

बाल विवाह मुक्त भारत CHILD MARRIAGE FREE INDIA

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Child marriage is an age-old social evil, which is prevalent in our society since time immemorial. It robs children of their childhood, hurtling them into adulthood overnight. In India, 23.3% of women (between the 20-24 age group) were married before they turned 18 (2019-2021, NFHS-5). 12 million children were married before attaining the legal age, of which 5.2 million were girls (Census 2011).



Child marriage severely impacts physical and mental health, education, future, and the overall well-being of a child. It triggers the vicious cycle of inter-generational poverty, thus affecting the economic development of the country.



Supreme Court of India declared child marriage as child rape, terming it as a major child protection crisis.

To address this, the most definitive and audacious commitment to end child marriage was made with launch of the Child Marriage Free India campaign.

Child Marriage Free India is a nationwide campaign led by civil society organisations and women activists in more than 300 of the worst impacted districts in the country with the aim to eliminate child marriage by 2030, thereby saving 30 million underage girls from getting married. The campaign is being run with the focus on effective implementation of the existing government policies and laws in the country that ensure child protection.

THE JOURNEY SO FAR- CHILD MARRIAGE FREE INDIA CAMPAIGN

Phase 1 The Launch

On 16th October 2022, over 76,000 courageous women took to the streets in 7,600 villages, across India, making Child Marriage Free India the largest movement against child marriage in the country.

Since then...

The campaign has led to a robust coalition of 160 NGO partners in 288 districts to work in villages to prevent and stop child marriages.

Across India more than 1 crore people have taken the pledge to end child marriage, over 1,700 child marriages have been foiled and over 171 FIRs have been registered in the last one year through the efforts of the coalition.

In Assam, the government launched a state-wide action against child marriage, leading to registration of around 4,000 cases and arrest of 3,000 perpetrators.

(Source: The Print 18 Feb, 2023)

Phase 2 Taking the baton ahead

Campaign on 16th October 2023 with focus on:

Mobilising, sensitising and empowering women leaders along with child protection stakeholders for realisation of a child marriage free nation.

Timely action by police, Child Marriage Prohibition officers and Magistrates in the **prevention of child marriage** by issuance of injunction orders.



To create child marriage free India

OBJECTIVES

- Reduce child marriages from 23.3% (NFHS-5) to 10% by 2025 by making 50,000 villages in 300 worst affected districts across India child marriage free; and make India child marriage free by 2030
- Educate, encourage and ensure 5 Crore pledges from citizens across India to end child marriage
- Strengthen community and village-level institutions to end child marriage
- Empower women as leaders and equip them to raise their voices against child marriage in their villages
- Appeal to faith leaders, local communities, temples, mosques and churches to support in eradicating child marriage by refusing to solemnise child marriage in their regions
- Build capacity of law enforcement and child protection agencies for immediate response on complaints related to child marriage

STRATEGY

Addressing the issue of child marriage requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach of different government departments, institutions, statutory bodies, and civil society organisations. Child Marriage Free India campaign is a targeted intervention aimed at accelerating progress towards the tipping point to end child marriages. The campaign is pillared on the 'PICKET' strategy as it requires a multi-pronged approach.

PICKET strategy to combat Child Marriage across India,

- Policy Intervention for Prevention and Protection;
- Investments in Capacity and Institutions to prevent child marriages;
- Convergence of services for health, education & social protection, and Community participation;
- Knowledge-driven decision making;
- Education for all children under 18 years as a right, and skills and livelihoods training;
- Technology for change

DEMANDS



Ensure access to free education for all children till class XII



Dedicated budgetary allocation for schemes and infrastructure for education and vocational training till class XII



Enable real-time attendance data analysis and intervention when irregularities occur



Effective implementation and enforcement of laws against child marriage for all sections of society

Child Marriage Free India Campaign Event Day

16 October 2023

Call to Action:

5 crore people and women leaders to light candles/*diyas*, take out torches/*mashal julus* and pledge to end child marriage through online and offline modes.