

Minutes of the 14th Meeting of the Central Supervisory Board (CSB) of PC&PNDT Act held on 14th June, 2006

1. The 14th meeting of the Central Supervisory Board (CSB) of PC&PNDT Act was held on 14th June, 2006 under the chairmanship of Dr. Anbumani Ramadoss, Hon'ble Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare. Mrs. Renuka Chowdhury, Hon'ble Minister of State (Women and Child Development – independent charge), attended as co-opted Co-Chairperson of the CSB. List of Participants is Annexed.
2. In this special meeting of the CSB, Hon'ble Members of the Parliament from Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Rajasthan, Gujarat and all women Members of Parliament were invited as special guests to gather their views and suggestions on the very important issue of female foeticide as well as implementation of the PC&PNDT Act.
3. Secretary (Health & Family Welfare) welcomed the participants. He reiterated and emphasized the importance of recognizing the problem of female foeticide as an issue of great concern. He also pointed out that the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare is now working in close coordination and association with the Ministry of Woman and Child Development (MOWCD) to tackle the problem of declining sex-ratio and female foeticide. Secretary (Health and family Welfare) then invited Ms. Rewa Nayyar, Secretary (MOWCD) to give her remarks.
4. Secretary (MOWCD) emphasized the lack of awareness about the PC&PNDT Act and the legal provisions contained in it among general public, expectant mothers and medical community at large. She further emphasized that general public is not aware about the implementing agencies, as a result of which, they do not know where to go in case they notice a violation of the Act. She also pointed out that since the special legal Act like PC & PNDT Act are not well known as a result they are little attended which consequently result in fewer convictions. She stressed on the importance of wider publicity and awareness in this matter so that there is a fear of violating the provisions of this Act. She also mentioned that awareness is required to remove the confusion about

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provisions of the MTP Act vis-à-vis PC & PNDT Act. Further, she stressed that one should look into the reasons behind female foeticides like fear of upbringing a girl child, the cost of her marriage and dowry, fear of violence against her and its consequences etc. and try to eliminate these reasons and not the female foetuses.

5. Hon'ble Minister of State (Health & Family Welfare) in her address pointed out that discriminatory practices against women like dowry practice have been there in the society since long. She further stressed that discriminatory social practices against the girl child have adverse effects on the health and nutrition of the girl child. She expressed her deep concern over declining sex ratio as brought out by the figures of population census in 2001. She hoped that the deliberations of the meeting will go a long way in strengthening and effectively implementing the PC & PNDT Act.

6. Hon'ble Minister (Health & Family Welfare) in his address informed the gathering that Ms. Renuka Chowdhury, Hon'ble Minister of State (Women and Child Development) will be the Co-Chairperson of the Central Supervisory Board in future. He further expressed that the CSB meeting is acting as a forum for all the concerned stakeholders to come together and address the issue of female foeticide and declining sex-ratio. He mentioned that this is a social issue and it is high time that female foeticide should stop. He pointed out that there is a law existing in the form of PC&PNDT Act to tackle this issue however, the implementation of the act has not been satisfactory. He requested the participants to come forward and express their views about possible changes, modifications in the law as well as ways to ensure its effective implementation. Hon'ble Minister also announced that his Ministry would be providing Rs. 5 lakhs per year to each Member of Parliament from worst affected States for creation of awareness in their Parliamentary Constituencies. Hon'ble Minister of Health & Family Welfare then invited Ms. Renuka Chowdhury, Hon'ble Minister of State (Women and Child Development) to address the meeting.

7. Minister of State (Women and Child Development) expressed her concern that declining sex-ratio has given rise to various serious problems for the nation including

cross boarder trafficking of women, increasing vulnerability to diseases like HIV/AIDS and problems in gene pool mapping. She further mentioned that extent of preference for male child has been reflected in shorter duration of breastfeeding for girl child. She enumerated a number of important issues to be addressed in this matter which included the following:

- Increasing the number of Appropriate Authorities
- Appropriate Authorities not legally notified in some places
- Delays in filing the cases in court resulting in destruction of evidence
- Rewards to informers
- Creating a helpline number which can be displayed at each centre and PCOs etc.
- Wide publicity of punishments to ensure its telescopic effects
- Cancellation of licenses of doctors found culprits
- Ensure proper monitoring and specifying areas of operation of Mobile Ultrasound Clinics
- Inspection and Monitoring Committees should be made State specific and also ensure that the surprise visits are made
- Involvement of MOWCD in monitoring
- Prioritization of worst affected areas
- Creation of Database of court cases and conviction with wide publicity about black listed doctors
- Website on PNDT may be developed

8. Afterwards, Shri Arvind Kumar, former District Collector, Hyderabad was invited to make his presentation on implementation of PC&PNDT Act in Hyderabad district. The presentation emphasized on the importance of maintaining records in Form F. He presented data about the important items on which information is not recorded and the percentage of clinics not maintaining records. The presentation highlighted as to how we can implement the law and prompt action can be taken for various violations against the

clinics and the ultrasound manufacturing companies. He concluded that due to strict monitoring of records, sex ratio at birth has increased in various wards in Hyderabad.

9. Dr. Puneet Bedi, Gynecologist also made a presentation on his work regarding audit of clinics in Delhi. His presentation brought out the deficiencies and manipulations in maintaining data in Form F. The main finding was that most clinics were not submitting information and those furnishing did not provide core information in Form F.

10. Hon'ble Minister of Health & Family Welfare, then invited the Hon'ble Members of Parliament to express their views and suggestions. All the Honorable Members of Parliament who attended the meeting gave excellent suggestions for eliminating the social evil of female foeticide and for implementation of the PC & PNDT Act. These included the following:

- CSB to play a pro-active role in implementation of the Act.
- District Appropriate Authority is headed by a Medical Officer and often there is connivance between them and the violators. The composition of District Appropriate Authority needs to be changed.
- Sub sections 4(a), (c) and (i) on functions of Appropriate Authority empowers the Appropriate Authority to suspend or cancel registration of a centre but it has to get such actions vetted from Advisory Committee. Advisory Committee meeting is held only once in 2 months, if at all.
- Immediate action should be taken on prima facie evidence against the doctors shown on TV channels. No main doctor has been booked so far or arrested.
- Changes to be brought in Medical Council of India's Code of Ethics
- Meetings of State MPs should be held with State Governments. Political will on the part of state Governments is a must and MOSWCD can play a role in this.
- Provision of reward for informer should be there
- Issue of Female Foeticide should form part of political agenda

- Sensitization on this issue should form a part of school curriculum. Free education for girls should be for more number of years as compared to boys.
- Records maintained by clinics should be checked regularly e.g. daily, weekly without much time delay
- Awareness campaigning at the grass root level should be organized to sensitize people including elder women.
- Priority should be given to the worst areas like Haryana and Punjab
- Medical Institutions like Medical Council of India, Indian Council of Medical Research, State Medical Councils should be actively involved in the matter
- Religious aspects on the importance of girl child should be disseminated and emphasized by various religious leaders
- Some sort of social mobilization against female foeticide needs to be generated
- Foeticide is a murder and the punishment should be commensurate with this
- All concerned women's organizations should come together to tackle the issue
- Family members, pregnant women etc. should also be punished and not only the doctor

12. Member, National Commission for Women (NCW) emphasized that regular meetings of State Supervisory Boards should be held by all the States. The State governments should be asked as to why the follow up action is not taken by them against the violators. Proper referral slips should be maintained by the scan centres and records sent to the Appropriate Authorities.

13. Other participants from states and NGOs also stressed on the need to effectively implement the PC & PNDT Act. These included giving wider publicity to the PNDT Website developed by the Ministry of Health and

Family Welfare, taking up the specific case of Haryana with the MCI for deregistration of the Doctor who has been punished by the court, having monitor in the ultrasound machine etc. It was also pointed out that the States are not following the directions of Supreme Court and the provisions of PC & PNDT Act. Government may think of moving the Supreme Court.

To sum up the discussions in the end, Hon'ble Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare emphasized that CSB will play a proactive role in the implementation of the Act. He also pointed at the possibility of going to the court to ensure action by State Governments. It was announced that the views and suggestions given in the meeting will be collated and compiled and on the basis of these suggestions necessary actions will be discussed in the next meeting of CSB which will be organized by the end of August 2006. The members were also requested to give their suggestions in writing to be included as agenda of the next meeting of the CSB.

At the end, Honorable Minister of Health and Family welfare thanked all the Honorable Members of Parliament and other participants for attending the meeting.

List of Participant

1. Dr. Anbumani Ramdoss
Hon'ble Minister for Health & Family Welfare **In-Chair**
2. Smt. Renuka Chaudhary
Minister for Child & Women Development **Co-Chair**
3. Smt. Panabaka Laxmi
Hon'ble Minister for State Health & Family Welfare
4. Shri Rashtrapal Praveen
M.P. (R.S.)
5. Shri Harisinh Pratapsinh Chavda
(M.P.) (L.S.)
6. Shri Taralochan Singh
M.P. (R.S.)
7. Shri Jayantilal Barot
M.P. (R.S.)
8. Shri Santosh Bagrodia
M.P. (R.S.)
9. Ms. Brinda Karat
M.P. (R.S.)
10. Dr. Vallabhbhai Kathiria,
MP(LS)
11. Shri Prasanna Hota
Secretary, H&FW,
12. Smt. S. Jalaja
AS, H& FW
13. Dr. Deepika Deka
Prof. Obst. AIIMS,
FOGSI, Representative
14. Dr. Madhulika Kalra
Addl. Prof. Pediatrics (Genetics)
AIIMS

15. D.R. Meena
Joint Secretary,
Deptt. Legislative,
Ministry of Law
16. Ms. N. Hamsa
Advisor, Central for Social Research
17. Prof. Suneeta Mittal,
HOD. O&G, AIIMS
18. Dr. S.K. Sharma
Adviser Ayush
19. Dr. Medha Navivadakar,
Member, CSB
20. Dr. S.S. Doda,
President, Indian Radiological
& Imaging Association
21. Smt. Malini Bhattacharya,
Member, NCW.
22. Dr. Puneet Bedi, Gynecologist,
Member, CSD
23. Dr. Bela Makhija
Senior Consultant, Obst.& Gyn.
Member Advisory Committee
24. Dr. Avinash Sharma, DHS (SS) Haryana,
Head of Deptt. Haryana
25. Dr. Rattan Chand
Director (PNDD)
26. Smt. Sushma Rath
Under Secretary (ID/PNDD)

27. Dr. Sudha Sharma
DD(MCH)
28. Ms. Leena Prasad
Advocate, Action India
29. Dr. Ranawat,
Consultant (PNDT), Gujarat
30. Mrs. Mona Khaadhar,
Joint Secretary,
Deptt. Of H&FW, Gujart.
31. Dr. Sabu George, CWDS
32. Smt. Jyotshan Chatterji,
Director, Joint Women Programme,
IACR
33. Shri P.V.Rao
Director, PIB
34. Smt. Dhanashri Bramhe,
Prog. Officer, UNFPA
35. Ena Singh,
Assistant Rep., UNFPA
36. Shri Arvind Kumar,
IAS, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh.
CEO, AAA.
37. Dr. B.S. Negi,
Deputy Director, H&FW,
H.P.
38. Dr. B.N. Chauhan
Joint Director, H&FW, M.P.
39. Dr. R.L. Icchpujani
DDG(P), Dte. GHS.
40. Smt. Veena Kumari,
Advocate, Legal Consultant,
H.R.L.N. & UNFPA

41. Shri D.S. Guru, Secretary, H&FW,
Punjab.
42. Shir T.V. Raman, Director,
MOH&FW,
43. Shri Ugra Mohan Jha,
Research Co-ordination, Action India
44. Shri Maxwell Pereira,
UNFPA, Consultant
45. Shri S. Bhargava, Principal Secretary,
M&H, Goa
46. Dr. S.C. Arya,
Deptt. Centre & Child Health,
Ganga Ram Hospital
47. Shri Naseem Khan, Co-ordinator,
Action India
48. Smt. Gouri Chaudhary, Action India
49. Shri K. Singh, Parliament Street
50. Shri K.S. Rejimon, Deputy Director
MOH&FW
51. Smt. Rashmi Verma, Deputy Director
MOH&FW
52. Shri Bhart Rai, Chair Person
Action India
53. Miss Ifat Hamit, Social Scientist,
NSM& (PNDDT)
54. Rustam Sabarda, Director,
FPA India

55. Dr. Arish M.K. Sherwani,
Lecture, M.D. Communication Ayush
56. Dr. Arij M.K. Sherwani,
Medical Officer, Agra
57. Shri D.S. Moorty, OSD,
H&FW.
58. Dr. H. Bhusan,
AC (MH),
MOHFW