the girl child, empowering adolescents, equality, life and liberty, name and nationality, freedom of expression, freedom of association and peaceful assembly, the right to a family and the right to be protected from economic exploitation and all methods of abuse. The deed also be responsible for for protection of children in difficult conditions, children with incapacities, children from marginalized and deprived communities, and child victims. The deed while stipulating the duties of the State and the Community towards children also highlights the duties of children towards family, society and the Country.

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

There are numerous constitutional provisions for children. These comprise the following.

- I. **Article 14** provides that the State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India.
- II. **Article 15(3)** says that, "Nothing in this article shall prevent the State for making any special provision for women and children."
- III. **Article 21** clearly mention that no person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law.
- IV. **Article 21A** directs the State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such manner as the State may, by law, determine.
- V. **Article 23** prohibits trafficking of human beings and forced labour.
- VI. **Article 24** prohibits employment of children below the age of fourteen years in factories, mines or any other hazardous occupation.
- VII. **Article 25-28** provides freedom of conscience, and free profession, practice and propagation of religion.
- VIII. **Article 45** envisages that the State shall endeavor to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years.

Legislations: There are some Legislations relating to children. These comprise the following.

- a) The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929.

- b) The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986.
- c) The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000.
- d) The Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 1992.
- e) The Pre-Conception and Pre-natal Diagnostic Technique(Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994.
- f) The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995.
- g) The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956.
- h) The Guardian and Wards Act, 1890.
- i) The Young Persons (Harmful Publications) Act, 1956.
- j) The Commissions for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005

SCHEMES AND PROJECTS

Numerous Ministries and Departments of the Government of India are executing various schemes and programmes for the help of children. Some of the Schemes and Programmes being executed by the Ministry of Women and Child Development are as under:

1. Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme
2. Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme for the children of working mothers

Nutrition Component of Prime Minister ***Gramodya Yojana*** and ***Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls in 51 Districts*** being implemented with additional central assistance given by the Planning Commission, directly and indirectly contribute to promoting nutrition of children. A National Nutrition Mission has been set up under the chairpersonship of Hon'ble Prime Minister vide notification dated 31st July 2003 with a view to enable policy direction to concerned Departments of the Government for addressing the problem of malnutrition in a mission mode. A Combined Programme for Street Children is being implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development especially for those children who are on streets and homeless and comprise the rag picking and vagabond children. The Scheme goals at providing full and wholesome growth of children without homes and family links. The children without homes and family ties and children particularly susceptible to abuse and exploitation

such as children of sex workers and children of pavement dwellers are the target group for this Programme. Financial assistance is provided to the NGOs who are eligible and working for the welfare of the street children, for Formal & Non-formal Education, Shelter Home, Occupational Training to Children, Nutrition, health care, hygiene and hygiene, safe drinking water, education and recreational facilities and protection against abuse and exploitation.

CONCLUSION

Child abuse includes numerous features, such as, sexual exploitation, economic exploitation, domestic violence, trafficking for prostitution, corporal punishment at school, and others. So, the Ministry felt a need to have a discourse on the matter so as to determine the opinions from all quarters and to express a consensus in order to statement the issue more adequately and efficiently. Accordingly few discussions have been made with voluntary organizations and experts commerce with the subject. It has been obvious after consultation to constitute a small group consisting of representative from Government, NGOs, legal experts and social workers which will go into all facets of the matter and after seeing all existing legal provisions and others accessible on the subject and express a draft legislation to address all concerns pertaining to child abuse. After wide discussions a draft Bill for Offences Against Children was prepared and dispersed to the State Governments for their commentaries and views. After procurement the commentaries of concerned Ministries and Departments a draft Cabinet Note has been mentioned to Law Ministry for their vetting. The suggestion will be located before the Cabinet soon.

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