



Prevention and Rehabilitation of Victims of

CHILD MARRIAGE



A HANDBOOK FOR STAKEHOLDERS

Neeru, Age 15, 11th Grade

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Foreword

Childhood is for education, exploration, play, and friendships. It is for dreaming to travel the whole universe, to understand the science behind flying an aeroplane, to wonder about the chirping of the birds, to swim in a lake, to learn about oneself, to forge friendships that last lifelong and to dare to hope to change the entire world.

Child marriage is anti-thetical to all of these. Child marriage is everything that childhood must not be. The law, rightfully, recognises this and has prescribed a minimum age for the marriage. However, decades since our independence, child marriage remains a stark reality in our country. We have made great strides, and we can make greater strides.

This handbook is an effort in that direction. I have had the privilege of working alongside many civil servants who are motivated, competent and empathetic. However, they often struggle with the nuances of operations of the law and administration. This handbook seeks to bridge that gap and leverage the motivation, competence and empathy of these civil servants to help our children enjoy their childhood. There are separate sections for every type of civil servant: District Magistrate, Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Child Welfare Committee, Police, District Child Protection Unit and the educators.

This handbook has a preventive as well as a rehabilitative dimension when delineating the role of stakeholders. Every chapter, dedicated to the role of each stakeholder, is self-contained and contains exercises to help them reflect and build a deeper perspective.

This handbook has been made possible due to the efforts of several people in the Commission. In particular, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the British Asian Trust whose team, especially Ms. Shivani Puri, drafted this handbook in collaboration with this Commission. I am very much grateful to all the individuals, organisations, and experts who have reviewed this handbook. Their efforts will, hopefully, help bring about a meaningful change in the lives of the children.

Children have always been the core of all of our efforts and this handbook is yet another attempt to help them enjoy their childhood.

I would like to thank these children for helping us reimagine a world full of hope and possibilities. The glitter of their eyes is our strongest motivation.

I sincerely hope that we can create a society where child marriage is relegated to history and every child can flourish in an environment that cherishes and safeguards their rights.

Anurag Kundu
Chairperson, DCPCR

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“ —

If we are to teach
real peace in this
world, and if we are
to carry on a real war
against war, we shall
have to begin with
the children.

— ”

-Mahatma Gandhi

INTRODUCTION

Who is a 'child' and who is a 'minor'?

For the purpose of child marriage, a 'child' is defined as a girl who has not attained the age of 18 years and a boy who has not attained the age of 21 years¹.

A 'minor' is defined as a person who has not attained the age of 18 years².

What is a 'child marriage'?

Child marriage means a marriage to which either of the contracting parties is a child.³ Thus, even if the boy is between the age of 18 and 21 years, the marriage would be considered as child marriage.

Who can be punished for violating the provisions of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006?

- ▶ An adult male marrying a child⁴ ;
- ▶ Persons having the charge of the child i.e. parents/guardians and organisations/associations/other persons⁵ ;
- ▶ persons performing/abetting/permitting the marriage⁶ such as priest/religious leader/community leaders, caterers, organisers and relatives/neighbours attending the wedding.

¹ Section 2(a) of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

² Section 2(f) of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

³ Section 2(b) of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

⁴ Section 9 of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

⁵ Section 11 of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

⁶ Section 10 of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006



The Supreme Court in *Hardev Singh v. Harpreet Kaur* held that the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 does not make any provision for punishing a female adult who marries a male child⁷. However, she may be punished under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (POCSO) if the marriage was with a male child below the age of 18 years and there were sexual relations between them.

What is the punishment prescribed for violating the provisions of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006?

Persons contravening the provisions of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 shall be punished with rigorous imprisonment which may extend to two years and/or shall be liable to pay fine which may extend to one lakh rupees⁹.

FACT

Unless the contrary is proved, it is presumed that where a minor contracts marriage, the person having charge of such minor child has negligently failed to prevent the marriage from being solemnised⁸.



A woman cannot be punished with imprisonment for permitting/abetting/performing/solemnising the child marriage under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006.¹⁰ However, a woman can be fined.

What is the legal status of a child marriage?

A child marriage already solemnised is voidable at the option of the child in the marriage and can be annulled at any time before the child completes two years after attaining majority by filing a petition in the District Court.¹¹

⁷ *Hardev Singh v Harpreet Kaur & Ors*, (Criminal Appeal No. 1331 of 2013, Supreme Court) para 3.2;

⁸ Section 11(2) of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

⁹ Sections 9, 10, 11 of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

¹⁰ Section 11 of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

A child marriage is null and void where a child, being a minor¹²

- ▶ is taken or enticed out of the keeping of lawful guardian, or
- ▶ is by force compelled, or by any deceitful means induced to go from any place; or
- ▶ is sold for the purpose of marriage; or if the minor is married after which the minor is sold or trafficked or used for immoral purposes.

A child marriage is void ab initio if it is solemnised in contravention of an injunction order issued by the Judicial Magistrate of the First Class or the Metropolitan Magistrate.¹³

- ▶ For the purpose of grant of reliefs under Sections 3, 4 and 5 of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, the District Court having jurisdiction shall include the District Court having jurisdiction over the place where the defendant or the child resides, or where the marriage was solemnized or where the parties last resided together or the petitioner is residing on the date of presentation of the petition.¹⁴

FACT

Anyone who knowingly disobeys an injunction order issued against them shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years or with a fine which may extend to one lakh rupees or with both.¹⁵

What are the important child rights legislations?

The laws related to children in India have their origins in the Constitution of India in the form of fundamental rights under Article 15(3), Article 21A, Article 24 and Directive Principles of State Policy under Article 39(e) and (f), Article 45 and fundamental duties under Article 51A. Further, India has also ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Some important child rights legislations dealing with child marriage in India include:

- ▶ The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 and Model Rules, 2016
- ▶ The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 and the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009
- ▶ The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 and Rules, 2020
- ▶ The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 and the Delhi Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Rules, 2011
- ▶ The Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976 and Rules, 1976
- ▶ The Commissions for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005
- ▶ Certain provisions of the Indian Penal Code 1860 (for instance, Sections 361/366/370, in case the child was kidnapped or trafficked for marriage)

¹¹ Section 3 of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

¹² Section 12 of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

¹³ Section 14 of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

¹⁴ Section 8 of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

¹⁵ Section 13(10) of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

- ▶ Certain provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (for instance, the order of maintenance for a married minor female under Section 125)
- ▶ The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961

What are the consequences of child marriage?

- ▶ Violation of a child's right to a free life devoid of exploitation, full care and protection.
- ▶ Denial of the basic right to a respectful and decent childhood; basic rights to good health, nutrition, education and freedom from violence, abuse and exploitation.
- ▶ Subjection to physical, mental and emotional trauma and also life-threatening circumstances for which the child is not prepared.
- ▶ Family and societal responsibilities and also acts as licence, though illegal, to engage in sexual activity amounting to child sexual abuse and rape.
- ▶ Exposure to high-risk diseases including HIV/AIDS and STDs, poor health and quality of life.
- ▶ Lack of economic opportunities due to lack of education.
- ▶ Endless and vicious cycle of domestic violence and abuse.



The Supreme Court in *Independent Thought v. Union of India and Anr*¹⁶ read down Exception 2 of Section 375 of the IPC, 1860 which provided that if the wife was between 15 to 18 years of age, sexual intercourse with her would not amount to rape. The exception was held as violative of the right to equality, dignity and individual autonomy of the child. With this judgment, the rights of married girls under the age of 18 were made uniform with those of unmarried girls.

¹⁶ *Independent Thought v. Union of India and Anr* [W.P. (Civil) 382 of 2013, Supreme Court] para 1

EXERCISE: CASE STUDY



You receive information that two adolescents, Arjun and Nisha, have run away from home and married without the knowledge or consent of their parents. Answer the following questions as per your role:

List down the steps that should be followed in this case.

Who are the stakeholders you need to interact with?

What is the first step you need to take?

What are the documents or reports you require or need to be submitted to you?

What orders do you need to issue or reports you need to prepare?

Now let us find out what your duties are. Go to the chapter that concerns your role and complete the exercises as you proceed.

“ —
|

Let us remember:
One book, one pen,
one child and one
teacher can change
the world

— ”
|

-Malala Yousafzai

SUB-DIVISIONAL MAGISTRATE (SDM) / CHILD MARRIAGE PROHIBITION OFFICER (CMPO)

Congratulations on being appointed as the SDM! As SDM you have many functions under various legislations. Under the child protection regime, you are the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer (CMPO).¹⁷ You have the most important role in preventing the child marriages and ensuring the well-being of children in your area. You have been given a wide range of powers to effectively curb the child marriages under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 and the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009.

EXERCISE 1: FILL IN THE BLANKS



To begin your work, you need to obtain the contact details of the following persons in the District. Once you have the details, save the contact details on your phone and complete the exercises below:

A. District Magistrate (DM)- The DM is responsible for supervising all child protection-related activities in their District.

Name _____

Phone No. _____



The DM becomes the CMPO in situations when mass child marriages take place such as on days like Akshaya Trutiya (Akha Teej) which is generally celebrated in April.¹⁸

¹⁷ Rule 3 of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009

¹⁸ Section 13(4) of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006



B. Child Welfare Committees (CWCs)- They are constituted by the State Government in every District to discharge duties in relation to children in need of care and protection including children who are at imminent risk of marriage.¹⁹ The Chairperson of the CWC prepares a monthly roster of the members to ensure that at least one member is always available to take cognizance of an emergency matter including on Sundays and holidays. This roster is to be shared with the stakeholders by the CWC.²⁰

- 1) Do you have the monthly roster from the CWC? YES/ NO
- 2) If not, obtain the contact number of the Chairperson of the concerned CWC.

Name _____ Phone No. _____ Designation: Chairperson

- 3) Call the Chairperson of the concerned CWC and ask for the monthly roster. Once you receive it, go back and tick 'Yes' in Exercise 1).

C. SHOs of the Police Stations in your area

- | | | | |
|-----|----------|-----------|-----------------|
| 1) | PS _____ | SHO _____ | Phone No. _____ |
| 2) | PS _____ | SHO _____ | Phone No. _____ |
| 3) | PS _____ | SHO _____ | Phone No. _____ |
| 4) | PS _____ | SHO _____ | Phone No. _____ |
| 5) | PS _____ | SHO _____ | Phone No. _____ |
| 6) | PS _____ | SHO _____ | Phone No. _____ |
| 7) | PS _____ | SHO _____ | Phone No. _____ |
| 8) | PS _____ | SHO _____ | Phone No. _____ |
| 9) | PS _____ | SHO _____ | Phone No. _____ |
| 10) | PS _____ | SHO _____ | Phone No. _____ |
| 11) | PS _____ | SHO _____ | Phone No. _____ |
| 12) | PS _____ | SHO _____ | Phone No. _____ |

¹⁹ Section 27 read with Section 2(14)(xii) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

²⁰ Rule 16(6) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

²¹ Section 107(1) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

FACT

Every police station has to have at least one officer not below the rank of Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) to be designated as a Child Welfare Police Officer (CWPO) to exclusively deal with children either as victims or perpetrators, in coordination with the police, voluntary and non-governmental organisations.²¹



D. Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Juvenile Police Unit)- The State Government constitutes the Special Juvenile Police Unit (SJPU) headed by a police officer not below the rank of a Deputy Superintendent of Police or above in each district and city to co-ordinate all functions of police related to children.²²

Check if there is a WhatsApp group for child protection stakeholders and get added to it, if it already exists. If not, you can make a WhatsApp group with them.

Name _____ **Phone No.** _____

E. District Child Protection Officer (DCPO)- The District Magistrate supervises the functioning of the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU).²³ Within the DCPU, the DCPO coordinates the functioning of the unit.

Name _____ **Phone No.** _____

F. Deputy Director of Education (DDE) of your zone²⁴ - The DDEs oversee all education related tasks in their respective zones.

Name _____ **Phone No.** _____

G. Secretary of the concerned District Legal Services Authority (DLSA)-They provide free and competent legal aid to the eligible sections of society including children.²⁵

Name _____ **Phone No.** _____

H. Civil society organisations working on child protection issues with a focus on awareness, prevention and rehabilitation of victims of Child Marriage.

1) **Name** _____ **Contact person** _____ **Phone No.** _____

2) **Name** _____ **Contact person** _____ **Phone No.** _____

3) **Name** _____ **Contact person** _____ **Phone No.** _____

²² Section 107(2) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

²³ Rule 85 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

²⁴ Hint: You can refer to <<https://www.edudel.nic.in/mis/mismail/frnComposeMailDirectory.aspx>>

²⁵ Rule 7(d) of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009



I. List of volunteers in your area- Prepare a list of volunteers in your area and get the list approved by the State Government.²⁶

- 1) **Name** _____ **Phone No.** _____
- 2) **Name** _____ **Phone No.** _____
- 3) **Name** _____ **Phone No.** _____
- 4) **Name** _____ **Phone No.** _____
- 5) **Name** _____ **Phone No.** _____



The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 provides that a respectable person of the locality such as:

- a person with a record of social service or
- an officer of the Gram Panchayat or Municipality or
- an officer of the Government of any public sector undertaking or
- an office bearer of any non-governmental organisation may be requested by the State Government to assist the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer (CMPO) and such person shall be bound to act accordingly.²⁷

J. List of schools in your area²⁸

The total number of schools in your area is _____.

Now that you have completed the exercise and saved the information of the stakeholders on your phone, let us understand your role in the context of child marriage.

²⁶ Rule 11(2) r/w Rule 2(e) of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009; Section 16(2) of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006

²⁷ Section 16(2) of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009

²⁸ Hint: you can refer to the list of schools on this website <<https://www.edudel.nic.in/edu/directorate.html>>

ROLE OF THE CHILD MARRIAGE PROHIBITION OFFICER (CMPO)

Who can file a complaint/ provide information about child marriage to you?

Any person who has a reason to believe that a child marriage is likely to be, is being or has been solemnised in Delhi may give information or make a complaint to you orally or in writing.²⁹



If the information received appears reliable, you have to take suo moto cognizance of the case. You have to conduct preliminary scrutiny on receiving information even if it appears unreliable.

What should you do when you receive the information/ complaint of child marriage?

a. On receiving information/complaint from any person that a child marriage has been or is being or is likely to take place, cause the same to be reduced into writing and signed by the informant/complainant.³⁰

b. If the informant/complainant is unable to provide written information, you will satisfy yourself with the information and keep a record of the identity of the informant (record details such as name, address, contact number, and relationship with victim).³¹

c. You will provide a copy of the details recorded to the informant/complainant immediately free of cost.³²



It is likely that the complainant may feel victimised by people in the community as a consequence of reporting a child marriage. It is your duty to provide assistance to the complainant to ensure that they do not feel victimised or pressurised. You also have to provide information regarding the legal aid available to the complainant and if they want, you have to provide it to them through the Delhi State Legal Services Authority (DSLISA).³³

²⁹ Rule 4(1) of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009

³⁰ Rule 4(2) of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009

³¹ Rule 4(2) of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009

³² Rule 4(3) of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009

³³ Rule 7 of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009

What should you do when you receive information/complaint of a child marriage likely to take place?

In case you receive information or a complaint about a possible child marriage in the future or that child marriage has been fixed, take the following steps:

- a. You have to act immediately when you receive information/complaint of child marriage likely to take place in the next few days.
- b. Visit the parents/guardians of the child and convince them to refrain from getting the child married/speak to them about not getting the child married.
- c. Inform them that child marriage is a punishable offence and that it has a detrimental impact on the lives of the children.
- d. Speak to the child and make them aware of the consequences of child marriage.
- e. Speak to the relatives to make them aware of the provisions of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006.
- f. Seek assistance from the police, if required.
- g. Seek the assistance of community leaders, teachers and civil society organisations.
- h. Inform the Chairperson/Member of the CWC and the DCPO about the case so that an assessment about the child being in need of care and protection may be done and the specified rehabilitative processes are

followed.³⁴

- i. Inform the school authorities where the child is studying to follow up on the welfare of the child and to provide the CWC with regular updates.
- j. Based on the information/complaint and the steps taken, prepare the child marriage report.³⁵
- k. Submit the complaint along with the child marriage report to the District Court or the Metropolitan Magistrate and forward a copy to the police officer in charge of the police station within the local limit of which the child was to be married.³⁶



In case you find that a child marriage is likely to take place or is taking place, you have to follow the steps detailed in the above sections. Additionally, once you have completed the steps above, you have to approach the Metropolitan Magistrate seeking an injunction on the child marriage. The effect of the injunction, if issued, would be that even if the child marriage is contracted despite your best efforts, the same would be void *ab initio*.³⁷ The Metropolitan Magistrate has to issue a notice to the parties providing an opportunity of hearing before passing an injunction order.³⁸

³⁴ Section 2(14) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

³⁵ Rule 5 of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009

³⁶ Rule 5 and 6 of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009; Section 13 of the Prohibition of the Child Marriage Act, 2006

³⁷ Section 14 of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

³⁸ Section 13 of the Prohibition of the Child Marriage Act, 2006

FACT

A child marriage report is an action taken report submitted to the District Court. Although there is no set format for the child marriage report, the following information should be included in the report:

- ☑ Name and contact details of the complainant
- ☑ Relationship with the child
- ☑ Date of receipt of complaint
- ☑ Details of child (name, age, information of parents/guardians)
- ☑ Details of accused (name, age, contact information)
- ☑ Details of marriage (eg. date, place, time, details of the priest)
- ☑ Action taken

The report can be addressed to the Principal District and Sessions Judge of the concerned District Court.

What should you do when you receive information/complaint of a child marriage taking place?

You would have received information or a complaint about the child marriage being solemnised at that very moment. This is an emergency case and your priority should be to stop the marriage from taking place while ensuring the well-being of the child. You have the power to investigate the cases of child marriage as exercisable by a police officer³⁹ and to collect evidence for the prosecution of persons contravening the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006.

Take the following steps:

a. You have to act immediately when you receive information/complaint of a child marriage taking place.



You can organise pre-rescue meetings with all relevant stakeholders to plan the rescue of a child who is likely to get married or whose marriage has been fixed. This will improve coordination among all stakeholders and ensure that they are aware of their roles on the day of the rescue.

b. Inform and seek the assistance of the police.

c. Proceed to the location of the child marriage.

d. If you witness a marriage taking place, put a stop to it with the help of the police.

e. The police may arrest persons at the venue for committing the cognizable and non-

³⁹ Rule 3 of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009; Chapter V, VII, XI and XII of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973

bailable offence⁴⁰ of child marriage under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006.

f. Collect evidence by taking videos, photographs, and seize invitation cards, receipts, etc. and making a list of persons at the venue and others who may be involved.⁴¹ This has to be shared with the police.

g. Speak to the child, explain the situation and further steps to them.

h. If required, provide immediate medical aid to the child.

i. Produce the child before the concerned CWC within 24 hours or as soon as possible.⁴²

j. Inform the school authorities where the child is studying to follow up on the welfare of the child and to provide the concerned CWC with regular updates.

k. Based on the information/complaint and the steps taken, prepare the child marriage report.

l. Submit the complaint and child marriage report to the District Court and forward a copy to the police officer in-charge of the police station within the local limits of which the child was to be married.

m. Submit an application seeking an injunction along with the complaint to the jurisdictional Metropolitan Magistrate for appropriate action.⁴³



As the CMPO you play an important role in spreading awareness. You have to advise and counsel the residents of the locality not to indulge in promoting, helping, aiding or allowing child marriages. You have to create awareness and sensitise the community to the evil which results from child marriages.⁴⁴



Regularly engaging with priests/imams/religious heads and encouraging them to spread awareness in the community about the ill effects of child marriages is an effective tool to prevent child marriages.

What should you do when you receive information/complaint of a child marriage having already taken place?

In this case, you would have received information about a child marriage which was solemnised before you could reach the venue to stop it. Your priority now is to ensure the well-being and safety of the child.

⁴⁰ Section 13 of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

⁴¹ Section 16(3)(b) of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

⁴² Section 31 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015; Section 2(14) r/w 27 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

⁴³ Section 13 of the Prohibition of the Child Marriage Act, 2006

⁴⁴ Section 16 of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

Take the following steps:

- a.** Visit the location where the child resides (which may be the marital home) to assess the safety and security of the child.
- b.** Explain the available options the child has such as annulment of marriage and maintenance. Ensure that you are polite when speaking to the child and reassure them that they are not at fault.
- c.** Provide medical and legal support to the child if required.
- d.** Encourage the family to send the child to school.
- e.** Ensure that unwarranted medical or gynecological tests are not conducted. If any tests are required, consent of the parents/guardians should be taken and the child should be informed.

In such cases where the child is already married and wishes to annul the marriage, you or their guardian or their next friend can file the petition on their behalf before the District Court if they are minors.⁴⁵ This petition may be filed at any time but before the child filing the petition completes two years of attaining majority i.e. 20 years for girls and 23 years for boys.

In case the child wishes to continue staying in the marriage, you have to (i) submit the Child Marriage Report to the District Court with a copy to the police and, (ii) produce the child before the concerned CWC.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Section 3(2) of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006



You have to assist the District Court in the enforcement of orders passed for maintenance and custody.⁴⁷

FACT

The CMPO has to furnish a report in Form I of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009 (Annexure 2) in the first week of every quarter to the concerned District Magistrate.⁴⁸

What should you do in case a prohibition order or court direction is breached?

- a.** Any person may report breach of a prohibition order or a court direction issued under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 or the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009 or resistance to their enforcement to you or directly to the Court.⁴⁹
- b.** The complainant shall provide the report to you in writing, duly signed by them.
- c.** You shall assist the complainant in case they seek your assistance in lodging a complaint with the local police.

⁴⁶ Rule 5(1) of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009; Section 13 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015, read with Rule 55 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Model Rules, 2016

⁴⁷ Rule 7(j) of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009

⁴⁸ Rule 7(l) of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009

⁴⁹ Rule 10 of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009

EXERCISE 2: CASE STUDY



You receive information that the marriage of Sita aged 13 years old has been fixed for the next month. You were told by Sita's mother that the father is abusive and the home environment is unsafe for Sita. To protect her from abuse at the hands of her father, the mother decided to fix her marriage as the groom (Rahul) and his family assured the continued education of Sita. Rahul is 19 years old.

What process should be followed to safeguard Sita and Rahul's rights?

What will be your first step?

Who are the stakeholders you would need to interact with?

Which reports do you need to prepare and submit?

“ —
The children of
today will make the
India of tomorrow.
The way we bring
them up will
determine the
future of the
country — ”

— Jawahar Lal Nehru

DISTRICT MAGISTRATE

Congratulations on being appointed as the District Magistrate! You play an important role in supervising all child protection-related activities and coordinating the work of various stakeholders in your District.

EXERCISE 1: FILL IN THE BLANKS

To begin your work, you need to obtain the contact details of the following persons. Once you have the details, save the contact details on your phone and complete the exercises below:

A. Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPO)- The CMPOs are appointed in every State to prevent child marriages and ensure the protection of victims and prosecution of offenders. In Delhi, the SDMs have been appointed as CMPOs.⁵¹

1) Name _____

PhoneNo. _____ Area _____

2) Name _____

PhoneNo. _____ Area _____

3) Name _____

PhoneNo. _____ Area _____

4) Name _____

PhoneNo. _____ Area _____

⁵¹ Rule 3 of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009

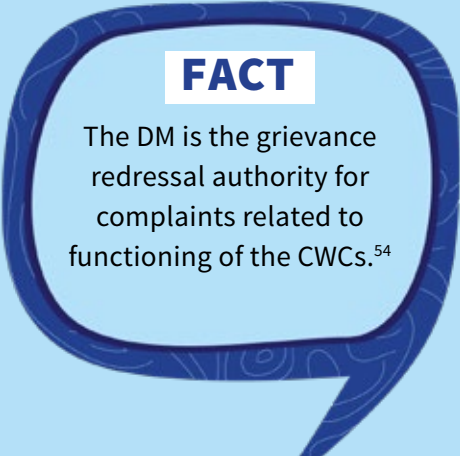


B. Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) -They are constituted by the State Government in every District to discharge duties in relation to children in need of care and protection including children who are at imminent risk of marriage.⁵² The Chairperson of the CWC prepares a monthly roster of the members to ensure that at least one member is always available to take cognizance of an emergency matter even during holidays. This roster is to be shared with the stakeholders by the CWC.⁵³

- 1) Do you have the monthly roster from the CWC? YES/ NO
- 2) If not, obtain the contact number of the Chairperson of the concerned CWC.

Name _____ Phone No. _____
 _____ Designation Chairperson

- 3) Call the Chairperson of the concerned CWC and ask for the monthly roster. Once you receive it, go back and tick 'Yes' in Exercise 1).



FACT

The DM is the grievance redressal authority for complaints related to functioning of the CWCs.⁵⁴

C. Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Juvenile Police Unit)- The State Government constitutes the Special Juvenile Police Unit (SJPU) headed by a police officer not below the rank of a Deputy Superintendent of Police or above in each district and city to co-ordinate all functions of police related to children.⁵⁵

Name _____ Phone No. _____

D. Deputy Director of Education (DDE) of your zone⁵⁶ -The DDEs oversee all education related tasks in their respective zones.

- 1) Name _____ Phone No. _____ Zone _____
- 2) Name _____ Phone No. _____ Zone _____
- 3) Name _____ Phone No. _____ Zone _____

⁵² Section 27 read with Section 2(14)(xii) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015
⁵³ Rule 16(6) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016
⁵⁴ Section 27(10) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015
⁵⁵ Section 107(2) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015
⁵⁶ Hint: You can refer to <<https://www.edudel.nic.in/mis/mismail/frmComposeMailDirectory.aspx>>



E. District Child Protection Officer (DCPO) in your District- The District Magistrate supervises the functioning of the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU). Within the DCPU, the DCPO coordinates the functioning of the unit.

Name _____ Phone No. _____

F. Civil society organisations working on child protection issues with a focus on awareness, prevention, and rehabilitation of victims of Child Marriage.

- 1) Name _____ Contact person _____ Phone No. _____
- 2) Name _____ Contact person _____ Phone No. _____
- 3) Name _____ Contact person _____ Phone No. _____



When you take charge of your office, call an introductory meeting with all relevant stakeholders and orient yourself with the work being done on child marriage in the district. This will improve coordination among the stakeholders. You can also create a WhatsApp group for child protection stakeholders in your district or get added to one if it already exists.

G. List of schools in your area⁵⁷

The total number of schools in your area is _____.

Now that you have completed the exercise and saved the information of the stakeholders on your phone, let us understand your role in the context of child marriage.

⁵⁷ Hint: you can refer to the list of schools on this website <<https://www.edudel.nic.in/edu/directorate.html>>

ROLE OF THE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE

a. You are the Nodal Officer in the District for the implementation of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 and Model Rules, 2016. You may designate any Additional District Magistrate of the District to discharge these duties.⁵⁸

b. You have to supervise the functioning of the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU).⁵⁹

c. You are the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer (CMPO) in situations when mass child marriages take place such as on days like Akshaya Trutiya (Akha Teej) which is generally celebrated in April.

d. You have the additional powers to stop or prevent the solemnisation of child marriages by taking all appropriate measures and using the minimum force required.⁶⁰

e. You have to monitor the functioning of the SDMs in their role as the CMPOs under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006. This includes ensuring that (i) quarterly reports as required under the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009 are sent to you by the CMPO, (ii) child marriage report is sent to the District Court in every case.⁶¹

f. You have to ensure that inputs received from CMPOs in quarterly reports are shared with the DCPU falling within your jurisdiction.

g. You have to ensure that the CWCs maintain a suggestion box at a prominent place on their premises and regularly review the suggestions/grievances yourself or through a nominee.⁶²

h. You have to ensure that you are sent quarterly reports by the CWCs about children in need of care and protection received by them with all relevant details on the nature of disposal of cases, pending cases and reasons for such pendency.⁶³ You have to review these quarterly reports on the pendency of cases.⁶⁴



At the beginning of each year, you can find out the auspicious dates for marriages by engaging with imams/priests/religious heads and plan intensified action during those periods to prevent child marriages.

You can share this information with the CMPOs, DCPU, SJPU, Anganwadi workers and schools so they are on alert during these periods.

⁵⁸ Rule 85(2) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

⁵⁹ Rule 85 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

⁶⁰ Section 13(5) of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

⁶¹ Rule 7(l) and 5 of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009

⁶² Rule 17(ii) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

⁶³ Rule 17(v) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

⁶⁴ Rule 20(2) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

i. You have to conduct quarterly review meetings with the relevant stakeholders such as the police, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Education Department, Health Department, etc. to discuss issues of child protection, including child marriage.⁶⁵

What is your role as the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer?

a. In case you receive information or a complaint about a possible child marriage in the future or that child marriage has been fixed, act immediately and inform the concerned stakeholders (SDM, DCPU, CWC, CSO) to take necessary action to prevent the child marriage from occurring. Ensure that the wellbeing of the child is monitored and that the child attends school regularly.

b. In case you receive information or a complaint that a child marriage is being solemnised at that very moment/shortly, take immediate action and inform the concerned stakeholders (SDM, police, DCPU, CWC, CSO). Proceed to the location or send your nominee to stop the marriage and direct the police to register an FIR. The wellbeing of the child is your top priority and ensure that the child is produced before the concerned CWC within 24 hours or as soon as possible.

c. In case, you receive information that a child marriage has already been solemnised before you could reach the venue to stop it, ensure that the safety and wellbeing of the child are maintained. Inform the concerned stakeholders (SDM, DCPO, CWC, police, CSO) and direct the police to register an FIR.



In case of a child marriage likely to be or being solemnised, once you have completed the steps above, you have to approach the Metropolitan Magistrate seeking an injunction on the child marriage. The effect of the injunction, if issued, would be that even if the child marriage is contracted despite your best efforts, the same would be void *ab initio*.⁶⁶ The Metropolitan Magistrate has to issue a notice to the parties providing an opportunity of hearing before passing an injunction order.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Rule 85(3) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

⁶⁶ Section 14 of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

⁶⁷ Section 13 of the Prohibition of the Child Marriage Act, 2006

EXERCISE 2: CASE STUDY



You have been informed that your district has the highest number of child marriages and school dropout rate in Delhi. The rate of child marriages has started rising in the past 3 years.

What will be your top priority?

Which are the stakeholders you would interact with?

What reports would you request for and from whom?

What actions will you take?

“ —

|


Don't limit a child to
your own
learning, for he was
born
in another time

| — ”

-Rabindranath Tagore

You play an important role in child protection and are instrumental in making your area child marriage free.

EXERCISE 1: FILL IN THE BLANKS



To begin your work, you need to obtain the contact details of the following persons. Once you have the details, save the contact details on your phone and complete the exercises below:

A. District Magistrate (DM)- The DM is responsible for supervising all child protection related activities in their District.

Name _____

Phone No. _____

Area _____

B. Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM)/Child Marriage Prohibition Officer (CMPO)- The CMPOs are appointed in every State to prevent child marriages, ensure the protection of victims and prosecution of offenders. In Delhi, the SDMs have been appointed as the CMPOs.⁶⁸

Name _____

Phone No. _____

Area _____

⁶⁸ Rule 3 of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009



C. Deputy Director of Education (DDE) of your zone⁶⁹ - The DDEs oversee all education related tasks in their respective zones.

- 1) Name _____ Phone No. _____ Zone _____
2) Name _____ Phone No. _____ Zone _____
3) Name _____ Phone No. _____ Zone _____

D. Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) - They are constituted by the State Government in every District to discharge duties in relation to children in need of care and protection including children who are at imminent risk of marriage.⁷⁰ The Chairperson of the CWC prepares a monthly roster of the members to ensure that at least one member is always available to take cognizance of an emergency matter even during holidays. This roster is to be shared with the stakeholders by the CWC.⁷¹

- 1) Do you have the monthly roster from the CWC? YES/ NO
2) If not, obtain the contact number of the Chairperson of the concerned CWC.
Name _____ Phone No. _____ Designation: Chairperson
3) Call Chairperson of the concerned CWC and ask for the monthly roster. Once you receive it, go back and tick 'Yes' in Exercise 1).

E. District Child Protection Officer (DCPO) in your district- The District Magistrate supervises the functioning of the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU).⁷² Within the DCPU, the DCPO coordinates the functioning of the unit.

Name _____ Phone No. _____

F. Civil society organisations working on child protection issues with a focus on awareness, prevention, and rehabilitation of victims of Child Marriage.

- 1) Name _____ Contact person _____ Phone No. _____
2) Name _____ Contact person _____ Phone No. _____
3) Name _____ Contact person _____ Phone No. _____

G. List of schools in your area⁷³

The total number of schools in your area is _____.

Now that you have completed the exercise and saved the information of the stakeholders on your phone, let us understand your role in the context of child marriage.

⁶⁹ Hint: You can refer to <<https://www.edudel.nic.in/mis/mismail/frmComposeMailDirectory.aspx>>

⁷⁰ Section 27 read with Section 2(14)(xii) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

⁷¹ Rule 16(6) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

⁷² Rule 85 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

⁷³ Hint: you can refer to <http://web.delhi.gov.in/wps/wcm/connect/doiit_education/Education/Home/About+Us/>

ROLE OF THE POLICE (CHILD WELFARE POLICE OFFICER)

On receipt of a complaint of child marriage, the role of the police as enumerated in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (Cr.P.C.) should be followed. Offences under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 are cognizable non-bailable.⁷⁴ Remember, the well-being of the child is most important.

The following steps should be taken:

a. Register an FIR regarding the child marriage under relevant sections of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 and other applicable laws if approached by any person with a complaint and immediately start the investigation.

b. Accompany the CMPO/the complainant to the venue of marriage or residence of the child, as the case may be. Ensure the team includes women police officers and Child Welfare Police Officer (CWPO).



When dealing with children, the Child Welfare Police Officer (CWPO) should not be in uniform.⁷⁶

The Delhi High Court in *Independent Thought v. Union of India and Anr*⁷⁵, held that:

1) the mandatory reporting under Section 19 read with Section 21 of POCSO would override restrictions in Sections 198(1) and 198(3) of the CrPC;

2) while Section 198(6) of the CrPC barred the Court from taking cognizance of an offence under Section 376 of the Indian Penal Code 1860 where the offence consists of sexual intercourse by a man with his own minor wife if more than a year has lapsed since the date of commission of the offence, the Courts are empowered under Sections 472 and 473 of the CrPC to extend the period of limitation;

3) there is no distinct category within child victims of rape as those who are married and those who are not.

⁷⁴ Section 15 of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

⁷⁵ 2023 SCC OnLine Del 2570, decided on 03-05-2023

⁷⁶ Refer to National Human Rights Commission, Responsibilities of the Police Towards the Vulnerable Sections of Society <<https://nhrc.nic.in/sites/default/files/Responsibilities.pdf>>; Guidelines for Police Officers of the Special Juvenile Police Unit issued by the Juvenile Justice Committee of the Delhi High Court <[http://www.wcddel.in/Guidelines\[1\].pdf](http://www.wcddel.in/Guidelines[1].pdf)>

FACT

Persons such as priests/religious leaders/ community leaders, caterers, organisers and relatives/neighbours attending the wedding who perform, abet or permit the solemnisation of marriage are liable under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006.⁷⁸

c. In case a child marriage is being or has been solemnised, do the needful as per the relevant sections of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 and other applicable laws. Remember, women cannot be imprisoned under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006.⁷⁷

d. Do not arrest the child/children. Ensure you do not intimidate the child/children.

The Supreme Court in *Hardev Singh v. Harpreet Kaur and Ors*⁷⁹, was seized with the question of whether a male child married to an adult female would attract the provisions of Section 9 of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 which provides:

“Punishment for male adult marrying a child. Whoever, being a male adult above eighteen years of age, contracts a child marriage shall be punishable with rigorous imprisonment which may extend to two years or with fine which may extend to one lakh rupees or with both.”

The Court noted that a literal interpretation of Section 9 would mean that if a male child aged between 18 and 21 years contracts marriage with a female adult, the female adult would not be punished since the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 does not contain a provision for punishing a female adult, but the male would be punished for contracting a child marriage, though he himself is a child. It was held that such interpretation went against the very object of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006.

It was held that:

- 1) the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 does not make any provision for punishing a female adult who marries a male child.⁸⁰
- 2) A male between the age of 18 and 21 years of age, contracting marriage with a female adult, would not be punished under Section 9 of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 and such a case falls outside the ambit of the provision.
- 3) The words “male adult above eighteen years of age, contracts a child marriage” in Section 9 of the 2006 Act were held to be read as “male adult above eighteen years of age marries a child”.⁸¹

⁷⁷ Section 11(1) of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

⁷⁸ Section 10 of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

⁷⁹ Criminal Appeal No. 1331 of 2013

⁸⁰ *Hardev Singh v Harpreet Kaur & Ors*, para 3.2

⁸¹ *Hardev Singh v Harpreet Kaur & Ors*, para 3.9

Therefore, when you are faced with a case where the male child is between the age of 18 and 21 years married to or marrying a female adult above 18 years, do not register the complaint against the male child as in this case, the male child is a victim of child marriage.


e. Ensure the presence of a lady police officer when engaging with a girl child. Only when there is no lady officer immediately available should a male police officer interact with a girl child but in the presence of a female social worker/teacher/Anganwadi worker/trusted female adult of the child.

f. No child should be taken to a police station or placed in police custody.

g. Produce the child before the nearest CWC within 24 hours.⁸²

h. Apart from the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, the provisions of other relevant Acts may be applicable for the protection of the children and prosecution of offenders.⁸³

EXERCISE 2: CASE STUDY



You receive information from the CMPO, under whose jurisdiction your Police Station falls, that 17 year old Priya and 19 year old Naman went to the neighbouring state and got married 3 months prior. They have now returned and live in a locality falling under the jurisdiction of your police station.

A. What is the process to be followed in this case?

B. Who will be the accused in this case? What will your first step be?

C. Are there any additional laws that may be applicable in this case? If yes, which ones?

⁸² Section 2(14) r/w Section 27 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015; Rule 55(1) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

⁸³ These Acts may include the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, Indian Penal Code, 1860, Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 etc.

“ —

| One of the luckiest things that can happen to you in life is, I think, to have a happy childhood |


— ”

-Agatha Christie

TEACHERS

You play an important role in the lives of your students. You are in a position to make children and their parents aware of their rights, duties and laws that affect them. As a teacher, you can prevent child marriages by listening to students and by observing their behaviour.

EXERCISE 1: FILL IN THE BLANKS



To begin your work, you need to obtain the contact details of the following persons. Once you have the details, save the contact details on your phone and complete the exercises below:

A. Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM)/ Child Marriage Prohibition Officer (CMPO)- The CMPOs are appointed in every State to prohibit and prevent child marriages, ensure the protection of victims and prosecution of offenders. In Delhi, the SDMs have been appointed as the CMPOs.⁸⁴

Name _____

Phone No. _____

Area _____

⁸⁴ Rule 3 of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009



B. Child Welfare Committees (CWCs)- They are constituted by the State Government in every District to discharge duties in relation to children in need of care and protection including children who are at imminent risk of marriage.⁸⁵

Name _____

Phone No. _____

Designation Chairperson/Member

C. SHOs of the Police Stations in your area-

PS _____ **SHO** _____ **Phone No.** _____

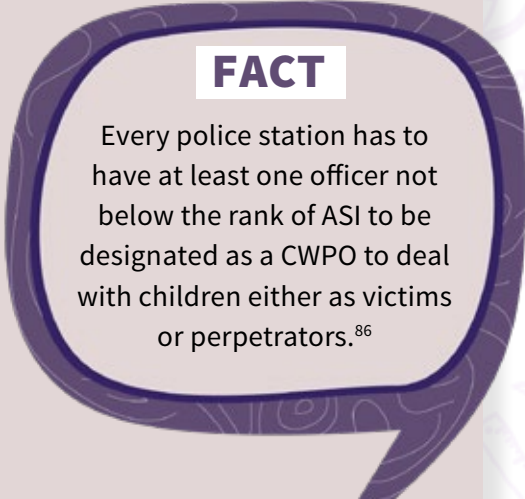
D. District Child Protection Officer (DCPO) in your District- Within the DCPU, the DCPO coordinates the functioning of the unit. The District Magistrate supervises the functioning of the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU).⁸⁷

Name _____ **Phone No.** _____

E. Civil society organisations working on child protection issues with a focus on awareness, prevention and rehabilitation of victims of Child Marriage.

Name _____ **Contact person** _____ **Phone No.** _____

Name _____ **Contact person** _____ **Phone No.** _____



FACT

Every police station has to have at least one officer not below the rank of ASI to be designated as a CWPO to deal with children either as victims or perpetrators.⁸⁶

You need these details to intimate the relevant authorities in case you need to report a case of child marriage or participate in the rehabilitative process of a victim of child marriage.

Let us understand how you can help prevent child marriages and help victims of child marriage including child brides.

⁸⁵ Section 27 read with Section 2(14)(xii) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

⁸⁶ Section 107(1) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

⁸⁷ Rule 85 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

ROLE OF TEACHERS

What preventive measures can you take?

a. Keep track of the attendance of the students in your class. Ensure that you regularly mark the attendance of the children on your Edudel tab that is connected to the Early Warning System.⁸⁸



Prolonged absence of an adolescent girl child from school could be a sign of child marriage. Ensure that you follow up with the parents of the child in case of uninformed prolonged absence.

b. In cases where extended periods of absence are seen, raise the matter with the HOS. Call and visit the child's house to assess the safety and security of the child.

c. If you suspect that there could be a possibility of child marriage of your student, speak to the parents and the child to confirm your belief. Speak to the parents and the child about the repercussions of child marriage.

d. Make a complaint before the relevant stakeholders depending on your conversation with the family.

e. Inform the DCPU about the child being at risk of child marriage.

f. Conduct regular follow up with the student and the family.

g. In cases where a child was produced before the Child Welfare Committee (CWC), ensure you follow directions, if any. This could include providing regular updates to the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) or the DCPU on the child.

h. Conduct special sessions for the students where the CMPOs, Police, CWC members may be invited to speak to the children about the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 as well as the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012.

i. Conduct sessions in class with the children about their rights and the various laws that affect them. Similarly, inform parents about the negative consequences of child marriage during the Parent Teaching Meetings.



Organising debate, painting, essay writing competitions are effective ways to spread awareness on the evils of child marriage.

⁸⁸ The Early Warning System detects vulnerable children by tracking their attendance and provides intervention where necessary.

Who can you make a complaint to?

Inform one of the following when you are aware that a child marriage has been or is being or is likely to be solemnised:

- ▶ Nearest Police Station
- ▶ Child Marriage Prohibition Officer (CMPO)
- ▶ Child Welfare Committee (CWC)
- ▶ Childline (1098)
- ▶ Any civil society organisation that works on the issue of child marriage
- ▶ DCPCR Helpline (9311551393)
- ▶ DCPU

What can you do when a child marriage has already taken place?

a. Inform any of the stakeholders mentioned above regarding the child marriage so that the appropriate action may be taken, if it has not already been taken.

b. Ensure that you follow up with the family of the student for resuming their education.

c. Provide the child with additional support if they have missed classes due to the marriage so that they are able to catch up with missed classes.

d. Ensure that there is no bullying taking place against them.

e. In case where a child was produced before the Child Welfare Committee (CWC), ensure you follow directions, if any.

EXERCISE 2: CASE STUDY



You notice that the performance of one of your students is deteriorating. The student has become irregular with their homework and seems withdrawn. What do you do?

What will you do in this case?

Who are the stakeholders you will reach out to?

In case you find that the child has already been married, what can you do for the welfare of the child?

“ —

We must protect families, we must protect children, who have inalienable rights and should be loved, should be taken care of physically and mentally, and should not be brought into the world only to suffer.

— ”

-Indira Gandhi

CHILD WELFARE COMMITTEE (CWC)

Congratulations on being appointed to the Child Welfare Committee (CWC). You play a crucial role in the care and protection of children.

EXERCISE 1: FILL IN THE BLANKS

To begin your work, you need to obtain the contact details of the following persons. Once you have the details, save the contact details on your phone and complete the exercises below:

A. District Magistrate (DM) – The DM is responsible for supervising all child protection related activities in their District.

Name _____

Phone No. _____

B. Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM)/Child Marriage Prohibition Officer (CMPO)- The CMPOs are appointed in every State to prevent child marriages, ensure the protection of victims and prosecution of offenders. In Delhi, the SDMs have been appointed as the CMPOs.⁸⁹

1) **Name** _____ **Phone No.** _____

Area _____

2) **Name** _____ **Phone No.** _____

Area _____

3) **Name** _____ **Phone No.** _____

Area _____

4) **Name** _____ **Phone No.** _____

Area _____

⁸⁹ Rule 3 of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009



FACT

Every police station has to have at least one officer not below the rank of ASI to be designated as CWPO to deal with children either as victims or perpetrators.⁹⁰

C. SHOs of the Police Stations in your area-

- 1) PS _____ SHO _____
Phone No. _____
- 2) PS _____ SHO _____
Phone No. _____
- 3) PS _____ SHO _____ Phone No. _____
- 4) PS _____ SHO _____ Phone No. _____

D. Deputy Director of Education (DDE) of your zone⁹¹-The DDEs oversee all education related tasks in their respective zones.

Name _____ Phone No. _____

E. Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Juvenile Police Unit)- The State Government constitutes the SJPU in each district and city.⁹²

Name _____ Phone No. _____

F. District Child Protection Officer (DCPO) in your District- Within the DDCPU, the DCPO coordinates the functioning of the unit. The District Magistrate supervises the functioning of the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU).⁹³

Name _____ Phone No. _____

G. Secretary of the concerned District Legal Services Authority (DLSA)

Name _____ Phone No. _____

H. Civil society organisations working on child protection issues with a focus on awareness, prevention and rehabilitation of victims of Child Marriage.

- 1) Name _____ Contact person _____ Phone No. _____
- 2) Name _____ Contact person _____ Phone No. _____
- 3) Name _____ Contact person _____ Phone No. _____

I. List of schools in your area⁹⁴

The total number of schools in your area is _____.

Now that you have completed the exercise and saved the information of the stakeholders on your phone, let us understand your role.

⁹⁰ Section 107(1) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

⁹¹ Hint: You can refer to <<https://www.edudel.nic.in/mis/misemail/frmComposeMailDirectory.aspx>>

⁹² Section 107(2) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

⁹³ Rule 85 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

⁹⁴ Hint: you can refer to the list of schools on this website <<https://www.edudel.nic.in/edu/directorate.html>>

FACT

It is the duty of the Chairperson of the CWC to prepare and circulate the monthly roster to all the police stations, the Chief Judicial Magistrate/ Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, the District Judge, the District Magistrate, the Juvenile Justice Board, the District Child Protection Unit and the Special Juvenile Police Unit.⁹⁵ The monthly roster should also be shared with the CMPO.

ROLE OF CHILD WELFARE COMMITTEES (CWCs)

What should you do when a child marriage is likely to be solemnised or is being solemnised?

If you are made aware by any person/civil society organisation that there is an imminent risk of child marriage taking place or a marriage of a child has been fixed or a child marriage is taking place, then take the following steps:

- a. Immediately direct the police to lodge an FIR,⁹⁶ proceed to the venue of the marriage to stop it and produce the child before the CWC bench. Make sure that the CMPO is also informed about the complaint.
- b. The child in need of care and protection should be produced before you within 24 hours.⁹⁷ In case the child cannot be produced before you, you shall reach the child where they are located.⁹⁸
- c. When a child is produced before you, make a prima facie determination of the age of the child to ascertain your jurisdiction.⁹⁹
- d. Ensure that a report containing the particulars of the child is documented and submitted to you by the person who produces the child before you.¹⁰⁰
- e. Based on the level of risk to the child after interacting with the child and family, place the child with a fit person/CCI.¹⁰¹ Order immediate medical examination of the child if you feel the need.¹⁰²
- f. Assign the case to a social worker or a civil society organisation for preparing and

⁹⁵ Rule 16(6) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

⁹⁶ FIR may be registered under provisions of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 and Section 55 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

⁹⁷ Section 31(1) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

⁹⁸ Rule 18(1) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

⁹⁹ Rule 19(2) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016 read with Section 94 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

¹⁰⁰ Rule 18 (2) Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

¹⁰¹ Rule 18 (4) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

¹⁰² Rule 18(6) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016



When a child, likely to be married, is produced before you, ensure you inform the child and the family about the negative impact of early marriage on the health of the child.

submitting a social investigation report in 15 days and an individual care plan for the child.¹⁰³

g. Before restoring the child, you may refer the child and the family to a counsellor.¹⁰⁴

h. Request for follow-up from the school where the child studies to ensure the safety and continued education of the child.

i. Direct a civil society organisation or the DCPU to follow up on the case.



You have to maintain a suggestion box at a prominent place on the premises of the CWC for review by the District Magistrate.¹⁰⁵

What can you do in cases where child marriage has already been solemnised?

In instances where you are made aware by any person/civil society organisation that a child marriage has already been solemnised, take the following steps:

a. Ensure that the child is produced before the CWC within 24 hours of the complaint being filed and where it is not feasible, reach the location of the child.¹⁰⁶

b. Assess the health and condition of the child and provide immediate medical help, if required.

c. Direct the police to lodge an FIR and to do the needful as per law based on the statement of the child. Further, inform the concerned CMPO under whose jurisdiction the child falls, if they are not aware.

d. When you interact with the child, keep in mind that no person who can pressurise the child to give an incomplete or incorrect statement is in the vicinity.

e. Conduct an inquiry and you may pass an order to send the child to the children's home/shelter home/placement with a fit person or fit facility.¹⁰⁷

f. Issue an order to a social worker or Child

¹⁰³ Rule 19(3) and (4) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

¹⁰⁴ Rule 19(9) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

¹⁰⁵ Rule 17(ii) of Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

¹⁰⁶ Section 31(1) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015; Rule 18 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

¹⁰⁷ Section 36 r/w 31 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015; 18(2) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

Welfare Officer or Child Welfare Police Officer to conduct and submit a social investigation report within 15 days.¹⁰⁸

g. If required, provide the girl child who may have become pregnant with access to rehabilitative services and relevant schemes.

h. Appoint a counsellor to provide mental health support to the child, if needed.

i. Ensure that Individual Care Plans for the child are created, regularly updated and submitted to you in a timely manner.¹⁰⁹

j. Where the child needs to be repatriated to another District, or State, or country direct the DCPU to take necessary permissions required for the transfer, contact the counterpart Committee or any volunteer organisation in the District or State or country where the child is to be sent.¹¹⁰



You have to send quarterly reports to the District Magistrate for review about children in need of care and protection received by you with all relevant details on the nature of disposal of cases, pending cases and reasons for such pendency.¹¹¹

EXERCISE 2: CASE STUDY

A girl aged 17 years who has been married to a 17 year old boy has been produced before you. The child informs you that she has married out of her own free will and expresses her willingness to live with her husband.



The parents of the bride had supported the decision as they could not afford to educate her. Further, they inform you that they lived in an unsafe area and the groom's family had agreed to continue her education.

What is the first step you would take?

Which stakeholders would you coordinate with?

What information would you require in the case before passing the order?

What kind of orders with reasons would you issue for both children?

¹⁰⁸ Section 36 and 37 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

¹⁰⁹ Rule 19 (4) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

¹¹⁰ Rule 19 (16) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

¹¹¹ Rule 17(v) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

“ —

|

There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children

|


— ”

– Nelson Mandela

DISTRICT CHILD PROTECTION UNIT (DCPU)

Congratulations on being appointed to the DCPU! You play a crucial role in the care and protection of children.

EXERCISE 1: FILL IN THE BLANKS



To begin your work, you need to obtain the contact details of the following persons. Once you have the details, save the contact details on your phone and complete the exercises below:

A. District Magistrate (DM)- The DM is responsible for supervising all child protection related activities in their District.

Name _____

Phone No. _____

B. Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM)/Child Marriage Prohibition Officer (CMPO)- The CMPOs are appointed in every State to prevent child marriages, and ensure the protection of victims and prosecution of offenders. In Delhi, the SDMs have been appointed as the CMPOs.¹¹²

1) Name _____ Phone No. _____

Area _____

2) Name _____ Phone No. _____

Area _____

3) Name _____ Phone No. _____

Area _____

4) Name _____ Phone No. _____

Area _____

¹¹² Rule 3 of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009



C. SHOs of the Police Stations in your area- Every police station has to have at least one officer not below the rank of an ASI to be designated as the Child Welfare Police Officer (CWPO) to deal with children either as victims or perpetrators.¹¹³

- 1) PS _____ Name _____ Phone No. _____
- 2) PS _____ Name _____ Phone No. _____
- 3) PS _____ Name _____ Phone No. _____
- 4) PS _____ Name _____ Phone No. _____

D. Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) - They are constituted by the State Government in every District to discharge duties in relation to children in need of care and protection including children who are at imminent risk of marriage.¹¹⁴ The Chairperson of the CWC prepares a monthly roster of the members to ensure that at least one member is always available to take cognizance of an emergency matter even during holidays. This roster is to be shared with the stakeholders by the CWC.¹¹⁵

- 1) Do you have the monthly roster from the CWC? YES/ NO
- 2) If not, obtain the contact number of the Chairperson of the concerned CWC.
Name _____ Phone No. _____ Designation Chairperson
- 3) Call the Chairperson of the concerned CWC and ask for the monthly roster. Once you receive it, go back and tick 'Yes' in Exercise 1).

E. Deputy Director of Education (DDE) of your zone¹¹⁶ - The DDEs oversee all education related tasks in their respective zones.

Name _____ Phone No. _____

F. Secretary of the concerned District Legal Services Authority (DLSA)

Name _____ Phone No. _____

G. Civil society organisations working on child protection issues with a focus on awareness, prevention and rehabilitation of victims of Child Marriage.

- 1) Name _____ Contact person _____ Phone No. _____
- 2) Name _____ Contact person _____ Phone No. _____
- 3) Name _____ Contact person _____ Phone No. _____

H. List of schools in your area¹¹⁷

The total number of schools in your area is _____.

Now that you have completed the exercise and saved the information of the stakeholders on your phone, let us understand your role.

¹¹³ Section 107(1) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

¹¹⁴ Section 27 read with Section 2(14)(xii) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

¹¹⁵ Rule 16(6) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

¹¹⁶ Hint: You can refer to <<https://www.edudel.nic.in/mis/mismail/frmComposeMailDirectory.aspx>>

¹¹⁷ Hint: you can refer to the list of schools on this website <http://web.delhi.gov.in/wps/wcm/connect/doiit_education/Education/Home/About+Us/>



You can organise awareness activities on child marriage in schools, particularly during parent teacher meetings and in anganwadi centres to reach the parents.

ROLE OF DISTRICT CHILD PROTECTION UNIT (DCPU)

What can you do to prevent child marriages?

- a.** Generate awareness, organise and conduct programmes such as training and capacity building of stakeholders on the issue of child marriage.¹¹⁸ Spread awareness on various welfare schemes especially those which are conditional on the child completing their education and/or staying unmarried until they turn 18 years of ages.
- b.** Ensure inter-departmental coordination and liaise with the relevant department of the State Government and State Child Protection Society of the State and other DCPU in the State.¹¹⁹

- c.** Ensure you take appropriate action on the inputs you receive from the District Magistrate on the issues and cases of child marriage by virtue of the quarterly reports submitted by the CMPOs to them.
- d.** Network and coordinate with civil society organisations working on the issue of child marriage.¹²⁰
- e.** Organise quarterly meetings with all stakeholders at the district level to review the progress and implementation of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.¹²¹ Ensure that the issues of child marriage in the district are taken up during the meetings.



You can engage with priests/imams/religious heads in your area, share collateral for putting up in the mosque/temple, etc. premises and encourage them to spread awareness in the community about the ill effects of early marriages. This is an effective way to prevent child marriages and reach the community.

¹¹⁸ Rule 85(xxi) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

¹¹⁹ Rule 85(xii) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

¹²⁰ Rule 85(xiii) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

¹²¹ Rule 85(xxii) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

FACT

The District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) functions under the overall control and supervision of the District Magistrate. The District Magistrate is the Nodal Officer in the District for implementation of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 and the Model Rules 2016¹²²

What should you do if you receive information or complaint about a child marriage likely to be solemnised or being solemnised?

- a.** Immediately inform the CMPO and the police regarding the information or the complaint received.
- b.** Assist the CMPO and the police during their visit to the residence of the child or venue of the marriage, as the case may be, to ascertain the information or stop the marriage.
- c.** Your paramount responsibility is to ensure the well-being of the child. Further, you have to ensure that their rights are respected.
- d.** Produce the child before the CWC if required and comply with the directions passed. These directions may include:

- ✓ Making the Social Investigation Report (SIR) and submitting it in 15 days
- ✓ Making the Individual Care Plan (ICP) .
- ✓ Follow up on the rehabilitation of child victims.
- ✓ Assisting in the repatriation process of a child who is to be sent to their home District or State or country.¹²³
- ✓ Arrange individual or group counselling services for children.

What can you do once the child has been married?

- a.** Follow up on the well-being of the child and report to the CWC as directed.
- b.** Inform the family of the benefits of continuing education in case the child is not going to school.
- c.** Counsel the child and the family on reproductive health.
- d.** Ensure that the child, in case they are pregnant or a parent, receives the benefits at the Anganwadi level.

¹²² Rule 85 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

¹²³ Rule 19(16) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016; Rule 85(xi) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016

EXERCISE 2: CASE STUDY



You have been informed that a 16 year old girl in your district has dropped out of school and is pregnant. You speak to the family of the child and find that the girl's marriage has been fixed for the day after to prevent social stigma.

What is your first step in this case?

Which stakeholders will you interact with?

What are reports/documents you will submit and to whom?

How will you interact with the child and the family?

“

“We are guilty of many errors and many faults, but our worst crime is abandoning the children, neglecting the fountain of life. Many of the things we need can wait. The child cannot. To him we cannot answer ‘Tomorrow.’ His name is today.”


”

- Gabriela Mistral

ANGANWADI WORKERS

Congratulations on being appointed as an Anganwadi worker! You play an important role in spreading awareness against child marriages and in ensuring the well-being of child brides and young mothers.

EXERCISE 1: FILL IN THE BLANKS



To begin your work, you need to obtain the contact details of the following persons. Once you have the details, save the contact details on your phone and complete the exercises below:

A. Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM) /Child Marriage Prohibition Officer (CMPO)- The CMPOs are appointed in every State to prevent child marriages and ensure the protection of victims and prosecution of offenders. In Delhi, the SDMs have been appointed as the CMPOs.¹²⁴

Name _____

Phone No. _____

Area _____

B. District Child Protection Officer (DCPO) in your District- Within the DCPU, the DCPO coordinates the functioning of the unit. The District Magistrate supervises the functioning of the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU).¹²⁵

Name _____

Phone No. _____

¹²⁴ Rule 3 of the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009

¹²⁵ Rule 85 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016



C. SHOs of the Police Stations in your area-

PS _____ SHO _____ Phone No. _____

D. Civil society organisations working on child protection issues with a focus on awareness, prevention and rehabilitation of victims of Child Marriage.

Name _____ Contact person _____ Phone No. _____

ROLE OF ANGANWADI WORKERS

a. In case you become aware that a child marriage is likely to take place or is taking place or has taken place, immediately inform the CMPO, DCPU, police or a civil society organisation working on child protection issues.

b. Conduct awareness sessions on the ill effects and consequences of child marriage with adolescents.

c. Provide information and awareness to mothers on the consequences of child marriage on the health of the child as well as the legal repercussions of the same.

d. You may have girls or child brides in the area under your jurisdiction who may require

your assistance as expectant or nursing mothers. Ensure their care and that of their children.

e. Provide health and nutrition education and counselling on breastfeeding/infant and young feeding practices to mothers.

f. Make home visits to educate the expectant or young mothers on how to raise the child for effective growth, development and empowerment.

g. Motivate and educate the adolescent girls and their parents and the community in general by organising social awareness programmes/campaigns, etc. against child marriages.

EXERCISE 2: CASE STUDY



You are informed that a 17 year old girl in your area has dropped out of school because she is pregnant.

What are the services you would provide?

Which stakeholders would you contact?



1. Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 (Annexure 1)



भारत का राजपत्र The Gazette of India

असाधारण

EXTRAORDINARY

भाग II — खण्ड 1

PART II — Section 1

प्राधिकार से प्रकाशित

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY

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इस भाग में भिन्न पृष्ठ संख्या दी जाती है जिससे कि यह अलग संकलन के रूप में रखा जा सके।
Separate paging is given to this Part in order that it may be filed as a separate compilation.

MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (Legislative Department)

New Delhi, the 11th January, 2007/Pausa 21, 1928 (Saka)

The following Act of Parliament received the assent of the President on the 10th January, 2007, and is hereby published for general information:—

THE PROHIBITION OF CHILD MARRIAGE ACT, 2006

No. 6 OF 2007

[10th January, 2007.]

An Act to provide for the prohibition of solemnisation of child marriages and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

BE it enacted by Parliament in the Fifty-seventh Year of the Republic of India as follows:—

1. (1) This Act may be called the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006.

(2) It extends to the whole of India except the State of Jammu and Kashmir; and it applies also to all citizens of India without and beyond India:

Provided that nothing contained in this Act shall apply to the Renoncants of the Union territory of Pondicherry.

(3) It shall come into force on such date as the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint; and different dates may be appointed for different States and any reference in any provision to the commencement of this Act shall be construed in relation to any State as a reference to the coming into force of that provision in that State.

Short title,
extent and
commencement.

Definitions.

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,—

(a) "child" means a person who, if a male, has not completed twenty-one years of age, and if a female, has not completed eighteen years of age;

(b) "child marriage" means a marriage to which either of the contracting parties is a child;

(c) "contracting party", in relation to a marriage, means either of the parties whose marriage is or is about to be thereby solemnised;

(d) "Child Marriage Prohibition Officer" includes the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer appointed under sub-section (1) of section 16;

(e) "district court" means, in any area for which a Family Court established under section 3 of the Family Courts Act, 1984 exists, such Family Court, and in any area for which there is no Family Court but a city civil court exists, that court and in any other area, the principal civil court of original jurisdiction and includes any other civil court which may be specified by the State Government, by notification in the Official Gazette, as having jurisdiction in respect of the matters dealt with in this Act; 66 of 1984.

(f) "minor" means a person who, under the provisions of the Majority Act, 1875 is to be deemed not to have attained his majority. 9 of 1875.

Child marriages to be voidable at the option of contracting party being a child.

3. (1) Every child marriage, whether solemnised before or after the commencement of this Act, shall be voidable at the option of the contracting party who was a child at the time of the marriage:

Provided that a petition for annulling a child marriage by a decree of nullity may be filed in the district court only by a contracting party to the marriage who was a child at the time of the marriage.

(2) If at the time of filing a petition, the petitioner is a minor, the petition may be filed through his or her guardian or next friend along with the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer.

(3) The petition under this section may be filed at any time but before the child filing the petition completes two years of attaining majority.

(4) While granting a decree of nullity under this section, the district court shall make an order directing both the parties to the marriage and their parents or their guardians to return to the other party, his or her parents or guardian, as the case may be, the money, valuables, ornaments and other gifts received on the occasion of the marriage by them from the other side, or an amount equal to the value of such valuables, ornaments, other gifts and money:

Provided that no order under this section shall be passed unless the concerned parties have been given notices to appear before the district court and show cause why such order should not be passed.

Provision for maintenance and residence to female contracting party to child marriage.

4. (1) While granting a decree under section 3, the district court may also make an interim or final order directing the male contracting party to the child marriage, and in case the male contracting party to such marriage is a minor, his parent or guardian to pay maintenance to the female contracting party to the marriage until her remarriage.

(2) The quantum of maintenance payable shall be determined by the district court having regard to the needs of the child, the lifestyle enjoyed by such child during her marriage and the means of income of the paying party.

(3) The amount of maintenance may be directed to be paid monthly or in lump sum.

(4) In case the party making the petition under section 3 is the female contracting party, the district court may also make a suitable order as to her residence until her remarriage.

Custody and maintenance of children of child marriages.

5. (1) Where there are children born of the child marriage, the district court shall make an appropriate order for the custody of such children.

(2) While making an order for the custody of a child under this section, the welfare and best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration to be given by the district court.

(3) An order for custody of a child may also include appropriate directions for giving to the other party access to the child in such a manner as may best serve the interests of the child, and such other orders as the district court may, in the interest of the child, deem proper.

(4) The district court may also make an appropriate order for providing maintenance to the child by a party to the marriage or their parents or guardians.

6. Notwithstanding that a child marriage has been annulled by a decree of nullity under section 3, every child begotten or conceived of such marriage before the decree is made, whether born before or after the commencement of this Act, shall be deemed to be a legitimate child for all purposes.

Legitimacy of children born of child marriages.

7. The district court shall have the power to add to, modify or revoke any order made under section 4 or section 5 and if there is any change in the circumstances at any time during the pendency of the petition and even after the final disposal of the petition.

Power of district court to modify orders issued under section 4 or section 5.

8. For the purpose of grant of reliefs under sections 3, 4 and 5, the district court having jurisdiction shall include the district court having jurisdiction over the place where the defendant or the child resides, or where the marriage was solemnised or where the parties last resided together or the petitioner is residing on the date of presentation of the petition.

Court to which petition should be made.

9. Whoever, being a male adult above eighteen years of age, contracts a child marriage shall be punishable with rigorous imprisonment which may extend to two years or with fine which may extend to one lakh rupees or with both.

Punishment for male adult marrying a child.

10. Whoever performs, conducts, directs or abets any child marriage shall be punishable with rigorous imprisonment which may extend to two years and shall be liable to fine which may extend to one lakh rupees unless he proves that he had reasons to believe that the marriage was not a child marriage:

Punishment for solemnising a child marriage.

11. (1) Where a child contracts a child marriage, any person having charge of the child, whether as parent or guardian or any other person or in any other capacity, lawful or unlawful, including any member of an organisation or association of persons who does any act to promote the marriage or permits it to be solemnised, or negligently fails to prevent it from being solemnised, including attending or participating in a child marriage, shall be punishable with rigorous imprisonment which may extend to two years and shall also be liable to fine which may extend up to one lakh rupees:

Punishment for promoting or permitting solemnisation of child marriages.

Provided that no woman shall be punishable with imprisonment.

(2) For the purposes of this section, it shall be presumed, unless and until the contrary is proved, that where a minor child has contracted a marriage, the person having charge of such minor child has negligently failed to prevent the marriage from being solemnised.

12. Where a child, being a minor—

(a) is taken or enticed out of the keeping of the lawful guardian; or

(b) by force compelled, or by any deceitful means induced to go from any place;

or

(c) is sold for the purpose of marriage; and made to go through a form of marriage or if the minor is married after which the minor is sold or trafficked or used for immoral purposes,

Marriage of a minor child to be void in certain circumstances.

such marriage shall be null and void.

Power of court to issue injunction prohibiting child marriages.

13. (1) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in this Act, if, on an application of the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer or on receipt of information through a complaint or otherwise from any person, a Judicial Magistrate of the first class or a Metropolitan Magistrate is satisfied that a child marriage in contravention of this Act has been arranged or is about to be solemnised, such Magistrate shall issue an injunction against any person including a member of an organisation or an association of persons prohibiting such marriage.

(2) A complaint under sub-section (1) may be made by any person having personal knowledge or reason to believe, and a non-governmental organisation having reasonable information, relating to the likelihood of taking place of solemnisation of a child marriage or child marriages.

(3) The Court of the Judicial Magistrate of the first class or the Metropolitan Magistrate may also take *suo motu* cognizance on the basis of any reliable report or information.

(4) For the purposes of preventing solemnisation of mass child marriages on certain days such as *Akshaya Trutiya*, the District Magistrate shall be deemed to be the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer with all powers as are conferred on a Child Marriage Prohibition Officer by or under this Act.

(5) The District Magistrate shall also have additional powers to stop or prevent solemnisation of child marriages and for this purpose, he may take all appropriate measures and use the minimum force required.

(6) No injunction under sub-section (1) shall be issued against any person or member of any organisation or association of persons unless the Court has previously given notice to such person, members of the organisation or association of persons, as the case may be, and has offered him or them an opportunity to show cause against the issue of the injunction:

Provided that in the case of any urgency, the Court shall have the power to issue an interim injunction without giving any notice under this section.

(7) An injunction issued under sub-section (1) may be confirmed or vacated after giving notice and hearing the party against whom the injunction was issued.

(8) The Court may either on its own motion or on the application of any person aggrieved, rescind or alter an injunction issued under sub-section (1).

(9) Where an application is received under sub-section (1), the Court shall afford the applicant an early opportunity of appearing before it either in person or by an advocate and if the Court, after hearing the applicant rejects the application wholly or in part, it shall record in writing its reasons for so doing.

(10) Whoever knowing that an injunction has been issued under sub-section (1) against him disobeys such injunction shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years or with fine which may extend to one lakh rupees or with both:

Provided that no woman shall be punishable with imprisonment.

Child marriages in contravention of injunction orders to be void

14. Any child marriage solemnised in contravention of an injunction order issued under section 13, whether interim or final, shall be void *ab initio*.

Offences to be cognizable and non-bailable.

15. Notwithstanding anything contained in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, an offence punishable under this Act shall be cognizable and non-bailable. 2 of 1974

16. (1) The State Government shall, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint for the whole State, or such part thereof as may be specified in that notification, an officer or officers to be known as the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer having jurisdiction over the area or areas specified in the notification.

Child Marriage
Prohibition
Officers.

(2) The State Government may also request a respectable member of the locality with a record of social service or an officer of the Gram Panchayat or Municipality or an officer of the Government or any public sector undertaking or an office bearer of any non-governmental organisation to assist the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer and such member, officer or office bearer, as the case may be, shall be bound to act accordingly.

(3) It shall be the duty of the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer—

(a) to prevent solemnisation of child marriages by taking such action as he may deem fit;

(b) to collect evidence for the effective prosecution of persons contravening the provisions of this Act;

(c) to advise either individual cases or counsel the residents of the locality generally not to indulge in promoting, helping, aiding or allowing the solemnisation of child marriages;

(d) to create awareness of the evil which results from child marriages;

(e) to sensitize the community on the issue of child marriages;

(f) to furnish such periodical returns and statistics as the State Government may direct; and

(g) to discharge such other functions and duties as may be assigned to him by the State Government.

(4) The State Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, subject to such conditions and limitations, invest the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer with such powers of a police officer as may be specified in the notification and the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer shall exercise such powers subject to such conditions and limitations, as may be specified in the notification.

(5) The Child Marriage Prohibition Officer shall have the power to move the Court for an order under sections 4, 5 and 13 and along with the child under section 3.

45 of 1860. 17. The Child Marriage Prohibition Officers shall be deemed to be public servants within the meaning of section 21 of the Indian Penal Code.

Child Marriage
Prohibition
Officers to be
public servants.

18. No suit, prosecution or other legal proceedings shall lie against the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer in respect of anything in good faith done or intended to be done in pursuance of this Act or any rule or order made thereunder.

Protection of
action taken in
good faith.

19. (1) The State Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, make rules for carrying out the provisions of this Act.

Power of State
Government to
make rules.

(2) Every rule made under this Act shall, as soon as may be after it is made, be laid before the State Legislature.

20. In the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, in section 18, for clause (a), the following clause shall be substituted, namely:—

Amendment
of Act No. 25
of 1955.

"(a) in the case of contravention of the condition specified in clause (iii) of section 5, with rigorous imprisonment which may extend to two years or with fine which may extend to one lakh rupees, or with both".

21. (1) The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 is hereby repealed.

19 of 1929.

(2) Notwithstanding such repeal, all cases and other proceedings pending or continued under the said Act at the commencement of this Act shall be continued and disposed of in accordance with the provisions of the repealed Act, as if this Act had not been passed.

—
K. N. CHATURVEDI,
Secy. to the Govt. of India.



2. Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009 (Annexure 2)

NOTIFICATION

No. F. 61 (Child Marriage/DO-I/DSW/2009-10/ In exercise of power conferred by Sub Section (l) of Section 19 of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 (No. 6 of 2007) read with the Govt. of India, Ministry of Home Affairs Notification. S.O. 1274 (E) F. No. 110183/2008- UTL dated: 30.05.2008, the Lt. Governor of the National Capital Territory of Delhi, hereby makes the following rules, namely: -

1. Short title and commencement – (1) These rules may be called the Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009.

(2) They shall come into force on the date of their publication in the Delhi Gazette.

2. Definitions – In these rules, unless the context otherwise requires : -

- (a) “Act”, means the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 (No. 6 of 2007);
- (b) “Child Marriage Prohibition Officer” means an officer appointed as such by the State Government under Section 16 of the Act;
- (c) “Complaint” means any allegation made orally or in writing by any person to the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer;
- (d) “Delhi” means the National Capital Territory of Delhi;
- (e) “Government” means the Lt. Governor of the National Capital Territory of Delhi appointed by the President under article 239 and designated as such under article 239 AA of the Constitution;
- (f) “Section” means a Section of the Act;
- (g) Words and expressions used and not defined in these rules and defined in the Act shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them in the Act.

3. Appointment of Child Marriage Prohibition Officer – The Sub- Divisional Magistrate of the area shall be the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer for his respective jurisdiction and shall have powers to investigate the relevant cognizable cases as is exercised by a police officer under Chapter V, VII, XI and XII of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.

4. Information to Child Marriage Prohibition Officer – (1) any person who has reason to believe that an act of child marriage has been, or is being, or is likely to be committed in Delhi may give information about it to the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer having jurisdiction in the area, either orally or in writing.

(2) In case the information is given to the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer under sub-rule (1) orally, he shall cause it to be reduced to writing and shall ensure that the same is signed by the person giving such information and in case the informant is not in a position to furnish written information the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer shall satisfy and keep a record of the identity of the person giving such information.

(3) The Child Marriage Prohibition Officer shall give a copy of the information recorded by him immediately to the informant free of cost.

5. Child Marriage Report– (1) Upon receipt of a complaint of child marriage, or on his own the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer shall prepare a child marriage report and submit the same to the District Court and forward copies thereof to the police officer, in charge of the police station within the local limit of jurisdiction of which the child marriage alleged to have been committed has taken place.

(2) Upon any information received, any individual authorized in terms of sub-section (2) of section 16 may record child marriage report and forward a copy thereof to the District Court and to the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer having jurisdiction in the area where child marriage is alleged to have taken place or is likely to take place.

6. Application to the Magistrate – (1) Every application or complaint received by the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer shall be forwarded to the concerned District Court.

(2) In case the complaint is illiterate the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer shall read over the application and explain the contents thereof.

7. Duties and functions of Child Marriage Prohibition Officer - The duties and functions to be discharged and performed by Child Marriage Prohibition Officer (in addition to the duties mentioned in Section 16 (3) of the Act) shall be as described below: -

(a) To assist the complainant in making a complaint under the Act, if the complainant so desires.

(b) To provide information to the contracting parties regarding the rights and offence being committed.

(c) To assist the person in making the application in terms of sub-section (1) of

section 13 or any other provision of the Act or these rules.

- (d) To provide legal aid to the complainant through State Legal Aid Service Authority.
- (e) To inform the person authorized under sub-section (2) of section (16) that their services may be required in the proceedings under the Act.
- (f) To maintain a record and copies of the records and documents forwarded under sub-section (3) of section 16 and in pursuance of the powers conferred upon him under sub-section (4) of section 16.
- (g) To provide all possible assistance to the complainant to ensure that he/she is not victimised or pressurized as a consequence of reporting the incidence of child marriage.
- (h) To liaise between the complainant or persons, police and authorized persons in the manner provided under the Act and these rules.
- (i) To take all reasonable measures to prevent recurrence of child marriage against the aggrieved person, in accordance with the provisions of the Act and these rules.
- (j) The Child Marriage Prohibition Officer shall assist the Court in the enforcement of orders in the proceedings under the Act including orders under section 4 and 5.
- (k) The Child Marriage Prohibition Officer shall also perform such other duties as may be assigned to him by the Government in giving effect to the provision of the Act and these rules from time to time.
- (l) The Child Marriage Prohibition Officer shall furnish the report in Form – 1, appended to these rules, in the first week of every quarter of the year to the District Magistrate/ Deputy Commissioner concerned.

8. Action to be taken in cases of emergency – If the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer or a person authorized under sub-section (2) of section 16 receives reliable information through e-mail or a telephone call or the like, either from the aggrieved person or from any person who has reason to believe that an Act of child marriage is being and is likely to be committed, in such an emergent situation, the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer or the person authorized, as the case may be, shall see immediate assistance of the police and shall proceed to the place of occurrence and record the child marriage report and present the same to the court without any delay.

9. Means of services of notices – (1) The notices for appearance in respect of the proceedings under the Act shall contain the names of the person alleged to have committed or caused child marriage, the nature of child marriage and such other details as may facilitate the identification of person concerned.

(2) The service of notices shall be made in the following manner, namely –

a) The notice in respect of the proceedings under the Act shall be served by the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer or any other person directed by him to serve the notice, on behalf of the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer, at the address where the respondent is stated to be ordinarily residing in India by the complainant or aggrieved person or where the respondent is stated to be gainfully employed by the complainant or aggrieved person, as the case may be.

b) The notice shall be delivered to any person in charge of such place at the moment and in case of such delivery not being possible, it shall be pasted at a conspicuous place on the premises.

(3) On a statement on the date fixed for appearance of the respondent, or a report of the person authorised to serve the notices under the Act, that service has been effected, appropriate orders shall be passed by the court on any pending application for interim relief, after hearing the complainant or the respondent, or both.

10. Breach of Prohibition – (1) Any person may report breach of prohibition order or an interim Court direction to the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer.

(2) Every report referred to in sub-rule (1) shall be in writing by the informant and duly signed by him.

(3) The complainant may, if he so desires, make a complaint of breach of prohibition order directly to the court.

(4) If, at any time after a prohibition order has been breached, the complainant seeks his assistance, the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer shall assist the complainant to lodge the report to the local police authorities in an appropriate manner.

(5) Any resistance to the enforcement of orders of the court under the Act by the respondent shall be deemed to be breach of prohibition order or an interim prohibition order covered under the Act.

11. Role of the Government – (1) The Government shall, by notification in the official Gazette, notify any civil court /family court as having jurisdiction in respect of the matters dealt within the Act.

(2) The Government shall have a list of volunteers in each District and it shall be made available to the concerned Child Marriage Prohibition Officer in terms of sub-section (2) of section 16.

12. Disposal of Records – The records of documents in respect of a case of child marriage shall be kept in a safe place for a period of seven years or until the pendency of court case, if any and thereafter, be destroyed as per standard procedure.

By order and in the name of the Lt. Governor
of the National Capital Territory of Delhi.



(Debashree Mukherjee)
Secretary
Department of Women & Child Development

No. F. 61 (Child Marriage)/DO-I/DSW/2009-10/27489-490 Dated : , 2009
Copy forwarded for information to: 10 OCT 2009

1. The Secretary to Lt. Governor, Govt. of NCT of Delhi, Raj Niwas Marg, New Delhi.
2. The Secretary to the Chief Minister, Govt. of NCT of Delhi, Delhi Secretariat, New Delhi.
3. The Secretary to Minister of Women & Child Development, Govt. of NCT of Delhi, Delhi Secretariat, New Delhi.
4. The OSD to Chief Secretary, Govt. of NCT of Delhi, Delhi Secretariat, New Delhi.
5. The Pr. Secretary (Home), Govt. of NCT of Delhi, Delhi Secretariat, New Delhi.
7. The Pr. Secretary (Health), Govt. of NCT of Delhi, Delhi Secretariat, New Delhi
8. The District & Session Judge, Govt. of NCT of Delhi, Tis Hazari, Delhi.
9. The Secretary, Department of Women & Child Development, GLNS Complex, Delhi Gate, Delhi.
10. The Secretary (Law & Judicial), Govt. of NCT of Delhi, Delhi Secretariat, New Delhi.
11. The Secretary, Department of Labour, 5, Shyam Nath Marg, Delhi.
12. The Director, Department of Women and Child Development, Govt. of NCT of Delhi, 1, Canning Lane, K. G. Marg, New Delhi.
13. The Registrar, Delhi High Court, New Delhi.
14. The Police Commissioner, Delhi Police HQ, WFO, New Delhi.
15. The Dy. Commissioner, Govt. of NCT of Delhi, Tis Hazari, Delhi.
16. The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Tis Hazari, Delhi.
17. The Registrar, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, 5th Floor, Chandernagore Building, Janpath, New Delhi.
18. The Member Secretary, Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights, 5th Floor, I.S.B.T., Kaslumber Gate, Delhi.
19. The Deputy Secretary (Co-ordination), Govt. of NCT of Delhi, Delhi Secretariat, New Delhi.
20. The Joint Director (Admn.), Social Welfare, GLNS Complex, Delhi Gate, Delhi.
21. The Joint Director (Programme), Women & Child Development, 1, Canning Lane, New Delhi.
22. The Joint Director (Tech.), Women & Child Development, 1, Canning Lane, New Delhi.
23. The Deptt. Of Public Relation, Govt. of Delhi (in duplicate) for the publication in Delhi Gazette Part IV Extra ordinary.



(Debashree Mukherjee)
Secretary

Department of Women & Child Development

Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009

FORM – 1

Quarterly report on Child Marriages

Office of the Sub – Divisional Magistrate (Child Marriage Prohibition Officer)

To,

The District Magistrate

Sub : Quarterly Report for the period _____ to _____ under Rule 7 (1) of Delhi Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2009.

Sir/Madam,

The subject report is as under:

S. No.	Date of receipt of information/ complaint of Child Marriage	Name, address, phone no. of the informer/ complainant	Name of the child bride and phone no.	Age of the child bride	Name, address, phone no. of parents of the child bride
1	2	3	4	5	6

Name of the child groom and phone no.	Age of the child groom	Name, address, phone no. of parents of the child groom	Date of the solemnization of child marriage	Action taken by the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer	Remarks
7	8	9	10	11	12

Yours faithfully,

Name of the Officer
Child Marriage Prohibition Officer

Area _____
Stamp

Guests at child marriages face two-year jail term, ₹1-lakh fine

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mysuru: The women and child development (WCD) department is going all out to stop child marriages in the district. Besides the bride and bridegroom's families, even those attending such marriages and facilitating them by letting out choultries will be booked under the Child Marriage Prohibition Act.

The attendees will face Rs 1 lakh fine and two years jail.

There's also the possibility of being booked under the PoCSO Act and facing minimum of seven years of imprisonment. K Radha, deputy director, WCD department, Mysuru district, said, "If it's found that the minor was pushed to have sex or if she becomes pregnant, those who attended and facilitated the marriage will be booked under PoCSO Act."

In the last two years, the department stopped 216 child marriages in the district. However, no stringent action was taken against the violators. Now, the department will be going tough against them, she said.

Child marriage is most

Number of child marriages stopped

2012-13	35
2013-14	21
2014-15	111
2015-16	105



TIMES VIEW

Witnessing a child marriage is akin to abetting it and the women and child development department has done well to plan action against even attendees of such weddings. One hopes this initiative will force people to stop or report such marriages. This will ensure young girls are not forced into early sexual activity and child-bearing at a time when they should be studying. The government should also create more public awareness against this social evil. But how will the authorities implement it? For one cannot ask about the girl's age before attending a wedding. The government must ensure people are not victimised.

common among poor and rural communities and it only perpetuates the cycle of poverty. More often than not, child brides are pulled out of school, depriving them of education and meaningful work. They suffer health risks associated with early sexual activity and childbearing, leading to high rates of maternal and child mortality.

"With the help of voluntary organizations we will try to create more awareness by visiting schools and villages about the consequences of child marriage. In days

to come, the punishment will be stringent and no one can escape from law," Radha said. "In 2012-13 and 2013-14, 35 and 21 child marriages were stopped respectively. The number increased in 2014-15 and 2015-16 as we managed to stop 111 and 105 child marriages across the district. More child marriages are found taking place in Hunsuru, KR Nagar and HD Kote taluqs. Not only the bride and bridegroom's families but also the priests, the attendees and those let out choultries for the marriage

will be booked under the Child Marriage Prohibition Act."

Dr Radhamani, superintendent, Cheluvamba Hospital, said, "Every month, around 1,200 deliveries happen in the hospital. About 5% are related to teenage pregnancy that is below 18 years of age. Abortion chances are high among teenage pregnancy. Besides, there are chances of preterm delivery, high BP and sugar and anaemia. Also there are chances of more health complication during delivery."

Underage marriage, edu levels linked, finds study

Nearly A Third Married Before 18 Uneducated

Amiba.Pandit@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: A report on child marriage and teenage pregnancy that analyses the data from National Family Health Survey-4 (2015-16) shows a direct correlation between underage marriages and educational status of girls.

Citing low prevalence rates where girls have completed secondary education, the report by National Commission for Protection of Child Rights and voluntary organisation Young Lives makes a pitch for making secondary level schooling a fundamental right. Findings show the completion rate of secondary schooling is considerably higher among unmarried girls aged 15-19 years in almost all states. Even National Human Rights Commission secretary general Arvind Sharma emphasised the need to extend the right to education from Class VII to secondary level. The NHRC is also planning to recommend to the ministry of women and child development a uniform age for marriage for both men and women.

In 149 countries, age of marriage is 18 for both men and women. Last month the law commission in a consultative paper on family laws suggested the legal age for marriage for both men and women across religions should be recognised at 18 years, the advanced age for majority. The study

CHILD MARRIAGE AND TEENAGE PREGNANCY

12 states show higher prevalence of child marriage than national average of 11.5% in NFHS-4 (15- to 19-year-old girls who got married before 18 years)

State	Percentage
West Bengal	25.4%
Tripura	21.6%
Bihar	19.7%
Jharkhand	17.8%
Odisha & Nagaland	17.5%

Teenage pregnancies: 27.2% of married teenage girls have given birth to one child while 4.2% of married girls have 2 or more children

State	Percentage
Goa	64.4%
Mizoram	60.8%
Meghalaya	52.9%
Nagaland	52.0%
Tripura	52.2%

Reduction of child marriage of more than 20% for 15- to 19-year-old girls from NFHS-3 to NFHS-4

State	NFHS-3 (%)	NFHS-4 (%)
Bihar	19.7%	47.8%
Jharkhand	17.8%	44.7%
Rajasthan	16.2%	40.0%
UP	6.8%	29%

Substantial reduction of child marriage reported by 20- to 24-year-old women who had underage marriages from NFHS-3 to NFHS-4

State	NFHS-3 (%)	NFHS-4 (%)
Uttar Pradesh	58.0%	21.1%
Chhattisgarh	55%	21.3%

More than 20% (TOP FIVE)

State	NFHS-3 (%)	NFHS-4 (%)
Bihar	69%	42.5%
Rajasthan	65.2%	35.4%
Jharkhand	63.2%	37.9%
Madhya Pradesh	57.3%	32.4%
Andhra Pradesh	54.8%	33%

based on NFHS-4 data shows that of the 15 to 19 year old girls, who at the time of the survey reported to have been married before the legal age of marriage, 30.8% had never been to a school and 21.0% had education up to the primary level. The percentage of

girls who had secondary education and were married before 18 was 10.2%. Those with higher levels of education were further down to 2.4%. While overall prevalence of child marriage declined from 36.5% in 2005-06 to 11.5% in 2015-16.

Child marriage complaints flood Haryana

Gautam Dheer

CHANDIGARH, DHNS: In Haryana, one incident of child marriage is reported "every 24 hours" on an average, official data on the number of child marriages in the last one year said.

Human rights activists have expressed concern over the rising number of such cases. Complaints of child marriage have been steadily on the rise since 2014. With still a month to spare, government figures reveal that as many as 362 complaints of child marriage were reported in 2016-17.

Fortunately, out of these, as many as 230 were prevented through counselling. Cases



which could not be resolved through counselling were referred to the police.

The number of people who offer tip-offs about child marriages to the authorities has gone up. This emerging trend could help stem the social evil. Sources said that many cas-

es of child marriage were reported from the border towns in Rajasthan, where the practice is believed to be common.

Experts are of the opinion that the 923 cases reported in the last three years could be just a small portion of the total instances of child marriages taking place.

Often, these practices are confined to a few families for a long time.

They are even met with social sanctity and this compounds the problem.

In several villages in Haryana's Sirsa, minor girls and minor boys are forced into marriage. Prohibition officers in Haryana have often acted swiftly to rescue the children.

Child brides born out of poverty, lack of security

Prohibition Cell Prevented 1,214 Such Marriages In 2 Years In K'taka

Sourav Chatterjee

Mysuru, 15, from Child Marriage Prohibition Cell, said that in the last year, 1,214 such marriages were prevented. She also said that she was forced to marry to a man from Andhra Pradesh. After waiting for many hours for a friend who didn't come to pick her up, police rescued her and took her to the child welfare committee.

"My parents considered me a financial burden and committed me to a man from Andhra Pradesh," she said. She was 15 when she was in Class IX. She was 17 when she was married. She was 18 when she was in Class IX. She was 19 when she was married. She was 20 when she was in Class IX. She was 21 when she was married. She was 22 when she was in Class IX. She was 23 when she was married. She was 24 when she was in Class IX. She was 25 when she was married. She was 26 when she was in Class IX. She was 27 when she was married. She was 28 when she was in Class IX. She was 29 when she was married. She was 30 when she was in Class IX. She was 31 when she was married. She was 32 when she was in Class IX. She was 33 when she was married. She was 34 when she was in Class IX. She was 35 when she was married. She was 36 when she was in Class IX. She was 37 when she was married. She was 38 when she was in Class IX. She was 39 when she was married. She was 40 when she was in Class IX. 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