

Committee on Petitions

Petition praying for urgent need to curb Female Foeticide.

The Committee on Petitions of the Rajya Sabha, under the Chairmanship of **Shri Bhagat Singh Koshyari, Member, Rajya Sabha**, is considering a petition praying for urgent need to curb female foeticide. The petitioners have pointed out that despite Government's efforts to check this unethical practice of female foeticide, the same is still being followed clandestinely in our society leading to widening of gap in the male/female sex ratio in the society. According to the petitioners, the menace of female foeticide is giving rise to several other social problems too, like shortage of brides, increase in sex-related crimes, etc. The petition calls for a curb on this unethical practice of female foeticide in the larger interest of the society.

2. The petition is available on the Rajya Sabha's website (www.rajyasabha.nic.in) under the link: *Committees* → *Standing Committees* → *Committee on Petitions* → *Petitions with the Committee*.

3. The Committee has decided to undertake consultations with a wide cross-section of the society and invites written memoranda thereon. Those desirous of submitting memoranda to the Committee may send two copies (each in English and Hindi) thereof to **Shri Rakesh Naithani, Joint Director, Rajya Sabha Secretariat, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi – 110 001 (Tel: 011-23035433(O), 23794328 (Telefax) and E-mail: rsc2pet@sansad.nic.in)** latest by **30th December, 2010**.

4. Comments/suggestions, etc. submitted to the Committee would form part of its record and would be treated as confidential. Any violation in this regard may attract breach of privilege of the Committee.

5. Those who are willing to appear before the Committee besides submitting written comments/suggestions may indicate so. However, the Committee's decision in this regard shall be final.

To

The Council of States (Rajya Sabha)

The petition of **Dr. Ranjana Kumari**, Director and **Dr. Manasi Mishra**, Head, Research Division, Centre for Social Research (CSR), 2, Nelson Mandela Marg, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi- 110070.

Sheweth

1. The practice of female foeticide is prevalent in our society. It is prominent in the prosperous States of Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Himachal Pradesh (where sex ratio is declining) and also equally found in the backward State of Orissa.
2. The Prime Minister in his Independence Day speech on 15 August, 2009 has touched upon the said issue, which is reproduced below:-

".....The practice of female foeticide regrettably persists in our society. This is a shame for all of us. We must eliminate it as early as possible. Our progress will be incomplete till women become equal partners in all areas of our life and in our nation's progress....."

3. Even if there are Central laws, namely, The Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994 (PNDT Act) and The Pre-Conception Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994 the practice is being carried out surreptitiously by the parents in connivance with the medical practitioners in private nursing homes. The sex ratio in the 0-5 age group has declined from 945 girls per 1000 boys in the 1991 census to 927 in the 2001 census.
4. Child Sex Ratio for the last four decades (given on the table below) show that it has been declining continuously and the decline has been the sharpest from 1981 onwards.

Year	All India Female/male Child ratio in 0-6 age-group
1961	976/1000
1971	964/1000
1981	962/1000
1991	945/1000
2001	927/1000

5. The States and Union Territories that have shown a huge decline in Child Sex Ratio are Punjab (-82), Haryana (-59), Himachal Pradesh (-54), Chandigarh (-54), Gujarat (-50), and Delhi (-50).
6. The four worst hit districts of Haryana in respect of 0-6 year age group as per 2001 Census are Kurukshetra (770), Sonapat (783), Ambala (784) and Rohtak (796) with below 800 female children per 1000 male children.
7. The recent data shows the most alarming figures in terms of sex-ratio both at the national level and in the case of states:

Major State-wise Sex Ratio (Female Per 1000 Male) at Birth by Residence in India (2004-2006)			
India and Bigger states	Total	Rural	Urban
India	892	895	881
Andhra Pradesh	917	909	941
Assam	920	922	905
Bihar	881	884	847
Chhattisgarh	961	967	929
Delhi	847	810	854
Gujarat	865	886	827
Haryana	837	838	834
Himachal Pradesh	872	870	888
Jammu & Kashmir	838	834	861
Jharkhand	888	896	838
Karnataka	917	908	938
Kerala	922	910	962
Madhya Pradesh	913	914	907
Maharashtra	879	879	878
Orissa	934	937	908
Punjab	808	813	800
Rajasthan	855	855	856
Tamil Nadu	955	970	933
Uttar Pradesh	874	876	866
West Bengal	931	937	903

Source : Office of the Registrar General, India. Downloaded from Indiatat.com

8. Dowry system drives the parents to commit the crime of female foeticide in India. Again affordable access to sex determination and safe medical termination of pregnancies has aggravated the practice. Sex Selection has become a rampant phenomenon and technologies are being misused for the purpose which is equally a concern of medical ethics. Besides the parents other parties to the crime of female foeticide are a section of medical practitioners employed in private nursing home, who aids and abets the said unethical practice for sheer profit motive by disclosing the sex of foetus to the parents against the intent of the above mentioned Acts.
9. The selective elimination of girl child even before her birth is a breach of her right to equality and existence. The practice causes imbalances in human population which may give rise to many sex related crimes against women and also create shortage of brides in the marriage market. It is, therefore, imperative to eliminate the heinous practice of female foeticide in the larger interest of the society.
10. Accordingly your petitioners pray that
 - (i) **appropriate measures to be taken by both Central and State Govt. to implement the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994 (PNDT Act) and the Pre-Conception Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994 effectively and stringent punishment for the private nursing homes/clinics who aid and abet heinous practice of female foeticide for sheer profit motive as well as the erring parents.**
 - (ii) **Prohibition of manufacture and import of hand held portable ultrasound machines which are used to disclose gender of fetus; and**
 - (iii) **Any other measures including reservations in Government and private sectors for women which would make them economically independent and may change the perception of parents who commit the crime of female foeticides in giving preference to son over daughter even before their birth.**

S.N.	Name	Address	Signature
1.	Dr. Ranjana Kumari, Director, Centre for Social Research (CSR)	2, Nelson Mandela Marg, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi-110070	<i>Sd/-</i>
2.	Dr. Manasi Mishra, Head Research Division Centre for Social Research (CSR)	- do-	<i>Sd/-</i>

Sd/-
(Viplove Thakur)
Division No. 16
Countersigned by Member of Parliament