



RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
RAJYA SABHA

Member of Standing Committee on Defence
Member of Consultative Committee on Defence
Member of Central Advisory Committee for National Cadet Corps
Co-Chairman, Vigilance & Monitoring Committee, Bangalore Urban District
Vice Chairman, National Military Memorial Management Trust, Bangalore

December 10, 2014

Dear Manoj,

Sub: Need for urgent Government action on POCSO Amendment & Child Safety

As you and Government are aware, child abuse cases are increasingly on the rise all over the country amidst the growing perception of Government institutional inadequacy both in terms of response to prevent such crimes and to the response in prosecuting these crimes.

These crimes against Children rank as most heinous and is another form of Terrorism, which requires urgent, deep and concerted against by Governments at the Center and State.

As you are aware, I have brought this to your attention in the last Session of Parliament repeatedly with interventions in Parliament and questions posed to you. I have also specifically raised the need for amendments to the Protection of Children against Sexual Offences Act (POCSO) to bring in complete Accountability, ensure Prevention and administer swifter Prosecution for crimes against children.

Even this session of Parliament, the various responses from the Govt only serve to reinforce the casual and non-urgent response to this threat to our children. The responses of the Government to this terrorism against children is far from adequate. I am urging you to take the initiative to start an atmosphere of Governance to achieve a zero tolerance to paedophiles in our country and to make a country safe for our children.

To start, the Government must ensure stricter liability of school managements for the safety of children on their premises. This is of critical importance as the recent cases have taken place on school premises when the children are under school supervision. Exemplary punishment and sentences must be sought under POCSO Act for those convicted of crimes against children.

I have raised this issue through Parliamentary Questions and a Short Duration Discussion in the previous session. In my speech in Parliament in July this year during the discussion on the functioning of the Ministry of Women & Child Development, I had made several recommendations on the issue of Child Safety. These included:



1. School managements to be fully accountable child's safety whilst in school or in school buses.
2. Better Prevention by protecting our children from known Child predators by creating a Child Sexual Offenders Registry.
3. Training and deploying specially trained public prosecutors for handling child abuse cases.
4. Setting up special fast track courts to ensure speedy trial and conviction of the guilty.
5. Ensuring protection of victims and witnesses under the POCSO Act, considering that in most cases, witnesses are also children themselves.

I also enclose my letter to the Hon'ble Home Minister on the extradition of Paul Meekin, the British citizen who was arrested for molestation of a school student and who has since fled the country and reportedly teaching in a school in Kuwait.

It is essential your Ministry takes cognisance of alarming rise in crimes against children and take visible and effective action. I will seek a meeting with you to discuss the urgent issue of Child Safety and look forward to your immediate and decisive leadership on this clear and present danger to our children and society.

Yours Sincerely,

RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR

Smt. Maneka Gandhi
Hon'ble Minister for Women and Child Development
Government of India
New Delhi

Encl: as above



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4 December, 2014

Respected Rajnath Singh,

SUB: Bring back Paul Meekin to face justice

This has reference to the shocking case of sexual harassment of a twelve-year old child in a Bengaluru school in 2012 by the school Principal, a British citizen named Paul Meekin.

The police had arrested Paul Meekin and filed a charge sheet against the accused in January 2013, under Section 23 of the Juvenile Justice Act and Section 67 of the Information Technology Act of 2000. Now, it has emerged that the accused has jumped bail, fled the country and is reportedly teaching in a school in Kuwait under a false name.

Sir, it is essential that the Home Ministry take up the matter to extradite Paul Meekin at the earliest and bring him back to stand trial under the law of the land. The children of our country need assurance of our protection and this case is just one such in the long list of recent cases of child sexual abuse in schools.

I would request your ministry to bolster the Karnataka government to bring the accused back to India and face trial under more stringent charges to send a message of zero tolerance towards paedophiles.

I will seek an early meeting with you, to discuss this urgent matter and I look forward to your positive response.

Yours sincerely,

RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR

Shri Rajnath Singh
Hon'ble Home Minister
Government of India
New Delhi