



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

August 7, 2015

Respected Mrs Gaudar,

I write to you to draw your kind attention to the many instances of Child sexual abuse that are being reported in my city Bengaluru.

Just a few days ago on 3rd August 2015, in another horrifying incident - a 3 year-old child at a private school in Indiranagar, Bengaluru was sexually assaulted by a school guard. Subsequently the guard and the school management have been arrested as per law including POCSO act.

This recent incident follows from a slew of similar incidents of sexual assault against children in schools in Bengaluru & Karnataka, over the last year. During the last set of incidents, I along with various citizens/NGOs had petitioned/appealed/written to the Government of Karnataka, the Chief Minister, Home Minister, Education Minister and Women & Child Development Ministers - who are squarely accountable and responsible for the safety and well-being of children.

Specific policy and governance suggestions were given by citizen organizations and by me as well. I am enclosing my letters to Karnataka Home Minister dated February 20, 2014 and my public appeals. The suggestions were to make verification of staff mandatory in schools, Periodic safety Audits and Faster prosecution by designating POCSO courts. In my letter in 2014, I had specifically urged government to take immediate and stringent measures to ensure such crimes are prevented in the future. Unfortunately excepting for the Child Sex offenders registry, very little has been done despite the heinous nature of these crimes and the shame it brings on city, society and Government.

In effect if these suggestions made last year would have been implemented, this child as well as other children would have been spared from this crime. Child sexual abuse is a form of terrorism perpetrated against children and it is abominable that such incidents continue to transpire in Bengaluru. If the state government had acted up on



my suggestions and ensured that schools followed a rigorous verification process while hiring staff, this incident could have been prevented. If the Government had ensured implementation of guidelines in all schools, such horrific incidents could have been averted. Despite repeatedly urging the government, no action has been taken by the Government which came to power on assurances of good governance and hence my letter to you with a request to intervene.

The indifference to this issue will be seen and is being seen as a kind of continuing insensitivity, indifference & negligence to our children - instead of being responsible for their welfare and happy childhood which should be the solemn obligation of the Karnataka government, which is responsible for the safety of every child & citizen in the state of Karnataka. Failures of Governments are measured and critiqued in many ways. But when a government repeatedly fails in its obligations to protect its most vulnerable i.e, children, then the government can be said to be a failure and disappointment to those they serve.

I write to you as a citizen who is concerned about all the children of Bengaluru as well as an MP who represents this proud city and its fine citizens. As the head of the party which is governing the state of Karnataka, I request your urgent intervention in the matter and you to direct Chief Minister of Karnataka to take decisive Policy and Governance actions that will ensure safety for the children in Karnataka, rich & poor, irrespective of their caste & creed. It is high time that the Government of Karnataka led the process of creating a system within the state that ensures that the children of Bengaluru & Karnataka are assured of a safe and happy childhood.

I look forward to your early response.

Yours Sincerely,

RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR

Smt. Sonia Gandhi
Chairperson - UPA
10, Janpath, New Delhi

Enclosed:

1. Letter to Karnataka Home Minister, February 20, 2014
2. Press statement - The Times of India, dated November 1, 2014