# SKILLS FOR FREEDOM

**Newsletter from India**

**No: 16**                                                         **August: 2016**

This electronic newsletter from **PEACE TRUST, INDIA** is addressed to NGO's, Social Activists, Media, Opinion makers, Leaders and Bureaucrats for improving their understanding on skilling the youth for gainful employment and addressing social issues like modern slavery, child labour, migrant labour, un-employability of youth. We also send this to people who we believe are involved in improving the migrant worker's conditions. You are welcome to unsubscribe yourself, if you so choose.

**-EDITOR**

Peace Trust is a Non Government Organization working on Child Labour and Bonded Labour issues since 1984. It has also focused on Migrant workers rights issue since 1999.

- o Peace Trust's Skills for Freedom is the only solution to end Modern Slavery in Tamil Nadu. It is a joint effort for enhancing the employment opportunities of rural youth in Dindigul, Karur, Tiruppur Districts.
- o Reduce the risk for Young Workers - Beginning of this month Peace Trust has launched a new Initiative to "Support School Education, Health Protection, Livelihood Development and Skill Training for Gainful Employment among Vulnerable Young Population in Dindigul District".
- o SPSC Vocational Education & Employment Facilitation Centre provides access to vocational education and employment facilitation for rural poor youth in Nagapattinam, Thiruvarur District Tamil Nadu and Karaikal District, Puducherry.
- o Peace Trust also provides training for Quality Teacher Education and gainful employment to young women from resource poor families in Dindigul and Karur District.

The views expressed are not of the donors but a compilation of field realities for the purpose of sharing and action.

The Skills for Freedom e-newsletter is published by:

**PEACE TRUST**
Lifting up the least, the lost and the last..

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# MIGRANTS

**'NEARLY HALF OF WOMEN MIGRANTS IN MUMBAI WORK AS DOMESTIC HELPS'**

Anemia was frequently observed among the migrant women. In Mumbai, 62.2 per cent of the female migrants were moderately anemic and 9.9 per cent were severely anemic.

There has been an increasing feminization of internal labour migration in most developing countries over the past few decades. Although the reason for internal migration among women migrants, as reported by existing secondary sources in India, is predominantly marriage, there has been an increase in migration for economic reasons.

In the absence of primary studies on such migrants in India, a study titled "Female Migrants in India" was conducted by the Population Council. The study was carried out on women in Delhi and Mumbai aged 18 years or more, had migrated and currently working in either of the two cities.

According to the study, 54.9 per cent of female migrants worked as domestic workers in households, 18.4 per cent were engaged in tailoring/handicraft; and 11.8 per cent worked in factories. Shop keeping and other petty businesses made up 8.2 per cent. Very few respondents (5.9 per cent) were engaged in formal-sector jobs such as teaching, nursing and community health. On average, female migrants earn about Rs 4,655 per month.

Better income (67 per cent) and better work opportunities (60 per cent) were the most frequently reported pull factors, followed by having well-settled relatives in Mumbai (29.7 per cent) and family movement (17.9 per cent). The most frequently cited reason pushing respondents to migrate were reported as "no money in the household" (54.2 per cent), followed by being dissatisfied with the work they did at home (43.6 per cent) and lack of employment in their home districts (15 per cent).

Anemia was frequently observed among the migrant women. In Mumbai, 62.2 per cent of the female migrants were moderately anemic and 9.9 per cent were severely anemic.

High prevalence of spousal abuse, which included both verbal (65.1 per cent) and physical abuse (32.6 per cent) was reported by women. Around 45 per cent of the respondents in Mumbai reported having a violent argument with their husbands in the past six months.

The study calls for creating an enabling environment for potential female migrants, including establishing migration information and support centers at both origin and destination sites. "We observed a high proportion of women reporting economic reasons for their migration, indicating increasing feminization of migration for work opportunities. Thus, a well-organized support system for potential female migrants can facilitate their independent migration," the study says.


**TURKEY SAYS TO BACK AWAY FROM EU MIGRANT DEAL IF NO VISA-FREE TRAVEL**

Visa-free access to the EU has been subject to delays due to a dispute over Turkish anti-terrorism legislation and Ankara's crackdown after a failed coup.

Turkey would have to back out of its agreement with the European Union to stem the flow of migrants into the bloc if the EU does not deliver visa-free travel for Turks, Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu has said.

Visa-free access to the EU – the main reward for Ankara's collaboration in choking off an influx of migrants into Europe – has been subject to delays due to a dispute over Turkish anti-terrorism legislation and Ankara's crackdown after a failed coup.

Cavusoglu told Germany's daily Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung the agreement on stemming the refugee flow had worked because of "very serious measures" taken by Ankara.

"But all that is dependent on the cancellation of the visa requirement for our citizens, which is also an item in the agreement of March 18," Cavusoglu said in a release in advance of comments to be published in the newspaper's Monday edition."If visa liberalization does not follow, we will be forced to back away from the deal on taking back (refugees) and the agreement of March 18," he said, adding that the Turkish government was waiting for a precise date for visa liberalization.

"It could be the beginning or middle of October – but we are waiting for a firm date." European Commissioner Guenther Oettinger said recently he did not see the EU granting Turks visa-free travel this year due to Ankara's crackdown after the failed military coup in mid-July.


**IN-FLIGHT BEER A RARE TREAT AS NEPALI MIGRANT WORKERS LEAVE FAMILIES FOR JOBS**


For Nabin Lama, leaving Nepal after his annual home leave to return to his construction job in Saudi Arabia is not easy. What makes the journey bearable -- even enjoyable -- is the can of beer he can drink on the flight from Kathmandu.

As soon as the seat belt sign dinged off on a flight to Mumbai -- from where he and a couple of hundred other Nepalese would take a connecting flight to Jeddah -- Lama rose to look for the stewardess.

"Beer," he bellowed, waving to her as she made her way down the aisle with a tray of fruit juice and water.

"It's a tough life there. But at least we can earn something and help our family," said Lama, 24, one hand on his passport, a white sticker across its green cover identifying a Nepali recruitment agency and his job.

"But we can't drink there. So we have a beer on the flight. It feels good," he said with a grin.

Lama comes from one of the world's poorest countries. On-going political instability since a decade-long civil conflict ended in 2006 has discouraged investment, hampered growth and curbed job creation in Nepal, forcing hundreds of thousands to migrate overseas for work.

Most go to the Middle East, Malaysia and India, from where they send remittances which make up almost 30% of Nepal's annual gross domestic product, according to the labour ministry.

Most migrants are in low-paid, unskilled jobs in construction, or work as security guards and domestic helpers.

Many face labour abuses including long hours, unsafe conditions and withholding of their wages and passports, say activists. Many are trafficked, tricked into doing jobs that they did not sign up for, or under conditions and wages far worse than they were promised.

Their families are not that much better off. Elderly parents, as well as young women and children left behind in remote villages are themselves vulnerable to traffickers and racketeers, and struggle with everyday hardship.

"There are hardly any young men left behind in some districts," said Nandita Baruah, deputy country representative at Asia Foundation, an international development organization, in Kathmandu.

Families left behind may be duped into sending their children with traffickers posing as aid workers, or even selling their kidneys in India for money, she said.

"Migration is increasing the economic and social vulnerability of the country: People left behind are exposed to the harsh economic realities, and it makes them take greater risks, like trusting a trafficker or a kidney tout," she said.

**Zero Cost**

More than 3.8 million permits to work abroad were issued in the decade to 2015, representing about 14% of the current population, according to Nepal's labour ministry.

This does not include the hundreds of thousands crossing the border into India, where they do not require a permit.

Nepal is forecast by the World Bank to have received about $6.6 billion in remittances in 2015. But the journey to an overseas job is fraught with challenges and usually leaves workers deep in debt.

Recruitment agencies that facilitate procuring a job and a work permit often charge 2,00,000 to 5,00,000 rupees ($1,860 to$4,660) per worker. That is several times the average income of about $730.



**A Nepalese woman spins prayer wheels as she walks home. Hardly any young men are left in the country as they seek better paying jobs abroad, mostly in the Middle East.**

Fear of losing their job and not being able to pay back the money -- usually borrowed from moneylenders, often underwritten by the family home, or from selling land -- forces workers to tolerate harsh working conditions and low wages.

"Migration is important -- most workers do well, earn a living, support their families," Baruah told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "But the very first journey of migration leads to indebtedness. And they are bonded to their employers because of the huge burden of debt," she said.

The Nepali government introduced a "zero-cost" migration policy last year, which makes the employer and recruiter responsible for costs. But the law is applied unevenly. After female domestic workers in the Gulf countries complained of abuse, Nepal in 2012 banned women below the age of 30 from going there as domestic helps. But many women produced fake papers to say they were older than 30, or were hired for other jobs.

Nepal has since lowered the age limit to 26 years. In June, Nepal banned its nationals from working in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria after 13 Nepali security guards were killed by a suicide bomber in Kabul. These measures to protect workers have had limited success.

"We know that when labour-sending countries try to protect their citizens through such bans, unscrupulous recruiters just use unregulated channels," said Meenakshi Ganguly, head of Human Rights Watch for South Asia.

Instead, Nepal should monitor recruitment agencies, engage with host countries to enforce worker rights and ensure embassies provide emergency shelters and assistance, she said.

A spokesman for the labour ministry said Nepal aims to sign labour agreements with Saudi Arabia and Malaysia to improve workers' rights, similar to those already agreed with the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain and South Korea.

**Quake Effect**

The absence of working-age men was felt deeply in the days and weeks following twin earthquakes in Nepal last year which killed about 9,000 people, and damaged or destroyed more than 9,00,000 houses.

Women tending to children and elderly relatives were often not in a position to go to relief camps, claim compensation, or rebuild their homes quickly, said Lily Thapa, founder of Women for Human Rights in Kathmandu.

"Women whose husbands are working overseas are vulnerable and helpless, particularly during disasters," Thapa said.

"There were many instances of sexual violence after the quakes directed at such women," she said. Teaching skills and creating jobs at home will be key to keeping emigration in check, Baruah said. The government also needs to prepare for the return of these workers in the event of an economic downturn or anti-migrant laws in the host countries.

There is already a slow trickle from the Middle East and Malaysia as jobs dry up because of lower oil prices. More than 10,000 Indians in Saudi Arabia who have been laid off are facing a "food crisis", Indian officials have said.

"Imagine if the 1,500-1,700 men who leave each day from the Kathmandu airport start coming back," Baruah said.

"Imagine what will happen when they come back to a country where there are no jobs." For Lama and his friends, drinking beer on the flight, that is a distant prospect for now.

"I have a contract for one year," he said. "After that, I will have to find another job somewhere."

# CHILD LABOUR

**A LAW AGAINST CHILDREN**

The amended act legalizes the bulk of child labour while claiming to do the opposite.

Of the many injustices that have scarred India, the most unconscionable are those of unequal childhoods. The law in the country has permitted children to be confined to work instead of being in schools and at carefree play. India's child labour law, until the recent amendments passed by Parliament, barred child work until 14 years only in officially designated hazardous employment. There was no bar on the employment of children between 14 and 18 years.

On the face of it, two major amendments to India's child labour law seem welcome. These amendments prohibit all work, hazardous or otherwise, for children under 14, who now also enjoy the constitutional right to free and compulsory education. And for adolescents between 14 and 18 years, whose labour was entirely lawful until now, the law prohibits their employment in work scheduled as hazardous.

Yet on closer scrutiny, we discover the same pattern as many other pronouncements of this government vis a vis the poor: The reality of what is being offered is the reverse of what appears on paper. The ban on hazardous adolescent work is accompanied by changes in the schedule of hazardous work in the statute, bringing these down from 83 prohibited activities to only three. Apart from mining and explosives, the law only prohibits processes deemed hazardous under the Factories Act 1948. In other words, the amended law prohibits only that child work which is considered hazardous for adult workers, without recognizing the specific vulnerabilities of children.

More damaging is the caveat in the amended law that permits even children less than 14 years to now work in non-hazardous "family enterprises" after school hours and during vacations. The family is defined to include not just the child's parents and siblings, but also siblings of the child's parents. And a family enterprise includes any work, profession or business in which any family member works along with other persons.

In effect, this proviso accomplishes the very opposite of what it claims to do. Instead of ending child labour, it actually makes lawful once again a large part of child work that was earlier unlawful. It is estimated that around 80 per cent of child labour is in work with family members. This is in farms, forests, home-based work such as bidi rolling, carpet weaving, making of bangles and handicrafts, home-based assembly tasks, domestic work, eateries, roadside garages, and street vending. Child rights activists had fought long and hard to compel governments to include many of these occupations in the statutory list of hazardous occupations. But by the double whammy of legalising child participation in non-hazardous "family enterprise" work and drastically trimming the list of hazardous occupations, in effect the government has again legalised the bulk of child work.

Reopening the flood gates for child labour by these amendments is part of a larger package of weakening labour protections for enhancing labour market flexibility to facilitate higher corporate investments. The quarter century of economic reforms has witnessed the steady dismantling of factory floor manufacture by organised adult workers into a preference for unorganised migrant, adolescent and child workers and contractual and home-based production systems.

Home-based work absolves the owners and managers of global supply chains from any legal obligations of fair wages, healthy work conditions and social protection to the actual end-line workers who labour in isolated home-based units. Economist Archana Prasad points to the surge of home based work from 23.3 million (1999-2000) to 37.4 million workers in 2011-2012. Of this, 16 million were women home-based workers. Nearly 32 per cent of total women workers outside agriculture are home-based workers. Around 73 per cent of these women engage in home-based manufacture, in sectors such as apparel, tobacco products and textiles. Once work is undertaken within the four walls of a home, children routinely (but up to now unlawfully) assist their mothers for long hours to complete and maximize their "piece-work" orders. What these amendments accomplish is to render this child labour lawful.

The argument that has long held sway is that child labour, however unfortunate, is inevitable as long as households remained poor. Only after parents escape poverty will their children be able to enter school. What these claims ignore is that the reverse is far more true. That child labour is indeed a major cause of persisting poverty. That if a child is trapped in labour instead of being able to attend fully to her schooling; she will never be able to escape the poverty of her parents. The child of a sanitation worker, rag-picker, domestic worker or casual laborer is likely to be trapped in the professions of her parents unless she is able to access quality education. And also, for every child in work is an adult denied the same work, an adult who could have ensured that her children could be in school. We may argue that working with one's hands is integral to a full education. But in that case, the opportunities and the obligation to work must surely lie with children of privilege as much as it does with children of disadvantage?

Children enrolled in schools but rising from disadvantage face many barriers. They may be poorly nourished; be first-generation learners; have no place for study in their homes; and be unable to afford tutors. It is they who would be further disadvantaged by this amendment.

Those who defend this amendment applaud the opportunity it would provide for children to learn the trades of their parents. This argument is a thinly disguised defense of caste, because it is only the caste system that envisages the "natural" transition of children into the professions of their parents. Why should the child of a potter learn to be a potter, and not a poet; the child of a sanitation worker not a doctor; and the child of a leather tanner not a philosopher? These amendments are one more spur to India's ancient tradition of unequal childhoods.

# TRAFFICKING

### 'JUVENILE TRAFFICKER': HOW HUMAN TRAFFICKERS ARE TRAINING HUNDREDS OF MINORS IN THE JOB

An investigation by Hindustan Times has revealed an emerging form of human trafficking, one which is falling through the cracks --seasoned traffickers using children in 16-18 age group in organized crime, training them to traffic younger kids from country's poorest states to urban centers. For promised amount of Rs 5,000 to Rs 10,000 per child, minors on the cusp of adulthood, embark on this dangerous journey, in the hope of escaping endemic poverty. Once they arrive in the urban centers, trafficked children are placed in various sectors: domestic work, brick kiln, sex work, agricultural labour and eateries. The first-ever anti-

human trafficking bill, introduced by Women and Child Development minister Maneka Gandhi in May, overlooks this issue.

"Traffickers keep looking for new ways to escape law. They are training kids because of two reasons. Children don't raise suspicion. And if they are caught, they are tried under the Juvenile Justice Act (JJA) which is relatively lenient that the Indian Penal Code meant for adult offenders," said Aradhana Singh, in-charge of Anti Human Trafficking Unit in Jharkhand's Khunti district which has been supplying domestic help to thousands of homes in Delhi and satellite towns such as Noida, Gurgaon and Faridabad.

The IPC defines trafficking as recruiting, transporting, harbouring, or receiving person(s), by using threats or coercion, or deception, or power, for the purpose of exploitation.

The consent of the victim is immaterial in determination of the offence of trafficking.

As per data from National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), the number of registered human trafficking cases increased by more than 38 per cent between 2009 and 2013.

**LOST IN TRANSLATION**

Based on interviews with trafficking survivors, members of various government institutions working for the welfare of minors, Anti- Human Trafficking Units, Railway Police and NGOs, Hindustan Times could confirm that more than 30 cases of children trafficking children have come to light in the last one year.

However, there is no centralised database of such cases as the current legal framework does not acknowledge 'juvenile traffickers'. The focus of anti-human trafficking efforts is to catch middlemen or gang leaders who are adults.

"Every time we interact with kids, the priority is to inquire who are they working for and what is the scale of the operation. Details pertaining to masterminds become part of the database. This is one of the reasons why it is hard to get exact number of cases in which kids were used as traffickers," said Singh.



**Anti-trafficking Bill**
(Salient features)

In May, Women & Child Development Ministry released the draft of anti-trafficking Bill. The Ministry has invited suggestions on the Bill. It is expected to be introduced in the Parliament in the winter session. The Bill talks about:

- State-level anti-trafficking committees with government officers and NGO representatives
- Protection homes for rescued victims
- Specialised schemes for survivors of sex trafficking
- Registration of placement agencies
- Criminalises using a narcotic substance, alcohol or psychotropic substance for trafficking
- Criminalises administering any chemical substance or hormone to a trafficked woman or child to enable early sexual maturity
- Criminalises revealing the identity of a victim or witness to a crime of trafficking.
- Penalises non- registration of protection homes, special homes
- Anti-trafficking fund to fund implementation

Aparna Dwivedi, member of one of the three Child Welfare Committees in Delhi, has come across many cases which followed the pattern: an older child transporting children younger to him. In most of these cases, Dwivedi said, the elder child had in his custody, money, identity proof and tickets of younger ones. According to her, various teams of government bodies and NGOs working on the ground to curb human trafficking are unable to recognise this emerging form of trafficking because they are not sensitised enough.

"At railway stations when cops find that kids are travelling by themselves, they make a note of the same and hand over those kids to us. They do not probe the trafficking angle. If this angle emerges, they don't lodge FIRs. This is why hundreds of trafficking cases remain undocumented," she said.
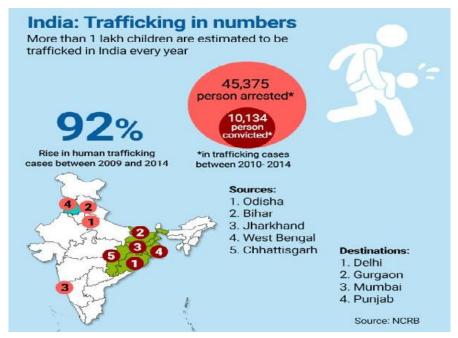
## THE TRAINING

It starts with a trip to a metro in search of better avenues. In a majority of the cases, a child's distant relative or friend or acquaintance working in the big city doubles as a trafficker. With him, kids make the journey to the city voluntarily or involuntarily.

After reaching the urban centre, traffickers get hundreds of minors placed in various sectors. Minor girls, placed in prostitution, are sold many times over. But traffickers are always on a look out for children who can assist them. A tribal child who is smart and has spent three to six months in Delhi is seen as a potential recruit. The minor is trained to go back to the village to bring back more children.

"The outlook, things such as lipstick, mobile phone, and body language of girls who have returned from Delhi, appeal to girls in villages. They interact in local dialect about city life. The fact that a girl who was one of them has changed so much in a big city works as a magnate for village girls," said Alakh Narayan Singh, member of the Child Welfare Committee in Jharkhand's Gumla district.

How much money the 'child trafficker' gets depends on the age, looks and the sector in which the transported kids will be placed in. "If the girl who is brought to Delhi is beautiful and tribal, the child who brought her can get anything between Rs 10,000 to 50,000," said Singh.



**India: Trafficking in numbers**
More than 1 lakh children are estimated to be trafficked in India every year

45,375 person arrested*

10,134 person convicted*

92%
Rise in human trafficking cases between 2009 and 2014

*in trafficking cases between 2010- 2014

Sources:
1. Odisha
2. Bihar
3. Jharkhand
4. West Bengal
5. Chhattisgarh

Destinations:
1. Delhi
2. Gurgaon
3. Mumbai
4. Punjab

Source: NCRB

They try and keep changing their modus operandi to evade police.

Anil K Mishra, a lawyer from Bihar who has been working to curb human trafficking was part of a team that detained 12 kids in 2014 at Bihar's Kaithal railway station. Hailing from Aharia and Kishanganj districts in Bihar, the kids were aboard Mahananda train to travel to Delhi. On realizing that the kids were traveling by themselves, Mishra and his team mates asked them to get out of the train. On inquiring they found out that one of them was given the responsibility of taking others to Delhi. "That minor told me that next time he travelled in the train, he would appear busy working with a pen and notebook so that he looks like a student and does not catch people's attention. I was quite surprised. It speaks volumes about the kind of training his employer would have given him on evading law," said Mishra.

Rahul Mehta is the director of Ranchi chapter of Child line (an initiative of the Ministry of Women & Child Development, Department of Telecommunications and NGOs to work for cause of vulnerable children). Mehta said as part of the training, kids are told not to deboard the train in cities in which the Railway Police is active. "Instead of coming directly to railway stations in Delhi, they deboard the train at Anand Vihar, Nizamuddin and Ghaziabad," he said.


**CRIMINAL OR VICTIM?**

Child rights experts are divided on whether to treat the 'child trafficker' as a victim or offender. The Juvenile Justice Act (JJA) has two broad categories for vulnerable children: children in need of care and protection and children in conflict with the law. Effectively, the former are considered victims and later, offenders.

In all the cases Hindustan Times examined, authorities treated kids who were found trafficking other kids, as children in need of care and protection. In some cases, they were let off after admonishment. In others, they were sent to shelter homes or reunited with their families.

"In such cases, the underage 'trafficker' will be treated as a victim. This is because he or she is not aware of the law- breaking aspect of the activity. If you say that it is about fixing accountability, we should also book parents," said Mahavir Kaushik, former inspector with Delhi AHTU.
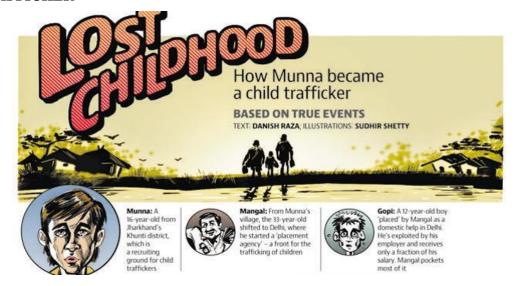
Enakshy Ganguly Thukral, co- director, HAQ centre for child rights, had a different opinion. "If the police has been treating them as children in need of care and protection, it is wrong. They should be treated as juveniles in conflict with the law. If the child is not made to realise that he was doing something illegal, there is a high possibility of him repeating the offence," said Thukral. "If the same child is found smuggling drugs, authorities will treat him as an offender. Why not the same in case of human smuggling?" she added.

Legal action against trafficking in India is being taken under the IPC, Immoral Traffic Prevention Act, and Maharashtra Control of Organized Crime Act.

In 2011, the Juvenile Justice Board, Delhi, ruled that police could use MCOCA against adults who were using the juveniles in an organized manner.
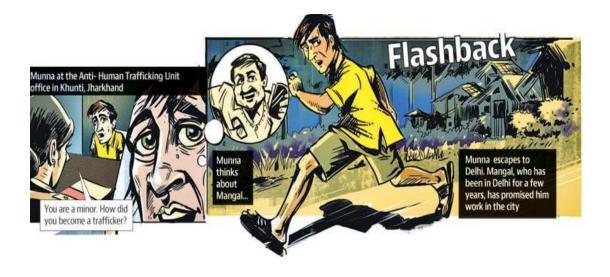
The United Nations and the Union Ministry of Home Affairs describe trafficking as an organised crime. So far, there has not been a single case of police booking an adult for using children in trafficking- yet another example of laws failing to recognize changing dynamics of crime.
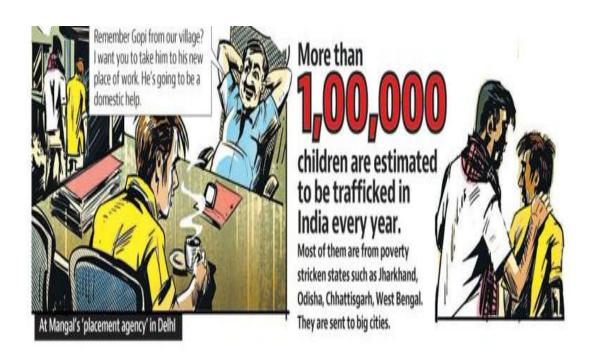
**LOST CHILDHOOD: HOW 16-YEAR-OLD MUNNA BECAME A CHILD TRAFFICKER**



LOST CHILDHOOD
How Munna became a child trafficker
BASED ON TRUE EVENTS
TEXT: DANISH RAZA; ILLUSTRATIONS: SUDHIR SHETTY

Munna: A 16-year-old from Jharkhand's Khunti district, which is a recruiting ground for child traffickers

Mangal: From Munna's village, the 33-year-old shifted to Delhi, where he started a 'placement agency' – a front for the trafficking of children

Gopi: A 12-year-old boy 'placed' by Mangal as a domestic help in Delhi. He's exploited by his employer and receives only a fraction of his salary. Mangal pockets most of it
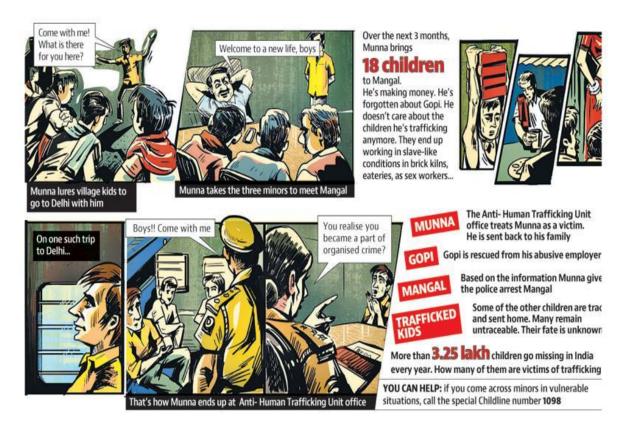
This is the story of Munna. He could be a minor from any impoverished region of India. He is easily impressed by anyone who has visited a big city. Smartphones and wristwatches are things he dreams about. For human traffickers, it is easy to lure minors such as Munna into city life. The promise of a job and easy money is enough for juveniles like him to leave their villages, voluntarily or involuntarily.

Seasoned criminals are now using minors in organised crime by recruiting them to bring younger children from villages to cities. This is an emerging form of human trafficking that is falling through the cracks.



Munna at the Anti- Human Trafficking Unit office in Khunti, Jharkhand

You are a minor. How did you become a trafficker?

Munna thinks about Mangal...

Flashback

Munna escapes to Delhi. Mangal, who has been in Delhi for a few years, has promised him work in the city

Remember Gopi from our village? I want you to take him to his new place of work. He's going to be a domestic help.

At Mangal's 'placement agency' in Delhi

More than **1,00,000** children are estimated to be trafficked in India every year.

Most of them are from poverty stricken states such as Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal. They are sent to big cities.

What'll my salary be, Munna?

I don't know. Your employer will pay Mangal bhaiyya and he will pay you

Munna takes Gopi to his place of work

Go and collect Gopi's salary

After two months

TRRRRR

Munna can hear Gopi sobbing

Out of ₹**15,000**, I keep ₹13,000. And you can send ₹2,000 to Gopi's family

Gopi gets no money?

Munna leaves the house after collecting the money

That is none of your business. Go back to the village and get me 5-6 more boys. I will pay you ₹**2,000** per boy

Ok. I will try to persuade some boys to come with me

At Mangal's office

Munna in his village

12

Munna lures village kids to go to Delhi with him

Welcome to a new life, boys

Munna takes the three minors to meet Mangal

Over the next 3 months, Munna brings **18 children** to Mangal. He's making money. He's forgotten about Gopi. He doesn't care about the children he's trafficking anymore. They end up working in slave-like conditions in brick kilns, eateries, as sex workers...

On one such trip to Delhi...

Boys!! Come with me

You realise you became a part of organised crime?

That's how Munna ends up at Anti- Human Trafficking Unit office

**MUNNA** The Anti- Human Trafficking Unit office treats Munna as a victim. He is sent back to his family

**GOPI** Gopi is rescued from his abusive employer

**MANGAL** Based on the information Munna give the police arrest Mangal

**TRAFFICKED KIDS** Some of the other children are trac and sent home. Many remain untraceable. Their fate is unknown

More than **3.25 lakh** children go missing in India every year. How many of them are victims of trafficking

**YOU CAN HELP:** if you come across minors in vulnerable situations, call the special Childline number **1098**

## ALERT TAXI DRIVER FOILS ALLEGED TRAFFICKING BID, 4 GIRLS RESCUED

Four local girls were rescued from Darjeeling Hills on Saturday just as they were about to be trafficked, thanks to a vigilant taxi driver who alerted authorities in time.

The incident happened at Mirik, a scenic tourist town in Darjeeling surrounded by tea gardens. However, the economically backward condition of people of the tea gardens and surrounding villages makes it highly vulnerable to trafficking.

A number of sex rackets operating from private residences and guest houses were unearthed in SIliguri and other towns of North Bengal recently.

Sailesh Subba, the taxi driver at Krishnanagar taxi stand in Mirik, noticed the four girls talking to a man, who looked like an outsider.

"Recently I had attended an anti-trafficking awareness programme conducted by MARG, an NGO, and police," Subba told HT.

Suspecting something wrong, he approached the girls and learnt that they were going to Bangalore for jobs in a beauty parlour and that the man was escorting them to Siliguri railway station.

He immediately informed the NGO which in turn alerted the police. The four girls and the man were taken into custody for questioning.

The girls, aged between 18 and 24 years, revealed that they had undergone a beautician course and were offered jobs in a salon in Bangalore through a manpower placement agency in Kolkata. (The name of the manpower agency and the salon has been withheld for investigation purposes.)

"We found a lot of anomalies in the documents," investigating officer R K Diyali said. "The Kolkata placement agency document claimed that seven girls would be joining as stewards in F&B service department of the Bangalore based organization. However, the girls had no clue they were joining as stewards. The offer letter from the Bangalore salon claimed they would be joining as hairstylists and beauticians."

Nirnay John Chettri, president of the NGO, Mankind in Action for Rural Growth (MARG), said they got in touch with "our partner NGO, Justice and Care, in Bangalore. They paid a visit to the salon posing as customers. Except for a massage bed, the single room did not have any equipment used in a salon."

50-year-old Prabal Mohan Bhattacharya from North 24 Parganas has been arrested and charged under Section 370 IPC (trafficking).

"We are thoroughly investigating the case," the Investigating Officer Diyali said.

Recently four students of Darjeeling Hills had unearthed an international flesh trade racket resulting in the arrest of its kingpin from Gurgaon in Haryana. "Along with the four students we will felicitate Sailesh Subba also," Chettri said.

# ENVIRONMENT

**VEERAPANDI SHOWS THE WAY IN WASTE DISPOSAL**

Veerapandi town panchayat has set a role model in disposing of waste. With safe disposal of waste and recycling of bio-nondegradable waste, the panchayat has kept the surroundings clean and ensured regular supply of organic manure and vermicompost to farmers at cheaper rate, helping them reduce use of chemical fertilizers.

Initiatives taken by former Executive Officer of Veerapandi town panchayat M. Senthil Kumar have started yielding result now. The panchayat has achieved cent per cent door-to-door collection of waste. Proper conversion or recycling of entire waste has eliminated dumping of waste in expanding yards. It collects three tonnes of waste, including 1.5 tonnes of biodegradable waste, per day. A garbage processing yard produces around 500 to 600 kg of organic manure and vermicompost a day. It takes a minimum of 40 days to convert organic waste into manure or vermicompost.

Plastic waste is being shredded into pieces and sold to contractors for Rs. 20 a kg to lay roads. Vermicompost is being sold for Rs. 3 a kg and organic manure for Rs.1 a kg. Thus the town panchayat earned Rs. 1 lakh from waste last year, said panchayat officials. No stench emanates from the compost yard, which is surrounded by 200 bamboo trees. Thenkarai town panchayat too has started emulating this model, processing two tonnes of waste a day.

Talking to reporters after inspecting the compost yard and other town panchayats on Wednesday, Collector N. Venkatachalam said massive efforts were on to make town panchayats litter-free. A bridge was constructed across Vazhaiyaru River at a cost of Rs. 50 lakh, fulfilling decades-old dream of Boothipuram farmers. Work on underground drainage project, taken up at an estimated cost of Rs. 30.54 crore, at Palanichettipanchayat was in full swing, , he added.

**NOTHING GOES WASTE: Collector N. Venkatachalam inspecting the solid waste management plant at Veerapandi town panchayat in Theni district on Wednesday.**

## PUNNAI OIL, ECO-FRIENDLY FUEL FOR IRRIGATION

TRICHY: A farmer from Nagapattinam district has found a solution for the prevailing oil crisis for irrigation purposes.

C Rajasekaran hailing from Vettaikaraniruppu in Keelvelur taluk, a small village in the district is using oil extracted from punnai tree seeds to operate his 5 HP motor pump for irrigating his farm lands instead of diesel.

Since the cost incurred during irrigation of land has considerably been cut down, he is using the oil for a decade with the help of Punnai tree (Botanical name Calaphyllum Inophyllum).

He appealed to the government to extract the oil in large volume, to find remedy for the existing oil scarcity.

Without diesel, electric power and even solar energy, he has been irrigating his farm land using punnai oil, extracted from the kernel of the tree's seed, as it is more economical than any other oil and also eco-friendly. Initially he had only two trees, now he has raised nearly 20 trees in his land which gives 200 kilogram of seeds. From the seeds, he could extract 60 to 70 liters of oil by milling them with conventional ghani.

"To run a 5 HP engine for an hour, I need one liter of diesel. Whereas, in the case of punnai oil, it is enough to use 600ml for the same one hour. To extract a liter of punnai oil, I have to spend 10. For the whole year, I need 75 liter oil to pump water for my land. But, I should spend 4,000 to 4,200 per year", he stated. The oil cakes can be used as a good manure for farm land, he added. He explained that what forced him to go for an alternative source of energy.

# GENERAL

### NGO STAFF: PUBLIC SERVANTS OR PRIVATE CITIZENS?

Bowing to demands from various quarters — NGOs and political, corporate and philanthropic institutions — the Centre swiftly moved an amendment to address concerns arising from the mandatory declaration of assets and liabilities under the Lok Pal and Lokayukta Act, 2013.

While the amended Act continues to hold it is compulsory for public servants to file their returns, the form and procedure for doing so is left open with "as may be prescribed". In

doing so, it does away with sub-sections of Section 44 of the Act, which required public servants to disclose the assets of their spouse and dependent children. It also dispenses with the requirement such disclosure be made publicly available on websites, as laid down by Section 44 (6).

While this means that senior employees of NGOs will not have to file returns this year, the amendment falls short of what many NGOs wanted — to be rid of the requirement of doing so. Senior NGO employees will still have to declare their assets if the Centre decides to lay down when and how this should be done.

In other words, NGOs and their employees will still remain public servants under the Lokpal Act. Says Venkatesh Nayak of the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI): "This amendment is a big setback. Unfortunately, the Indian NGO sector has brought it upon itself. Instead of challenging the categorisation of NGO workers as 'public servants', they chose to raise the issue of asset declaration of spouses and children. The government has used this opening to set the clock back on transparency — we are now back to where Sri Lanka was in the 1970s."

What Nayak suggests is that under the amended law, no distinction is made between Central government employees and those of NGOs — both remain public servants. As a result, Central government employees will also no longer need to file returns on assets and liabilities.

But not everyone agrees that employees of NGOs that receive government funding should be treated differently from government employees. Says Anjali Bharadwaj of the National Campaign for People's Right to Information (NCPRI): "An NGO gets tax breaks under Section 12-A of the IT Act, when it gets registered. When it gets funding from the Government, it is public money. Therefore, it stands to reason that the assets of all involved should be disclosed and that includes those of spouses and dependents.

There is no significant evidence of privacy being violated in the case of disclosures."

The notifications issued in June spelt out the procedure for secretaries, managers and officers of trusts, societies and association of persons to declare their assets; the date was set as July 31. Failure to do so could invite prosecution under the Lokpal Act.

**Privacy violation**

The unease among NGOs led some members of governing bodies and trustees — some of them independent of the organisations they were associated with to resign from their posts. Partly, this arose from a sense that their privacy was being violated by the demand that their assets had to be made public. In many cases, trustees and members of the governing body have nothing to do with the day-to-day operations of a non-profit. They are professionals chosen for their expertise in certain areas. Is it right to label them public servants?

Says Noshir Dadruwala, CEO, Centre for Advancement of Philanthropy, Mumbai: "NGOs are essentially private organisations working for public good. By what stretch of imagination does a board member or officer of an NGO become a public servant merely because, for example, the organisation receives more than Rs.10 lakh from foreign sources? And what if this is information is put up in the public domain? It would be a huge violation of concerned individuals' privacy."

The other concern was that a great proportion of social work is carried out by volunteers. NGOs fear this could discourage people from getting involved in social causes. "Human rights workers are mostly volunteers. Forcing them to disclose their financials is nothing but

harassment aimed at driving them away from such work," says Nikhil Dey, a human rights activist associated with the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sanghatan (MKSS).

**Impracticality factor**

Finally, the Opposition stemmed from a suspicion that the notifications had less to do with tackling corruption than harassing civil society organisations that question the government's decisions. Nayak draws attention to the impracticality of the Lokpal monitoring NGOs.

"India has around 6 million NGOs. Even if we assume that only 50 percent, or 3 million, are government-funded, and if we take an average of four board members and 4 staffers per NGO, that leaves us with 24 million public servants for Lokpal to monitor. Can the Lokpal manage this? Will it also have the time to monitor the 20 million public servants employed by the state?" he says.


## INDIA'S DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

The country can only derive the digital dividend of faster growth, more jobs and better services by expanding affordable Internet access to all

There is little doubt that China has stolen a march on India when it comes to leveraging the Internet. Of the top 20 Internet companies in the world, 13 are American, five are Chinese, with one each for Japan and the United Kingdom. Alibaba, China's largest e-commerce company, has a market capitalisation that is 25 times higher than that of Flipkart, the largest e-commerce company in India.

Why did India, which has had the remarkable achievement of being the largest exporter of information technology services and skilled manpower among developing countries, fall behind China in digitally transforming its economy? Is it now making a comeback? The World Bank's recently released World Development Report (WDR) 'Digital Dividends' provides some answers.

The WDR finds that digital technologies have spread rapidly throughout much of the world, but their digital dividends — the broader development benefits from using these technologies — have lagged behind. In many instances digital technologies have boosted growth, expanded opportunities, and improved service delivery. Yet their aggregate impact has fallen short and is unevenly distributed.

The report argues that for digital technologies to confer their full benefit on society, it is vital to close the digital divide, especially in Internet access. But greater digital adoption will not be enough. To get the most out of the digital revolution, countries also need to work on its "analogue complements" — by strengthening regulations that ensure competition among businesses, by adapting workers' skills to the demands of the new economy, and by ensuring that government institutions and others are accountable.

Measuring the performance of India and China with the WDR metrics of connectivity and complements shows why India has not yet taken full advantage of the digital revolution.

**The contrast with China**

At the end of 2014, India had 227 million Internet users, compared to 665 million in China. Fewer than two out of every five Indian businesses had an online presence compared to almost two-thirds of firms in China.

The cost of a 1 Mbit/s residential broadband service in India is 6-10 times higher than in China. And by most accounts, the digital divide across age, gender, geography and income

within India is significantly higher than in China. Thanks to its successful digital ID programme, Aadhaar, India scores higher than China in digital adoption by governments, but the need now is to use the platform that Aadhaar provides more widely and effectively.

Amartya Sen has written extensively on the idea of human 'capability'. This concept has large applications in the digital world. Unfortunately, not only does India have a higher digital access gap, it also has a bigger digital capability gap. The capability gap, according to the WDR, arises from two main sources: the overall business climate and the quality of human capital.

Despite some commendable improvements in cutting bureaucratic costs faced by small and medium enterprises, India scores considerably below China in doing business indicators. It is important for India to create space for creativity and enterprise and to promote competition.

The slow pace of improvement of the quality of basic infrastructure — expressways, logistics, storage, postal delivery system and reliable supply of electricity — have also hampered the growth of e-commerce in India. And the excessively cautious approach of Indian regulators towards disruptive technological innovations such as mobile money or ride-sharing services has made it difficult for digital start-ups to enter new markets and achieve scale.

While Indian technology workers and entrepreneurs excel in Silicon Valley in the United States, the skills level of the average Indian worker remains significantly behind his or her Chinese counterpart. India has made considerable strides in improving its human capital, but a vast majority of its population still lacks the skills to meaningfully participate in the digital economy.

Around 25 per cent of India's adult population cannot read and write compared to fewer than 5 per cent in China.

There is also major difference in quality of education: The latest Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) test scores in rural India show that 10 per cent of children aged 16 and below cannot identify single-digit numbers consistently. Fewer than one in five can do a subtraction, performing considerably below their grade level.

Clearly, India's challenge to becoming a digital economy remains formidable. The government has announced a slew of new initiatives: Digital India; Make in India; Start-up India; and innovative applications of Aadhaar such as JAM (Jan-Dhan Yojana-Aadhaar-Mobile trinity) and Digital Lockers. Successful and accelerated implementation of these programmes can make up for some of the lost time. But India also needs to do more by strengthening the basic foundations of its digital economy.

Making the Internet accessible, open and safe for all Indians is an urgent priority. The cost of mobile phone access is already low by international standards. And with a supportive policy environment involving smart spectrum management, public-private partnerships, and intelligent regulations of Internet markets, the same can be achieved for Internet access. Zero-rated services for mobile data access have become controversial, though they could be an intermediate step to fully open and affordable Internet access for the poorest, provided that the choice of selecting services is transparent and inclusive.

**Back to basics**

Access, however, is only one part of the agenda. An important lesson from the WDR is that even the most sophisticated technologies are no substitute for tackling long-standing shortcomings in other areas — most importantly basic health, education and a regulatory ethos that encourages competition and enterprise.

When the World Bank adopted in 2013 "shared prosperity" as one of its mission goals, it was the first time that combating inequality was being set up as a target. There was a lot of initial opposition because while the battling of poverty seems like a fairly impersonal goal, the goal of "sharing" makes many uncomfortable.

Fortunately, the way the shared prosperity goal is formalised has deep conceptual roots. One of the best accounts is to be found in S. Subramanian's '"Inclusive Development" and the Quintile Income Statistic', in Economic and Political Weekly and this goal is now increasingly being recognised as vital for a better world. The aim of ending the digital divide discussed in our most recent WDR stems from this same basic idea and is an urgent need of our times.

India wrote one of the early success stories of the digital revolution when it became a global powerhouse for software development and information services. Its Aadhaar digital ID system has become a model for many other countries, helping governments to become more efficient and more inclusive in expanding services to those who had been left behind.

Whether the new initiatives will generate even greater and more widely shared digital dividends — faster growth, more jobs, and better services — depends not only on expanding affordable access to all, but also on making long overdue progress on the analogue complements of digital investments.


## ONE AMONG THREE ENGINEERING STUDENTS IN TAMIL NADU FAILS TO GRADUATE WITHIN 4 YEARS

CHENNAI: In what could tell a tale on quality of engineering education in the state, at least one among every three students enrolled in engineering courses has arrears at the end of the course period.

According to the statistics released by the All India Council for Technical Education, out of the 1.57 lakh undergraduate students who passed out in the last academic year (May 2016) from various branches of engineering and diploma courses, 48,139 had arrears. This means more than 30 per cent of the students did not complete the course within the 4 years time period.

Going by the data, the scenario is worse when it comes to masters-level engineering and diploma courses. More than 40 per cent of students studying post-graduate engineering and diploma did not complete their course this May. This amounts to a whopping 95,000 students.

It is not just the last academic year. This trend of poor performance has existed since 2012-13. In 2012-13, more than 39 per cent of undergraduates had arrears at the end of four years. The figure stood over 30 per cent in 2013-14. In the academic year 2014-15 alone, the numbers dropped significantly to 19.27 per cent. This, however, was rapidly reversed this year as the number of unsuccessful students saw a rise of more than 10 per cent.

Among the streams, it is the civil and mechanical engineering, which has the highest percentage of students failing to complete the course. In the last academic year, 44.29 per cent of civil engineering students had arrears; so did 41.39 per cent of mechanical engineering students. The Electronics and Communications Engineering stream, the most preferred course among toppers, had the least number of unsuccessful students - 17.6 percent.

So, what ails Tamil Nadu's engineering colleges? It is the sheer number of colleges that have sprung up in every nook and cranny of the state, say experts. "The mushrooming of private

colleges has brought down the intake quality," says former Anna University Vice-Chancellor, P Mannar Jawahar. "Students with much lower cutoff marks have managed to study engineering due to this," he says.

"Not all engineering students are genuinely interested. They join due to parent's pressure," says M Raj, an associate professor at a private college in Tirupur. But a few student blame it on the teachers. "All we managed to do is learn the set of important questions marked to us the previous day and repeat them in the internal exams," said D Arun, an engineering student from Erode. Since the same cannot be repeated in university exams, the students find it difficult to clear the paper, he says.


## REFORMING INDIA'S LAND TITLING SYSTEM

A gradualist approach stands a much greater likelihood of success with reforming a complex legacy system like land records.

Among all the problems faced while doing business in India, there is arguably none more daunting than that presented by incomplete land titles. Disputed ownership is commonplace, with many cases under litigation for decades. Buyers have to navigate a minefield to acquire clear land titles.

A Bill to amend the Registration Act, 1908 in a bid to increase transparency of land ownership and its transactions is currently pending in the Parliament. However, despite its good intentions and apparent rational appeal, the sorry state of land records in India, mount several practical challenges to its effective implementation.

Currently a registered sale deed does not confer title ownership and is merely a record of sales transaction. It only confers presumptive ownership, which is liable to be disputed. This amendment would convert land registration into a "guaranteed title certification". It would herald a paradigm shift in India's land titling system.

Currently title is established through a chain of historical transfer documents that originate from the first owner. Accordingly, before they purchase land, buyers have to examine all the link documents that establish the title from its original owner. As can be imagined, owners, especially in urban areas, rarely have access to such a long chain of documents. This increases uncertainty and risks in land transactions.

The amendment would usher in the Torrens system of land titling, whereby title is established by a register of land-holdings maintained by the government. A registration transaction would extinguish all previous rights and become sanctified as a formal title transfer to the purchaser. Prospective land buyers will now only need to examine the land register and purchase from the recorded owner.

This has obvious appeal as it appears to maximise transparency and eliminate uncertainty, apart from considerable simplification of land transaction process. However, this assumes that it is possible to construct an initial register of land-holdings which can support the registration process. Unfortunately it is here that this reform is likely to stumble in its implementation.

For something so valuable, land records in most developing countries are archaic. No register, which reliably confirms title, exists anywhere in India. Small experiments in some states to build such register have not been successful. Existing registers suffer from problems arising from lack of updation, fragmentation of lands, informal family partitions, unregistered

power of attorney transactions, and numerous boundary and ownership disputes. The magnitude of these problems gets amplified manifold in urban areas.

The creation of a land-holdings register requires that land parcels be identified, with their boundaries, and ownership established. The former requires maps of individual land parcels and their location within an area's land grid, both correlated accurately with the prevailing ground conditions. The latter requires undisputed, litigation-free ownership rights. Both these records will then have to be publicly notified before it takes effect.

Proceeding in this direction with the existing records is certain to open up a Pandora's Box of acrimony and litigation. But revising records is likely to be a long-drawn litigation-filled process, and certain to raise political opposition. The standard approach, like that done in states like Karnataka, Gujarat, and Andhra Pradesh, have been to carry out comprehensive one-time re-survey to document and digitize the latest boundaries, establish ownership by examining chain of documents, and then notifying them before entering in the land-holdings register. They invariably become embroiled in litigations and run into several practical problems. It is unrealistic to settle decades-old disputes in a short time.

So what is the way forward? Foremost, we need to acknowledge the difficulty of a time-bound, mission-mode strategy to build land-holdings register. A more realistic approach would be to let the records evolve over a period of time. In the circumstances, a two-track approach may be more appropriate.

New registrations should be done only with a digitised map of the individual land parcel and its location, and ownership established by certification of the documents by a competent authority. The registration will have to be publicly notified and appeals disposed, before the transaction enters the register. The legislative framework being contemplated can govern this process. All land-related transactions – new property tax assessments, utility service connections, mortgages and bank loans – should be brought under a similar policy framework. Further, existing land owners should be given the option of proactively getting their lands included in the register through this process.

However, given the pervasiveness of disputes and litigation, it may not be possible to clearly demarcate boundaries and establish ownership in many cases. Such registrations will continue under the current rules. The market will invariably price the land values to reflect the reduced risk from inclusion in the register. Incentives like lower stamp duty for transactions done under the amended process may encourage people to prefer the new process. Hopefully this two-track strategy will create adequate incentives for people to get their lands included in the register.

The mission-mode strategy of re-surveys, digitization, verification, and notification title could complement this two-track approach. It can be taken up in smaller towns where the land values are still low and development potential enormous, and therefore the marginal benefits from cleaning ownership records is the highest. It can also be done in villages where land records are more reliable and updated.

In a recent research paper, Jonathan Zasloff, Professor of Law at the University of California, Los Angeles, has argued convincingly that the embrace of the Torrens registration system is ill-suited for developing countries like India and "could represent another episode of failed economic development planning". Instead, he advocates that complementary legislations and rules that clearly define the time period within which property interest claimants should assert their rights and greater clarity on adverse possession can help advance the reforms.

In conclusion, a gradualist and heterodox approach stands a much greater likelihood of success with reforming a complex legacy system like land records.

## RAJASTHAN TAKES BIG STEP FORWARD WITH LAND TITLING BILL

Rajasthan gets that title with its new land-titling law

By: The Financial Express | Updated: April 9, 2016.

After its sweeping labour law changes—the Centre is also trying to push through similar legislation in Parliament—and laws to make land acquisition easier, Rajasthan has taken a big step forward with its assembly passing a land titling Bill earlier this week. Right now, as in the rest of the country, all ownership is 'presumed'. So, if A sells her property to B and the deal is registered and the appropriate stamp duty paid on it, it is not considered proof of ownership, it is merely treated as proof that a transaction took place between A and B —so, if C successfully contests the ownership of the property, there is no one to compensate B for the money invested. Indeed, even regular payment of property tax is not considered proof of ownership of property—several states even state this upfront.

Naturally, what this does is to reduce property transactions since buyers are wary the title can be contested. Under property titling of the sort Rajasthan now promises to give, once B buys A's property—even if C comes and successfully challenges the title, the Rajasthan government will compensate B for the payment made. Guaranteeing title is not easy, but the government's reason for doing this is that investors in the state will breathe easier and, if the titling work is done properly, the number of cases where compensation needs to be paid will be kept to a minimum—to the extent compensation has to be paid, it will be more than outweighed by the boost to the ease of doing business.

Though no state has come up with a way to guarantee title, the central government is already working on ways to do this—a Land Titling Authority along the lines of UIDAI would be the ideal way to do this but it is not clear if this is being planned—and there are some models being worked on which Rajasthan will probably adopt. Most states have already computerised their land records and have placed them on their websites—with this already done, the next logical step is to get the data verified by teams of lawyers and possibly to invite challenges to the title. If the authentication/challenge work is outsourced, getting a database on unchallenged titles would become a lot easier.

Those properties for which there is a challenge can be put under a different pool and perhaps be investigated further, giving both the possessor of the property and the challenger an equal opportunity to prove their case. And thanks to geo-tagging, each property can be uniquely identified. How long the process of guaranteeing title will take is not clear, but along with its other changes—including a law on land pooling—Rajasthan is clearly emerging as India's fastest reforming state.

# MR.PAUL GUIRE VISIT TO SPSC CENTRE - VELANKANNI

Mr. Paul Guire has visited SPSC centre on 18th and 19th of July 2016. During his visit the following meetings and field visit were made.

A hearty welcome was given by SPSC Open School Children to Mr. Paul Guire and his son Mr. Joshua. After brief introduction with SPSC Open School children, he met Ms. Madharasi and her families at SPSC centre and they discussed in private about their family's well being and business. Mr. Paul Guire asked, is there any request from you, she said we need to buy some raw materials for their business. Mr. Paul Guire replied that, he can give money on loan basis but not in a donation, and she has to repay the amount and they accepted to repay the amount on installment basis.

Visit made to Puspavanam where the farmers are growing crops with organic way of cultivation. He met Mr.Karthick who is one of the organic farmers and Mr.Paul Guire has visited his paddy and groundnut fields and got all the details such as seed process, planting, pest control, yield etc. Mr.Paul Guire was impressed on his cultivation practices. Mr.Paul Guire suggested the farmer that he would send raw materials which are to be mixed with manure on 6:1 basis and it will help to preserve the water longer duration. Farmer accepted his suggestion and trial on his field.

Evening there is Cricket Match played by Mr. Joshua with Open School children. Basically he wanted to learn cricket and he enjoyed it very much and they visited to Velankanni Basalica Church and Beach.

During the VCDC Teacher's meeting, he discussed about financial details of SPSC project and asked the current status of the centre. The Project Coordinator informed that the centre was functioning up to May 2016 before the summer holidays. In July schools are reopened we will resume the centre this month. Regarding the residential support the new SPSC project does not have the component for which he expressed that he was not aware of the dropping of residential care and functioning of Open School and VCDC centers.

On 19th morning he had meeting with VCDC teachers to get know the children's interest to come over VCDC centers. Village wise he has discussed and got the information from the teachers. He was so happy about the teacher's view and suggested the teachers continue their services in a successful way. He visited Shrimp farm to get know shrimp culture on organic method of cultivation. The shrimp farmers explained their practice such as cost, input, yield, outcome and market trends etc. He suggested the farmer that he will send some raw material to filter the outlet water and it will help to filter the nutrient in the shrimp farm itself. For that Mr. Paul Guire wanted to do the chemical analysis of the soil. He has collected the soil for chemical analysis and based on chemical analysis result the farmer to follow the steps to be taken.

He and Mr. Joshua went for boating in Velankanni coastal water around three kilometers in the sea. They enjoyed the trip very much and he said its different experience. Evening he visited the village called Gramathumedu where VCDC centre is functioning since 2011 onwards successfully. He has interacted with children and got their feedback about the centre's function and need of the centre to provide supplementary education to the children. Followed by discussion, children sang songs, dance along with Mr. Joshua also sang with children. The field visit has been completed successfully.