



PARLIAMENT OF INDIA
RAJYA SABHA

DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE
ON EDUCATION, WOMEN, CHILDREN, YOUTH AND SPORTS

THREE HUNDRED AND THIRTY THIRD REPORT
ON

**Action Taken by the Government on the
Observations/Recommendations contained in the Three
Hundred and Twenty Sixth Report on the Demands For
Grants (2021-22) of the Ministry of Women and Child
Development**

(Presented to the Rajya Sabha on 30th November, 2021)

(Laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 30th November, 2021)



Rajya Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi
November, 2021 /Agrahayana, 1943, (Saka)

Hindi version of this publication is also available

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COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE
(Constituted *w.e.f.* 13th September, 2021)

1. Dr. Vinay P. Sahasrabuddhe - Chairman

RAJYA SABHA

2. Shri R. S. Bharathi
3. Shri Bikash Ranjan Bhattacharyya
4. * Ms. Sushmita Dev
5. Shri Bhubaneswar Kalita
6. Shri Vishambhar Prasad Nishad
7. Shri K. C. Ramamurthy
8. Shri Gopal Narayan Singh
9. Shri Akhilesh Prasad Singh
10. Dr. M. Thambidurai

LOK SABHA

11. Shri Rajendra Agrawal
12. Shri D. M Kathir Anand
13. Dr. Dhal Singh Bisen
14. Shri Santokh Singh Chaudhary
15. Shri Lavu Sri Krishna Devarayalu
16. Shri Sangamlal Kadedin Gupta
17. Shri Sadashiv Kisan Lokhande
18. Dr. Jaisiddeshwar Shivacharya Mahaswamiji
19. Shri Asit Kumar Mal
20. Shri Anubhav Mohanty
21. Shri Balak Nath
22. Shri Chandeshwar Prasad
23. Shri T. N. Prathapan
24. Shri Ratansinh Magansinh Rathod
25. Shri Jagannath Sarkar
26. Dr. Arvind Kumar Sharma
27. Shri Vishnu Dutt Sharma
28. Shri Dharambir Singh
29. Shri Rajveer Singh (Raju Bhaiya)
30. Shri S. Venkatesan
31. Shri Ashok Kumar Yadav

* Nominated *w.e.f.* 27.09.2021

SECRETARIAT

Dr. Shikha Darbari, Joint Secretary and Financial Advisor
Shri Shri A.K. Mallick, Director
Shri Har Prateek Arya, Deputy Secretary
Smt. Oindrila Roy, Deputy Secretary
Shri Arun Bakshi, Under Secretary
Smt. Suman Khurana, Committee Officer (in-situ)
Shri Agam Mittal, Assistant Committee Officer

PREFACE

I, the Chairman of the Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports, having been authorised by the Committee to present the Report on its behalf, do hereby present this Three Hundred and Thirty Third Report of the Committee on the Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Three Hundred and Twenty Sixth Report on the Demands for Grants (2021-22) of the Ministry of Women and Child Development. The Action Taken Replies were received from the Ministry of Women and Child Development *vide* their communication dated 23rd July, 2021.

2. Three Hundred and Twenty Sixth Report of the Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports was presented to Rajya Sabha on 16th March, 2021 and simultaneously laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 16th March, 2021 and Replies of the Government to the observations/recommendations contained in the Report were considered by the Committee at its meeting held on the 26th November, 2021.

3. The Committee considered the draft Report and adopted the same in its meeting held on 26th November, 2021.

NEW DELHI
26th November, 2021
Agrahayana / 1943 (Saka)

Dr. Vinay P. Sahasrabudde
Chairman
Department-related Parliamentary
Standing Committee on Education, Women,
Children, Youth and Sports

ABBREVIATIONS

AWC	Anganwadi Centre
AWH	Anganwadi Helper
AWW	Anganwadi Worker
BBBP	Beti Bachao Beti Padhao
BE	Budget Estimate
CAMPA	Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act
CARA	Central Adoption Resource Authority
CCI	Child Care Institution
CSWB	Central Social Welfare Board
DEA	Department of Economic Affairs
DELNET	Developing Library Network
DoE	Department of Expenditure
DoFPD	Department of Food and Public Distribution
DoPT	Department of Personnel and Training
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
FNB	Food and Nutrition Board
GeM	Government e-Marketplace
GFR	General Financial Rules
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Services
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
JJ Act	Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015
JJB	Juvenile Justice Board
M/oRTH	Ministry of Road Transport and Highways
MeitY	Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
MHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MoH&FW	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
MoPR	Ministry of Panchayati Raj
MoRD	Ministry of Rural Development
MoSPI	Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MWCD	Ministry of Women and Child Development
NBA	News Broadcasters Association
NCPCR	National Commission for Protection of Child Rights
NCRB	National Crime Records Bureau

NCW	National Commission for Women
NeGD	National e-Governance Division
NEP	National Education Policy
NHFS	National Family Health Survey
NIPCCD	National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development
NNP	National Nutrition Park
OSC	One Stop Centre
PCMA, 2006	Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006
PMMVY	Pradhan Mantri MatruVandana Yojana
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institution
RE	Revised Estimate
RMK	Rashtriya Mahila Kosh
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
SCPCR	State Commission for the Protection of Child Rights
SH Act	Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013
SNP	Supplementary Nutrition Programme
SoP	Standard Operating Procedure
THR	Take Home Ration
UT	Union Territory
VHSNC	Village Health, Sanitation and Nutrition Committee
WHL	Women Helpline

REPORT

The Report of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports deals with the action taken by the Government on the observations/recommendations contained in its 326th Report on the Demands for Grants 2021-22 of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, which was presented to the Rajya Sabha and laid on the table of Lok Sabha on 16th March, 2021.

2. The Action Taken Notes in respect of observations/recommendations contained in above mentioned Report were received from the Ministry of Women and Child Development *vide* their communication dated 23rd July, 2021. These have been categorized as follows.

Chapter I: Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government

Paras - 2.5, 3.4, 3.11, 3.22, 3.24, 3.25, 3.29, 3.31, 3.32

Total - 9

Chapter II: Observations/Recommendations which the Committee does not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies:-

Paras – 3.1, 3.5, 3.9, 3.14, 3.19, 3.20, 3.21, 3.23, 3.26, 3.27

Total - 10

Chapter III: Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee:-

Paras- 2.10, 3.3, 3.13, 3.17

Total - 4

Chapter-IV: Observation/recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government is still awaited:-

Paras - Nil

Total - Nil

CHAPTER-I

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Observation/recommendation

1. *The Committee is of the view that there has been a constant decrease in the budget estimate of the Ministry vis-à-vis the Government of India Budget. RE 2020-21 has also been significantly reduced as compared to BE 2020-21. The Committee recommends that though the Ministry has re-vamped a lot of the schemes into new missions, the allocation in BE 2021-22 has been reduced significantly which might hamper implementation of the new missions. The Ministry should, therefore, make an in-depth analysis of the new missions and schemes thereunder and seek additional funds from the Ministry of Finance at RE stage, if required.*

(Para-2.5)

Action Taken

The recommendations of the Parliamentary Standing Committee have been noted for compliance.

Saksham Anganwadi

Observation/recommendation

2. *The Committee also recommends that computerized data relating to learning outcomes and health parameters of all the children registered in “Saksham Anganwadis” be maintained for early identification so that timely remedial measures for children requiring special attention are taken. This data should be uploaded on the website of the Ministry and regularly updated.*

(Para-3.4)

Action Taken

It has been proposed to upgrade 2.00 lakh AWCs @ 40000 AWCs per annum to Saksham Anganwadi Centres by providing/adding more services with better infrastructure to deliver

improved quality of services in health, nutrition and Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).

To track the data on health and Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), templates would be integrated including that for children requiring special attention, with POSHAN Tracker so that data on real time basis is available to the District and State authorities and remedial measures can be taken by them.

Suposhit Bharat

Observation/recommendation

3. *The Committee recommends that, in view of the increased cases of stunting, underweight and anemia among children and women in a number of States, POSHAN Abhiyaan should be taken up on a war footing with active involvement and convergent action by different Ministries like Women and Child Development, Rural Development, Jal Shakti and Health and Family Welfare to ensure concrete action on the ground, by identifying the maximum malnourished districts of the country and establishing a 'Malnutrition Eradication Authority', latest by 30th June, 2021.*

(Para-3.11)

Action Taken

The Pillars of Common Core under Poshan 2.0 includes Governance, Convergence, Capacity Building and IT Component. Through Convergence, Poshan 2.0 aims addressing Nutrition Indicators through a holistic approach engaging all relevant Ministries and Departments that aims at - Ministry and scheme level convergence, District and State level monitoring convergence, Community participation and ownership through Poshan Panchayats, VHSNCs, Mother Groups etc., and Rewards & recognitions, and incentives for functionaries & volunteers.

Nutrition support for children and pregnant women and lactating mothers is under the remit of MoWCD. Therefore, there is no significant overlap with other schemes/sub-schemes of other Ministries/Departments. However, as regards need for convergence to consolidate outcomes is concerned, 'AYUSH for Anganwadis is planned to strengthen indigenous knowledge on nutrition and usage in Anganwadi Centres with the help of Ministry of AYUSH.

Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare will help in creation of model POSHAN Vatikas and provision of bio-fortified seeds. Ministry of Environment and Forests will extend their schemes of Social Forestry and CAMPA for generating food-forests. Ministry of Jal Shakti will help to improve Drinking Water and Sanitation facilities in the Anganwadi Centres and in harvesting rainwater. With the help of Ministry of Rural Development, M/o PRIs, POSHAN Vatikas will be established as viable units. DoFPD is undertaking a programme for fortification of rice to meet micro-nutrient requirements. MoWCD will participate in the programme for supply of fortified rice under Poshan 2.0 to beneficiaries.

MoWCD has already issued joint guidelines with other relevant Ministries / Departments to deal with the issue of malnutrition in a holistic way.

In the joint letter issued dated 31st August, 2020, Secretaries of MoPR, MoRD and MoWCD have recommended developing Kitchen/Nutri-gardens in Anganwadi premises and on Panchayat / Community land in the village.

In the joint letter issued dated 7th September, 2020 by the Secretaries of MoHFW, MoAYUSH, MoPR and MoWCD, early identification and management of SAM children has been emphasized. Utilizing indigenous systems of Ayurveda, Sidha and Unani and strengthening community support, through Poshan Panchayat has been recommended.

The issue of SAM and Poshan Panchayat have been emphasized vide joint letters issued to States by Hon'ble Ministers of MoWCD and MoH&FW.

In the joint letter dated 2nd September, 2020 by Secretaries of School Education and Literacy and MoWCD, States have been requested to organize POSHAN Assembly, essay completions and e-Quiz in all schools.

In its streamlined guidelines vide letter dated 13th January, 2021, MWCD had emphasised that one of the major activities under the POSHAN Abhiyaan is to leverage technology for monitoring and improved service delivery for beneficiaries including Pregnant Women, Lactating Mothers and Children (0-6 years). For this, a robust ICT enabled platform 'Poshan Tracker' has been developed to ensure real time monitoring of provisioning supplementary nutrition for improving nutritional status of beneficiaries and providing real time information for prompt supervisions and management of services. All States/UTs were requested to advise all AWWs to down load the new Poshan Tracker App. States/UTs were advised to introduce transparent processes for procurement of phones as per GFR and vigilance guidelines and ensure its procurement within the ceiling using GeM platform.

The point regarding establishing a ‘Malnutrition Eradication Authority’ has been noted.

Missing Children

Observation/recommendation

4. *The Committee recommends that the Ministry along with National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) and the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCR) should evolve a mechanism to expedite the process so that the missing children reach home as soon as possible.*

(Para-3.22)

Action Taken

Section 2 (14) (vii) of JJ Act, 2015 includes a “Missing Child” as a ‘child in need of care of protection’. The Ministry has issued a ‘Standard Operating Procedure for cases of Missing Children’ on 23.11.2016, to assist Police, Child Welfare Committee, Juvenile Justice Board and other stakeholders in dealing with the cases of missing and found or recovered children

To deliberate upon the issues of safety, development and wellbeing of children of the country, a Seminar was organised on 24.03.2021 under the chairpersonship of Hon’ble Min (WCD) with National and State Commissions for Protection of Child Rights.

NCPCR would prepare a Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) for rescue and reintegration of missing children in consultation with SCPCRs.

Vacancy position in the Ministry and organizations under its ambit

Observations/Recommendations

5. *The Committee recommends that special recruitment drive may be conducted to fill up the large scale vacancies in the Ministry and various organisations under its administrative control latest by 30th June, 2021 as the persistent vacant positions create a wrong perception about our collective commitment to social justice.*

(Para-3.24)

Action Taken

The workforce of the Ministry (Secretariat), comprising of various cadres in different categories, is appointed by DoPT, MoSPI, DEA and MHA (OL), details of which are as under:

S/N	Name of Posts	Sanctioned posts	On-roll position	Vacancy	Cadre Controlling Authority
i.	ACC	13	10	3	DoPT
ii.	IES	3	3	0	DEA
iii.	ISS	9	7	2	MoSPI
iv.	CSOL	8	7	1	D/o Official Language, MHA
v.	CSS	119	93	26	DoPT
vi.	CSSS	46	24	22	DoPT
vii.	CSCS	7	4	3	DoPT
viii.	SCD	4	2	2	MWCD
ix.	MTS & Dispatch rider	50	14	36	SSC & DoPT
x.	Ex-cadre posts	4	2	2	MWCD
	DoPT	265	166	99	

It is mentioned that DoPT has been requested to fill up the vacant posts in Group ‘A’ and ‘B’ from time to time. Further, a reservation roster for filling up MTS posts in the Ministry was prepared and sent to DoPT for vetting. On its receipt, the matter will be taken up with SSC and DoPT for filling up these posts. Regarding SCD, no suitable candidate is available for filling up of vacant posts. However, efforts are being made for filling up these posts on deputation basis as per existing RR.

POSHAN Abhiyaan

Advertisement for two posts of Executive Director and seven posts of Project Manager has been published. The contractual posts of Consultant, Project Associate, Data Entry Operator and MTS has been extended up to 30.9.2021.

NCW

The Commission has been regularly advertising the sanctioned vacant posts in the Employment News. The latest advertisement has appeared in the Employment News of 3rd April, 2021 edition and last date of receipt of applications was 02.05.2021. The selection process is in pipeline. Efforts shall be made to finalize the process before 30th June, 2021. It is pertinent to mention here that in its Study carried out by the Staff Inspection Unit of Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, the mode of filling up the sanctioned posts has been given as transfer by deputation on Foreign Service terms basis. The office of the National

Commission for Women is located away from the Central place in Delhi in Jasola, hence there is very poor response to the advertisement given by the Commission from time to time and the post(s) remain vacant.

NCPCR

NCPCR has initiated the process of filling-up the vacant positions. The post of Hindi Translator (on deputation basis/foreign service terms) has been filled and selected candidate is expected to join by 26.05.2021.

The other vacant positions to be filled on deputation basis/foreign service terms have been circulated to all Ministries/Departments of Government of India on 19.04.2021 and last date of receipt of application is 08.06.2021.

RMK

There is no proposal to fill the vacancies of Rashtriya Mahila Kosh as the proposal for dissolution of Rashtriya Mahila Kosh is under consideration.

CARA

At present there are only 16 positions vacant in CARA. The office will carry out a special recruitment drive to fill-up the vacant positions

CSWB

As per the recommendations of the Ministry of Finance (DoE), Hon'ble Minister, WCD has given in-principle approval for closure of CSWB which has been conveyed to Chairperson, CSWB, *vide* letter dt. 18.06.2021. Therefore, the need for special recruitment drive to fill up vacancies in CSWB does not arise.

NIPCCD

Institute has requested to the Ministry for the permission to fill up the vacancies as per rules.

FNB

It is to state that all the operations of the Food and Nutrition Board have been closed and notification to this effect has also been published in the weekly Gazette Notification of India (26th June- 2nd July 2021).

Prevention of Sexual Harassment in Corporate World

Observations/Recommendations

6. *The Committee recommends that sexual harassment cases in corporate world should find a mention in the Annual Report of National Commission for Women (NCW). Further, gender sensitisation of male counterparts should be conducted and media protocol regarding depiction of women should also be framed.*

(Para-3.25)

Action Taken

As per Section 22 of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (the SH Act) authorises every employers to include in its annual report the number of cases filed and disposed off and if no such annual report is required to be prepared then intimate such number of cases to the District Officer, who shall forward a brief report on the annual report submitted to the State Government.

With regard to gender sensitisation of male counterpart, section 19 of the SH Act obligates all employers to organise workshops and awareness programmes at regular intervals for sensitising the employees including male employees about the provisions of the Act.

The Programme and Advertising Code prescribed under the Cable Television Network Rules, 1994 (Rule 6 and 7), Code for Self Regulation in Advertising of the Advertising Standards Council of India (Chapter II), Content Certification Code by Broadcasting Content Complaints Council (Theme 2 - Sex, Obscenity and Nudity) and Self-Regulation Guidelines by News Broadcasters Association (NBA) already provides for the decent depiction of women in media.

NCW

NCW shall comply with the observation of Department related Parliamentary Standing Committee.

Issue of pornography on social media and its effect on children

Observations/Recommendations

7. *The Committee recommends the Ministry along with National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) should take measures to curb sexual exploitation of children and circulation of child pornographic content on social media.*

(Para-3.29)

Action Taken

The steps taken by NCPCR with regard to circulation of child pornographic content on social media are enclosed as **Annexure I**.

Simplifying the procedure of adoption under Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.

Observations/Recommendations

8. *The Committee recommends that, with a view to reduce the delay due to procedural complexities, the methodology involved in the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, should be simplified and made more humane for making the adoption process smooth.*

(Para-3.31)

Action Taken

The Ministry has introduced the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Bill, 2021 to strengthen child protection in the District by empowering District Magistrate to coordinate and monitor functions of various stakeholders and to issue orders of adoption. Among other things, the amendment would help in addressing the delays in finalisation of adoption process. The Bill was passed by Lok Sabha on 24.03.2021.

Closure of Food and Nutrition Board (FNB), Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) and Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK)

Observations/Recommendations

9. *The Committee recommends that the Ministry should conduct an impact assessment of the three bodies - Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK), Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) and Food and Nutrition Board (FNB) and devise a mechanism to see that manpower of these bodies are not impacted by their closure and integrate them into the Ministry or other bodies/organizations.*

(Para-3.32)

Action Taken

The recommendations of the Committee have been noted for guidance.

CHAPTER-II

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DOES NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT'S REPLY

Saksham Anganwadi

Observations/Recommendations

1. *The Committee recommends that the Ministry should chalk out a blue print in coordination with the Ministry of Education to modernize Anganwadis and strengthen them as early-childhood education institutions in line with the over-arching goal of ensuring universal access to high-quality Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) as envisaged in the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020, latest by 30th June, 2021. Suitable training to Anganwadi workers/teachers for this increased responsibility needs to be imparted in a time bound manner.*

(Para-3.1)

Action Taken

It is proposed to roll out ECCE in all the AWCs in a phased manner beginning FY 2021-22 and cover up to 20% of the AWCs in each FY for next five years.

Ministry of WCD has already developed year wise Activity book for the children of age group of 3-4 years, 4-5 years & 5-6 years

Further, in convergence with Department of School Education, the curriculum of children of age group of 3-6 years will be finalised and for this purpose NCERT will be in touch with MWCD and NIPCCD.

Anganwadi workers will be further trained for quality education to children of the age group of 3-6 years. Anganwadi workers with qualifications of 10th will be given 1 year online training and that with +2 will be given 6 months online training.

Observation/recommendation

2. *The Committee recommends that the amount of honorarium given to Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) and Anganwadi Helpers (AWHs) may be considered for enhancement to provide better service conditions to them.*

Action Taken

Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) & Anganwadi Helpers (AWHs), being honorary workers, are paid a monthly honoraria as decided by the Government from time to time. In addition to the honoraria paid by the Government of India, most of the States/UTs are also giving monetary incentives to these workers out of their own resources.

Suposhit Bharat

Observations/Recommendations

3. *The Committee recommends that the Ministry should take the following actions in respect of POSHAN Abhiyaan:-*

i. Key Performance Indicators should be constantly monitored and uploaded on the website.

ii. National Nutrition Park (NNP) on the lines of the one created near the Statue of Unity, Kevadia, Gujarat, be created across different States of the country with the involvement of Anganwadi Workers.

iii. generate awareness about the uses of Ayurvedic plants for health and nutrition.

Action Taken

(i) A detailed technological platform, namely "Poshan Tracker", has been developed by National e-Governance Division (NeGD) of MeitY, which will track all beneficiaries along defined indicators.

This ICT enabled management application will provide a 360-degree view of the activities of the Anganwadi Centre (AWC), service deliveries of Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) and complete beneficiary management for pregnant women, lactating mothers and children. It will enable real-time monitoring and tracking of all AWCs, AWWs and beneficiaries on the defined indicators.

For Take Home Rations (THR), QR Code based check will be introduced while distributing packets and maintaining inventory. The ICDS data management application will have data analytics built to ensure a system of dynamic triggers and alters to all stakeholders in the system.

Outcomes in respect of improvement in malnutrition levels will be dynamically tracked by the IT platform, Poshan Tracker, in every quarter. Outcomes will feed into the National Nutrition Index.

(ii) Exposure visit for learning of other States/UTs to the pilot National Nutrition Park (NNP) created at Kevadia, Gujarat would be planned. Thereafter, States/UTs may initiate creation of similar parks from innovation funds @ 27.85 lakhs per district for entire project duration.

(iii) MoWCD and MoAYUSH have signed a MoU on 20th September, 2020 to work together on the objective of creating a joint framework for providing holistic nutrition care for women and children. In addition to providing technical guidance and conducting yoga programmes at Anganwadi Centres, MoAYUSH will also provide 'nutritional counselling' at Anganwadi Centres.

With regard to generating awareness about the uses of Ayurveda plants for health and nutrition, Plantations Drive under 3rd Poshan Pakhwada in March, 2021 has been emphasized upon. Through the AYUSH supported plantation drives, there have been planted 1.10 lakh saplings of medicinal plants during Poshan Pakhwada 2021. Similarly, in terms of setting up of Kitchen Gardens, 2,58,624 plantation activities held through which 10,92,968 new kitchen gardens developed during the Poshan Pakhwada 2021.

Observation/recommendation

4. *The Committee also recommends that to ensure effective implementation of the new POSHAN tracker application, the Ministry should maintain a State-wise progress of the implementation status so that identification of those deprived of the benefits can be made on real time basis for timely remedial measures.*

(Para-3.14)

Action Taken

In its streamlined guidelines vide letter dated 13th January, 2021, MWCD had emphasized that one of the major activities under the POSHAN Abhiyaan is to leverage technology for monitoring and improved service delivery for beneficiaries including Pregnant Women, Lactating Mother's and Children (0-6 years). For this, a robust ICT enabled platform, 'Poshan Tracker' has been developed to ensure real time monitoring of provisioning supplementary nutrition for improving nutritional status of beneficiaries and providing real time information for prompt supervisions and management of services. All States/UTs were requested to advise all AWWs to download the new Poshan Tracker App. States/UTs were advised to introduce transparent processes for procurement of phones as per GFR and vigilance guidelines and ensure its procurement within the ceiling using GeM platform.

Alternatively, through the Poshan Tracker, the system will generate automated alerts to the critical last-mile beneficiaries, and will also ensure efficient audit of the delivery system, by documenting real time attendance of beneficiaries, duty bearers and actual receipt of Supplementary Nutrition. Such a robust digital technology platform and management information system will help the mission to scale efficiently, thereby generating and documenting significant positive impact. Hence, all the States/ UTs shall implement POSHAN Tracker.

Poshan Tracker has already been implemented in 27 States and 6 Union Territories.

Legislation for curbing trafficking of women and children

Observation/recommendation

5. *The Committee recommends that in view of the spurt in crimes like foeticide, infanticide, child marriage and trafficking, the Ministry should work on a war footing in collaboration with the Home Ministry and State Governments to bring down the crimes against women and children and evolve proper rehabilitation, redressal and re-integration mechanisms, during Financial Year 2021-22.*

(Para-3.19)

Action Taken

'Police' and 'Public Order' are State subjects under the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India and therefore, it is the primary duty of the State Governments to prevent, detect, register and take action on complaints related to gender-based bias, discrimination and violence against

women and children and penalize the perpetrators responsible for such inequality, discrimination, bias and violence against women and children. This Ministry supplements State Government's efforts through various Schemes such as Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, One Stop Centre, Women Helpline and Mahila Police Volunteer etc. introduced to address such discrimination and violence. In addition, this Ministry from time to time sends communications to all the States/UTs to ensure the effective implementation of all these women centric Acts.

Safety of women

Observation/recommendation

6. *The Committee recommends that in view of the increase in cases of violence against women across the country, Ministry should make concerted efforts to evolve a mechanism through coordination with various field agencies to minimize the response time to distress calls from women, so that violence against women can be prevented and an action plan be submitted, latest by 30th June, 2021.*

(Para-3.20)

Action Taken

'Police' and 'Public Order' are State subjects under the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India and therefore, it is the primary duty of the State Governments to prevent, detect, register and take action on complaints related to gender-based bias, discrimination and violence against women and children and penalize the perpetrators responsible for such inequality, discrimination, bias and violence against women and children. This Ministry supplements State Government's efforts through various Schemes such as Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, One Stop Centre, Women Helpline, Mahila Police Volunteers etc. introduced to address such discrimination and violence. In addition, this Ministry from time to time sends communications to all the States/UTs to ensure the effective implementation of all these women centric Acts.

Further, there are various schemes/ projects being implemented under Nirbhaya Fund like 'setting up FTSCs, strengthening State's Forensic science Laboratories, setting up Women Help Desk at all Police Stations, setting up Anti Human Trafficking Units at district level and customization of AIS 140 vehicle platform device in State/UT's Public Transport for tracking etc.

Observation/recommendation

7. *The Committee recommends that, though Mahila Police Volunteers (MPVs) have been approved for 13 States, out of which it has been operational in only 5 States with a total of 9531 MPVs selected so far, MPVs should be deployed in the remaining 8 States, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas, so as to curb crimes against women and to supplement the existing law enforcement agencies.*

(Para-3.21)

Action Taken

The scheme did not receive encouraging response from the State Governments. Therefore, based on the learning experience and evaluation of the scheme, the Ministry has decided to discontinue this scheme.

The Ministry has decided to implement the Umbrella Scheme for Safety, Security and Empowerment of Women under the name 'Mission Shakti' including for improving the condition of women affected by violence in the country. The existing schemes of MWCD will be subsumed in Mission Shakti' to address the issues of women on a life-cycle continuum basis for making them equal partners in nation-building through convergence at different levels of governance, greater participation and support of Panchayats and local governance bodies and Jan Sahabgita.

Implementation of laws relating to child marriage and child labour

Observation/recommendation

8. *The Committee recommends that in view of the increase in incidents of child marriage and child labour during the lockdown period as reported in different States, the laws relating to child marriage and child labour should be enforced strictly.*

(Para-3.23)

Action Taken

The Parliament has enacted the 'Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA), 2006' to prevent the social evil of child marriage. The Government also undertakes awareness drives, media campaigns and outreach programmes and issues advisories to the States/ UTs from time to time to highlight evil effects of this practice. Further, the Ministry of Women and Child Development

implements the schemes of 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)' in which creation of awareness amongst women on matters pertaining to gender equality and discouraging of child marriage is an important focus area.

Child labour is a child in need of care and Protection under the provisions of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015. These children merit support from statutory service delivery structures along with Institutional and non Institutional care under the Act. The Ministry has been emphasizing upon the States and UTs to ensure rehabilitation of children adversely impacted by COVID 19 as per the provisions of the JJ Act, 2015.

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) is also mandated to monitor the implementation of the JJ Act, 2015.

Rescue and Rehabilitation of Children

Observation/recommendation

9. *The Committee recommends that the Ministry of Women and Child Development along with Ministry of Education and Ministry of Skill Development should formulate skill development initiatives and vocational training programmes for rehabilitation of children rescued from begging, drug abuse, child labour and adolescent dropout girls.*

(Para-3.26)

Action Taken

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015 lays down detailed instructions for the standards of care in Child Care Institutions (CCIs). The various rehabilitation and reintegration services to be provided in the CCIs, also include appropriate education, including supplementary education, special education, appropriate education for children with special needs; skill development; occupational therapy and life skill education.

The Ministry has formulated a new Mission VATSALYA, an initiative for ensuring comprehensive child welfare including child protection. Mission Vatsalya envisages to develop protocols for skilling interventions, drug de-addiction, and special interventions for Divyang, in consultation with the concerned Ministries/ Departments.

NIPCCD to take consultancy and impact assessment study

Observation/recommendation

10. *The Committee recommends the National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD) should create a platform for sharing their research with different Universities having gender/women studies and also use the research findings for the benefit of the general public. NIPCCD should also re-structure itself to provide consultation services and make impact assessment study of various schemes, programmes relating to women and children.*

(Para-3.27)

Action Taken

NIPCCD shares its Research Studies Reports with the software of Developing Library Network (DELNET), which have more than 250 Institutional Members in Delhi and more than 7000 Institutional member all over India. Further, suggestion of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports has been noted by the Institute for compliance.

CHAPTER-III

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

Observation/recommendation

1. *The Committee recommends that in view of the gross under utilisation of funds under important schemes like POSHAN Abhiyaan, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao etc., the benefits often do not reach the beneficiaries, and therefore, the Ministry should utilise the funds allocated under various Heads to the fullest extent and strive to achieve results at the grass-root level. The outlook of the Ministry needs to change from outlays to outcomes and Ministry should be able to spend, execute and give measurable outcome driven results, in the upcoming Financial Year.*

(Para-2.10)

Action Taken

The response on POSHAN Abhiyaan has reference to and is in continuation of updates provided by MoWCD against observation para 4.7 of the 321st Report on the recommendation observations contained in 314th Report of the Department.

(in Cr.)

Year	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
BE	1,500	3,000	3,400	3,700
RE	950	3,000	3,400	600
Expenditure	879.48	2590.67	1879.23	408.14

Against the fund released to the States and UTs, IUFR has been received for the sum of ₹2619.80 Crores till 31st January, 2021. Moreover, States and UTs are regularly asked in the meetings and through letters to push fund utilization.

Concerning expenditure on ICT-RTM, as on 31.3.2021 a total of ₹1053.44 Crore was spent out of which ₹600.29 Crore (56.98%) was spent on procurement of smartphones, followed by ₹203.96 Crore (19.36%) on smartphone recharge and maintenance. ₹68.50 Crore (6.50%) on training and ₹180.68 Crore (17.3%) on incentive to AWWs and AWHs for using smartphones.

Issues in procurement of Smart Phones and Growth Monitoring Devices (GMDs) from the GeM Portal was the major reason for low utilization as most States/UTs reported to have tender problems/issues.

Less procurement of Smart Phones and GMDs has simultaneously affected various other activities like Smart Phone recharge and maintenance, technological capacity building training and providing incentives to AWWs and AWHs for data coverage, thereby, further lowering the fund utilisation.

Additionally, Covid-19 outbreak has also put an effect on the flow of expenditure due to less field related activities during the pandemic. This has further reduced the expenditure under POSHAN Abhiyaan.

In order to efficiently utilize the funds allocated under various heads to the fullest extent by achieving results upto the grass-root level, MoWCD has designed 'SAKSHAM ANGANWADI and POSHAN 2.0' for 2021-22 to 2025-26 (five years) with the 'outcome based monitoring framework with respective indicators for the year 2021-22 is also indicated in the Scheme's EFC.

Comments of the Committee

It has been observed that the Ministry has stated the reasons for gross underutilization of funds for the scheme of POSHAN Abhiyaan only, while the reasons for under-utilisation of funds for other schemes like Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao etc. have been left out. The Committee recommends that the Ministry should look into this matter seriously and to exercise financial prudence and use the allocated funds optimally and judiciously and also provide the State-wise list for under utilization of funds along with the reasons, for other schemes like Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao etc. Unless the utilisation of funds on its key schemes goes up, the allocation has little meaning.

Saksham Anganwadi

Observation/recommendation

2. *The Committee recommends that the Ministry should make concerted efforts to provide well-constructed, well-ventilated buildings with piped potable water supply for drinking*

and cooking purposes and tap water in toilets to all Anganwadi Centers and devise a mechanism to constantly monitor and conduct inspection of Anganwadi Centers to curtail administrative and financial mismanagement at the grass root level during Financial Year 2021-22.

(Para-3.3)

Action Taken

The need for providing potable drinking water in all Anganwadi Centres has been repeatedly emphasized by the Govt. States/UTs were urged to leverage the Jal Shakti Mission under the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation to provide safe and clean piped water for cooking, drinking, washing and for toilets during a Review meeting recently conducted by Hon'ble Minister (WCD) with States/UTs during 15.12.2020 to 05.01.2021.

Emphasizing the importance of safe and adequate potable drinking water as an absolute necessity, Chief Secretaries of All State Governments and UT Administrations have been further requested, vide this Ministry's D.O. letter dated 12.01.2021 to take appropriate measures and extend all possible assistance to ensure that the piped water reaches every Anganwadi Centre.

Further, in order to stress importance of conservation, protection and sustainable use of water among citizens from very beginning to meet current and future human need of water, States/UTs have been requested, vide this Ministry's D.O. letter dated 18.03.2021, to take up roof- top rain-water harvesting by developing Rain Water Harvesting Structures (RWHS) suitable to climatic conditions in the premises of all Anganwadis so that these are ready to 'Catch The Rain', when the monsoon arrives and to ensure rooftop RWHS on all 'pucca' AWCs/buildings before monsoon and generate awareness and give technical guidance on RWHS. DM/District Collectors who are the Nodal Duty Holders may act as facilitators in convergence with Jal Jeevan Mission. Anganwadi Workers/Anganwadi Helpers would be actively engaged in dissemination of knowledge about conservation, hygienic and judicious use of water generally as well to propagate the importance of taking-up rain water harvesting while they interact with the beneficiaries.

Comments of the Committee

The Ministry has not mentioned about the steps taken by the Ministry to monitor and inspect AWCs to curtail administrative and financial mismanagement at the grass root level.

The Committee is of the view that AWC is the focal point for delivery of ICDS services and AWCs require proper infrastructure in order to discharge their functions effectively. Hence, the Committee recommends that the Ministry should ensure that proper infrastructure is available at all AWCs and to apprise the Committee of the efforts taken up by the Ministry in this regard and also the steps taken to monitor and inspect AWCs at the grass root level.

Suposhit Bharat

Observation/recommendation

3. *The Committee recommends that the Ministry should set up a vigilant monitoring mechanism to ensure that food packets for pregnant women and lactating mothers as well as targeted meals for highly undernourished children reach the intended beneficiaries at the ground level. Active involvement of Anganwadi workers need to be ensured for successful implementation of the scheme.*

(Para-3.13)

Action Taken

This Ministry, vide letter dated 13.01.2021 have issued Streamlining Guidelines on Quality Assurance Roles and Responsibilities of Duty Holders, procedure for procurement, Integrating AYUSH concepts and Data Management and Monitoring through 'Poshan Tracker' for transparency efficiency and accountability in delivery of Supplementary Nutrition.

The States/UTs have been directed to introduce transparent process for procurement as per GFR and Vigilance guidelines and ensure that THR procured conforms to technical and nutritional standards set by MoWCD. The States/UTs are also requested to carry out Special Internal Audit of the SNP portfolio at the earliest.

Comments of the Committee

Malnutrition is a chronic problem and a longstanding challenge of the country. The Ministry has not given any information as to whether a monitoring mechanism is being put in place to oversee the distribution system of food packets. The Committee recommends that the Ministry should put in place a monitoring mechanism to address the gaps and inefficiencies in the present distribution system to ensure that the food packets reach the intended beneficiaries. The Committee also recommended the food packets so delivered

should meet the nutritional/quality standards. There should be involvement of panchayats and other community groups to ensure that the scheme is being implemented effectively at the grassroots level.

Legislation for curbing trafficking of women and children

Observation/recommendation

4. *The Committee recommends that in view of the increase in incidents of trafficking of women and children in number of States, the Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, may be introduced in the next session of Parliament.* (Para-3.17)

Action Taken

Ministry is taking follow up action to bring the Bill in the Monsoon session of Parliament.

Comments of the Committee

The Committee observes that the said Bill has not been introduced in the parliament so far. The Committee reiterates that the Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill be introduced in Parliament at the earliest.

CHAPTER-IV

**OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE
GOVERNMENT IS STILL AWAITED**

-Nil-

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE - AT A GLANCE

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE (CHAPTER-III)

It has been observed that the Ministry has stated the reasons for gross underutilization of funds for the scheme of POSHAN Abhiyaan only, while the reasons for under-utilisation of funds for other schemes like Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao etc. have been left out. The Committee recommends that the Ministry should look into this matter seriously and to exercise financial prudence and use the allocated funds optimally and judiciously and also provide the State-wise list for under utilization of funds along with the reasons, for other schemes like Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao etc. Unless the utilisation of funds on its key schemes goes up, the allocation has little meaning. (Para 1)

The Ministry has not mentioned about the steps taken by the Ministry to monitor and inspect AWCs to curtail administrative and financial mismanagement at the grass root level. The Committee is of the view that AWC is the focal point for delivery of ICDS services and AWCs require proper infrastructure in order to discharge their functions effectively. Hence, the Committee recommends that the Ministry should ensure that proper infrastructure is available at all AWCs and to apprise the Committee of the efforts taken up by the Ministry in this regard and also the steps taken to monitor and inspect AWCs at the grass root level. (Para 2)

Malnutrition is a chronic problem and a longstanding challenge of the country. The Ministry has not given any information as to whether a monitoring mechanism is being put in place to oversee the distribution system of food packets. The Committee recommends that the Ministry should put in place a monitoring mechanism to address the gaps and inefficiencies in the present distribution system to ensure that the food packets reach the intended beneficiaries. The Committee also recommended the food packets so delivered

should meet the nutritional/quality standards. There should be involvement of panchayats and other community groups to ensure that the scheme is being implemented effectively at the grassroot level. (Para 3)

The Committee observes that the said Bill has not been introduced in the parliament so far. The Committee reiterates that the Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill be introduced in Parliament at the earliest. (Para 4)

INQUIRY ON SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS IN (Child Sexual Abuse Material) CSAM AND PORNOGRAPHIC MATERIAL AVAILABLE ONLINE TO CHILDREN

I. The Rajya Sabha *ad-hoc* Committee was constituted to look into the matter pertaining to “*alarming issue of pornography on social media and its effect on children and society as a whole*”. Since, in today’s world the availability and reach of children to pornographic material and the use of children in pornographic material is at rise. In view of the above scenario the *ad-hoc* Committee invited the Commission to make its submissions.

In order of making submissions and to apprise the *ad-hoc* Committee, the Commission under section 13 (1) (j) and 14 of CPCRA Act, 2005, conducted an inquiry into the spreading of porn sites on the internet/web and found indiscriminating evidences on the availability of such sites. Some of the findings that can be shared in a public document are given as under:

- a. The internet has three layers, namely the surface web, the deep web and the dark web. The dark web refers to encrypted online content that is not indexed by conventional search engines. It is a component of the deep web that describes the wider breadth of content that does not appear through regular internet browsing activities. To access dark web one need special browsers, search engines and also different networks. In regard to the above, total 31 sites were explored by NCPCR on dark web, of these, 5 were pertaining to Indian Territory; 19 were of possibility of being Indian and rest were international sites. The contents of these sites are highly vulgar and repulsive in nature. It is therefore, established that all the Indian as well as international sites are easily available and accessible to cross sections of the society including children who are having unabated access to the internet.

(Note: The Commission also reported these links of CSAM on Dark web to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Cyber Crime Portal.)

- b. Commission under Section 13 (1) (a) of CPCRA Act, examined and reviewed the existing safeguards and laws. On perusal of available legal provisions, a peculiar situation emerged that there is no safeguard for the person who happens to download any indiscriminating material which he is supposed to mandatorily report to the authorities under POCSO Act, 2012. Further, the IT Act doesn’t specify any authority to whom this report could be made.
- c. There is a provision of Mandatory reporting under Section 19 of POCSO Act, all the institutions, schools, parents, guardians, and organisation that are aware of any such objectionable use of their network; service provider should be made accountable for

reporting to appropriate authority. Therefore, a mechanism could be introduced for incorporating this provision in POCSO Rules to ensure that online exploitation of children be reported appropriately.

- d. It was observed that the children use internet/social media apps over various connections such as Wi-Fi, mobile internet service, etc., the connections of which are in the name of their parents. Hence, there is no data on how many children are having access of internet privately.
- e. There are numerous apps which were earlier available on the play store and now on sketchy websites along with other portals that distribute links to join social media platform and telegram groups soliciting child sexual abuse material. These links often lead to groups where either content is distributed free or at a premium that is paid using online payment services. Along with already created content, live streaming services of abuse of children and adults are also offered on these groups. There is a possibility that some of these apps may be hosted from within India.
- f. It has been further observed that the companies providing social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram, Twitter, Instagram etc. are reporting such incidents to NCMEC (National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children) which is a US based agency for reporting of cybercrime material. But Section 19 of POCSO Act, provides for mandatory reporting of such offences to the Indian authorities. Hence, there is a gap in reporting of such material/offences.
- g. Children are accessing social media platform such as Facebook, Instagram, Tweeter, Whats App, Telegram etc. and the pornographic material and the links to access such material are also available and circulated amongst the users on these platforms. Therefore, it was observed that children below 18 years have easy access to these materials without any check.

Therefore, based on the findings and careful deliberation; Commission provided few suggestions to the *ad-hoc* Committee as under:

1. Fixing Accountability: All the institutions, schools, parents, guardians, and organisations that are aware of any such objectionable use of their network, service provider should be made accountable for reporting to appropriate authority. Therefore, a mechanism should be introduced for incorporating this provision in POCSO Rules to ensure that online exploitation of children is reported on MHA portal “cybercrime.gov.in” or any other such portal created in future and awareness for reporting should be encouraged.
2. Issuance of Sim Card in name of children: NCPCR further laid out a solution to keep check on the children and nature of content they have access through mobile phones and internet. The Commission suggested that the connections should be given in the name of children by way of proxy accountability such in the case of bank account of minor, or else when parents purchase connection in their name for children they should give a declaration that the connection will be used by the child, to ensure that

the data can be maintained and children will not have access to such material. This can also help in providing filters and restrictions by service providers. Also, a report may be generated on daily basis and forwarded automatically to the linked number/connection or email of the parent/guardian. Similarly, in cases where children use internet service of school at labs, libraries, etc. the service should be firstly password protected and individual usernames/login ids should be provided to the students and the report should be sent to the school authority concerned.

3. Awareness regarding CSAM: The Commission expressed that Awareness need to be generated among general public in regard to Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) and its reporting mechanism.
4. Mandate on agencies running Social Media Platforms: The agencies providing social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram, etc. are reporting such incidents to NCMEC (National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children) which is an US based agency for reporting of cybercrime material. However, Section 19 of POCSO Act provides for mandatory reporting of such offences to the Indian authorities. Hence, they should be made mandatorily reporting it to the Indian agency.
5. Protection to the Whistle-blowers: The Commission suggested that Child pornography is an offence under POCSO Act and Section 19 provides for mandatory reporting of the same. Further, Sec. 19 (7) under the Act provides for protection for reporting of POCSO cases in good faith. A reporting mechanism should be developed and strengthen in the said Act by making amendment in POCSO Rules.

II.The Commission while conducting aforesaid inquiry came across of an article published in newspaper “The Hindu” dated 14th April, 2020, categorically mentioning the data of Pornhub, the world’s largest pornography website that ‘Traffic from India increased by 95% between March 24 and 26, as compared to average traffic before the lockdown’. It also observed that Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) is easily available to the users on payment of \$ 2.99 (USD) on Apple iOS. The user just has to pay the amount and become the Pro user and all such material will be available to him over phone.

Similarly, such material was also found to be available on Twitter where many links to reach and obtain such kind of material were available through different Handles. These Twitter Handles also provided for links to WhatsApp groups through which this material can be obtained on WhatsApp Chats which is so called encrypted chats. Further, such material was found to be available on Google Play Store through the Apps provided by them for free. The child pornographic material can easily be accessed by anyone by downloading these apps. Thus, the following issues emerged -

- i. Availability of online Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) and;
- ii. Pornographic Material accessible to children.

Taking cognizance of the same, the Commission decided to inquire in the matter and U/s. 13 (1) (j) and 14 of CPC Act, 2005 issued notices to social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, Google and Apple iOS on 23-24th April, 2020 to look into the matter and

provide their policy/guidelines in such cases and the action taken by them in such cases. The Commission also wrote to them to provide the information pertaining to number of complaints received by them on their platforms in regard to CSAM and Pornographic content. Understanding the seriousness of the issue the Commission organised various joint meetings and discussions with the social media platforms in order to formulate preventive methods and reporting mechanism to fill the lacunae and gaps in the laws and for the safety of children over internet.
