



GLOBAL MARCH
Against Child Labour
Contra el Trabajo Infantil
Contre le Travail des Enfants



8th March 2013, New Delhi

To
Shri Pranab Mukherjee
Honourable President of India

Sub: Regarding retaining sections on trafficking in the Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill

Your Excellency,

As a child rights activist, I congratulate you and the government for taking laudable measures to protect and promote the rights of children and the right to education.

The Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill (to include Section 370 and Section 370A, prohibiting trafficking in all forms, from the Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance, 2013 recently signed by you) is a progressive instrument that demonstrates outstanding wisdom and political will. It underpins zero tolerance towards violence against children and women.

Rightly was trafficking of persons included in the Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance for lakhs of children and women are sexually assaulted and abused during the process of trafficking and to ensure that they continue to be at the mercy of their traffickers and exploiters. Trafficking of persons is one of the most heinous and organised crimes in the world today. It is a crime that is being committed on lakhs of children, women and men in our country who are being exploited in forced labour, commercial sexual exploitation and similar slavery like conditions, and other forms of exploitation such as forced beggary, forced removal of organs, etc. The inclusive definition of trafficking provided in Section 370 and Section 370A of the Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance finally recognises the various aspects of trafficking, the inter-linkages between various forms of exploitation, and moves beyond just prostitution and sexual exploitation. This is a remarkable step forwards and finally upholds the Constitutional mandate under Article 23, which prohibits traffic in human beings and forced labour, and is amongst the only Articles in our Constitution mandating punishment.

The inclusion of the comprehensive provisions in the criminal justice system, namely the comprehensive definition of trafficking and the offence of employment of trafficked children and adults will demonstrate our collective commitment to the most vulnerable and exploited in our country. It would also set a milestone in the global development by affirming our commitments to international standards and conventions.

On this International Women's Day, I urge you to lead the country in our common efforts for protection of children and women, by retaining the Sections 370 and 370A in the Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill from the Ordinance, and ensuring its safe passage into substantive legislation as a matter of national urgency.

Sincerely,

Kailash Satyarthi
Founder, Bachpan Bachao Andolan
Chairperson, Global March Against Child Labour

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