

Justice Chandru invites suggestions on requirements of juvenile homes

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Justice K. Chandru, who has been appointed as the one-man committee to study the state of juvenile homes, special homes and places of safety, has asked members of the public to come forward with suggestions.

People could send information or suggestions by post to the office of the one-man committee at 147, Kutchery Road, Mylapore, or meet the committee on working days between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m.

The retired judge has been asked to submit recommendations on various aspects such as infrastructure, health and



Justice K. Chandru

medical facilities, food and nutrition and aftercare.

Report in 4 months

He would submit a report in four months on the facilities constituted under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.

Juvenile Justice Act 2015

Features of the Juvenile Justice Act 2015

1. The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act was instituted and passed by the Indian Parliament in 2015 to substitute the Juvenile Delinquency Law and the Juvenile Justice Act of 2000.
2. The Act included clauses for juveniles aged 16 to 18 to be tried as adults if they were found to be in violation of the law, particularly heinous offences.
3. The Act also included provisions for adoption. The Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act (1956) and the Guardians of the Ward Act (1890) were repealed in favour of more universally accessible adoption regulations.

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4. The JJ Act made the Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) the statutory framework for adoption-related matters, allowing adoption techniques for orphans, surrendered, and neglected or abandoned children to run smoothly.
5. All Child Care Institutions, regardless of whether they are run by the State Government or by voluntary or non-governmental organizations, must be registered under the Act within 6 months of its implementation.
6. The Juvenile Justice Act refined adoption methodologies for orphans, homeless children, and children who had surrendered.
7. The act also established foster care in India.
8. To allow it to carry out its duties more efficiently, the current Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) has been upgraded to the status of a statutory body.
9. The law also states that when a decision to adopt a child is taken, disabled children and physically or financially ineffectual children are given precedence.
10. Special measures have been taken to deal with child offenders aged 16 to 18 who commit heinous crimes.
11. After undertaking the preliminary assessment, the Juvenile Justice Board has the option of transferring cases of heinous criminal offences conducted by such children to a Children's Court (called a Court of Session).

Offences under the Juvenile Justice Act

The *Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act* covers three types of offences.

These offences include – Cognizable, Non-Cognizable, and cases including both Cognizable and Non-Cognizable Offences. All these offences are discussed in detail in the section below:

Cognizable Offences:

A cognizable offence, under the Juvenile Justice Act 2015, is a crime for which a policeman, according to the first schedule or any other law in force at the time, could first detain the convict with no need for a warrant and begin an investigation without consent from the court. Killing, rape, abduction, thievery, dowry death, and other abhorrent or profound offences are examples of cognizable offences. Only cognizable crimes receive a first information report (FIR).

Non-Cognizable Offences:

A non-cognizable crime is one that is not bailable and is listed in the first schedule of the **Indian Penal Code**. In the instance of a non-cognizable offence, the police cannot detain or investigate the defendant in the absence of a warrant.

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A charge sheet is filed with the magistrate, who is presumed to direct that an investigation be launched by the involved police officers. Falsification, deception or cheating, defamation, public nuisance, and other non-cognizable crimes fall into this category.

Cases including both Cognizable and Non-Cognizable Offences:

As per Section 155(4) of the **Criminal Procedure Code**, whenever there are two or maybe more crimes conducted in a case, at least one of which is cognizable and the other is not, in that scenario, the complete case must then be treated as a cognizable case, with the lead investigating officer having all of the authority and power that he possesses when investigating a cognizable case.

Problems with Juvenile Justice Act 2015

1. The amendment in question is to Section 86 of the JJ Act, which states that crimes under the special law, punishable by three to seven years in prison, have now been recategorized as non-cognizable.
2. While victims will be unable to straightforwardly report such crimes due to power imbalances, often such crimes are brought to the police by either parents or child rights organizations and Child Welfare Committees (CWC).
3. Parents of such children are most often day labourers who are either unsure how to go about reporting the crime or are unwilling to document the crimes with the police.
4. They do not want to participate in the court process as it would require them to leave work, resulting in wage loss.
5. In most cases, CWCs' (Child Welfare Committees) very first intuition is to "talk and come to an agreement" without intensifying the incident to the police.
6. Attempting to make these crimes, as well as several other major offences under the special law, non-cognizable would end up making trying to report a crime to the police much more complicated.

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World Lupus Day observed at Stanley Medical College

Lupus Day 2023 was observed at the Government Stanley Medical College Hospital on Wednesday. According to a press release, lupus is a chronic autoimmune disease that can cause inflammation in any part of the body. In India, 14 to 60 per lakh population are affected by the disease and it predominantly affects women in the ratio of 9:1. The theme for this year was 'Making Lupus Visible' to increase public awareness about diagnosis of lupus.

About Lupus:

1. Lupus is an autoimmune disease in which the body's immune system starts attacking your own tissues and organs.
2. The condition primarily affects the kidney, but it also has an impact on the skin, blood vessels, connective tissue, heart, brain, and almost every other organ.
3. It is treated by immunosuppression via drugs such as mycophenolate, azathioprine, cyclophosphamide, rituximab
4. The SLEDAI disease activity index is used for the prognosis of this disease.

What are the types of lupus?

1. Systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE): The most common form of lupus.
2. Cutaneous lupus: A form of lupus that is limited to the skin.
3. Drug-induced lupus: A lupus-like disease caused by certain prescription drugs.
4. Neonatal lupus: A rare condition that affects infants of women who have lupus.

No answers even months after atrocity

The Dalit victims at Vengaivayal village in Pudukottai deserve justice

STATE OF PLAY

S. Ganesan

ganesan.santhanam@rediffmail.com

The social fabric of Tamil Nadu, widely acknowledged as a progressive State, is put to severe strain every now and then by appalling acts of atrocities against Dalits. The most recent of such cases – the dumping of human faeces in an overhead tank that supplied drinking water to Dalit families at Vengaivayal in Pudukottai district – remains unresolved even nearly four months after the State's premier investigation agency, the Crime Branch-Criminal Investigation Department (CB-CID), began its investigation. A one-man commission, appointed by the Madras High Court, has also begun a parallel inquiry.

The hamlet, which can be reached by a barely motorable road branching off from the Tiruchi-Pudukottai National Highway, remains heavily guarded as its 20-odd Dalit families live close to Eraiyur, which is dominated by intermediate caste members.

Around last Christmas, some Dalits, especially children, started taking ill. Water contamination was suspected, and youngsters who checked the tank found the faeces floating inside. The victims were left shaken and so were social activists. Incidents of discrimination against Dalits by people of dominant castes are not new, but the sheer perversion of the act in Vengaivayal was disturbing.

The police booked a case under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 and the Indian Penal Code and formed multiple probe teams. But as weeks passed



by, activists and political parties, especially the Viduthalaï Chiruthaigal Katchi and the Left parties, grew restive over the delay in arresting the perpetrators of the crime.

In mid-January, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin told the Assembly that his government will act firmly against those indulging in such demeaning acts. As the issue refused to die down, the case was transferred to the CB-CID.

Pudukottai Collector Kavitha Ramu, who visited the village a day after the incident came to light, found the prevalence of the 'two-tumbler' system in which separate glasses are kept aside for Dalits and for others to serve tea. She also led a group of Dalits into Eraiyur's Sri Ayyanar temple, where they had allegedly been denied entry for years.

Curiously, none of the State Ministers, especially S. Regupathy and Siva. V. Meyyanathan, who represent the district, visited the village immediately after the incident. They did so only around Pongal, nearly 20 days later, along with the Minister for Adi Dravidar Welfare, N. Kavalvizhi Selvaraj. To promote harmony, they partook in a 'Samathuva Pongal' (a community feast) and led a public darshan at the Sri Ayyanar temple.

Activists viewed the temple entry as a diversionary tactic and felt that the government was trying to play down the incident. There were calls for

demolishing the water tank. The authorities desisted, contending it was key evidence in the case. The construction of a new water tank, to replace the contaminated one, attracted criticism too. It was argued that supplying water to Dalits from an exclusive tank in itself amounted to discrimination.

In the absence of any known eyewitnesses or surveillance cameras in the hamlet, the investigators have had to largely depend on circumstantial evidence and possible scientific corroboration. Dalits of the village are aghast that despite being the victims, they too are being viewed as suspects. One of them moved the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court against the CB-CID's decision to seek blood samples from him for a DNA test. The agency had sought to conduct DNA tests, with the approval of the Special Court for exclusive trial of cases under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, on suspects from both communities in an attempt to try and match them with samples of the faecal matter found in the water tank. It has inquired over 150 persons, and more suspects could be asked to undergo the DNA tests. But this again is seen as a delaying tactic by the activists, who say the investigators ought to look for the persons who dumped the faeces rather than trying to trace the origin of the faeces.

With the Madras High Court deciding to wait for two months for the report of the one-man commission instead of ordering a probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation, as sought by a public interest litigant, the inquiry by the retired High Court judge M. Sathyanarayanan has raised expectations. The victims, who are haunted by the humiliation, deserve answers.

Scheduled Castes and Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act

- In 1989, the Government of India enacted the Scheduled Castes and Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act in order to prevent atrocities against SC/STs.
- The purpose of the Act was to prevent atrocities and help in the social inclusion of Dalits into society.
- **Aim:**
 - This legislation aims at preventing the commission of offences by persons other than Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

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- **Offender:**
 - Any person who is not a member of a scheduled caste or a scheduled tribe and commits an offence listed in the Act against a member of a scheduled caste or a scheduled tribe is an offender.
- **Cognizable offence:**
 - All offences listed in the Act are cognizable.
 - The police can arrest the offender without a warrant and start an investigation into the case without taking any orders from the court.
- **Punishments:**
 - The Act prescribes both minimum as well as maximum punishment.
 - The minimum in most cases is six months imprisonment while the maximum is five years sentence and with a fine.
 - In some cases, the minimum is enhanced to one year while the maximum goes up to life imprisonment or even death sentence.

Other Provisions safeguarding the rights of SCs and Sts in India

- The Indian Government has enacted laws to remove negative discrimination and has also brought in many reforms to improve the quality of life for the weaker sections of society. Few among them are:
 - Constitutionally guaranteed fundamental human rights
 - Abolition of 'untouchability' in 1950
 - Provision of reservations in places like educational institutions, for employment opportunities etc.
 - Establishing social welfare departments and national commissions for the welfare of scheduled castes and tribes.
- **Right to Equality**
 - Articles 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 of the Constitution of India highlight the Right to Equality in detail.
 - It refers to equality in the eyes of law, discarding any unfairness on grounds of caste, race, religion, place of birth sex.
 - It also includes equality of prospects in matters of employment, abolition of untouchability and abolition of titles.

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Joe Biden to host Modi in Washington DC on June 22

The leaders will have the opportunity to review strong bilateral cooperation in various areas of mutual interest, including technology, clean energy, and defence, says an MEA statement

Sriram Lakshman

The White House has announced the state visit by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Washington DC next month. The visit has been in the works for months, with Indian officials working out the logistics for Mr. Modi's first state visit during the Biden administration.

"President Joe Biden and First Lady Jill Biden will host Prime Minister Narendra Modi of the Republic of India for an Official State Visit to the United States, which will include a state dinner, on June 22, 2023," the announcement said, adding that the visit will "affirm the deep and close partnership" between the two countries and their people to people ties. The government confirmed the visit, saying it would underscore the "growing importance" of the bilateral relationship.

"The leaders will have



Close ties: Prime Minister Narendra Modi (left) with U.S. President Joe Biden during the G-20 Summit in Indonesia. FILE PHOTO

the opportunity to review strong bilateral cooperation in various areas of mutual interest, including technology, trade, industry, education, research, clean energy, defence, security, healthcare, and deepening people-to-people connections," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in a statement.

"The visit will strengthen our two countries' shared commitment to a free, open, prosperous, and secure Indo-Pacific

and our shared resolve to elevate our strategic technology partnership," the White House said.

The Indian readout went into more detail, adding that the two leaders would reflect on "their shared vision for a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific and discuss opportunities to expand and consolidate the Quad engagement".

The MEA also said the visit would allow Mr. Modi and Mr. Biden to explore

ways in which India and the U.S. could strengthen their cooperation at the G-20 [of which India currently holds the rotating presidency] and other multilateral and plurilateral forums.

Mr. Modi and Mr. Biden are expected to discuss an expansion in educational exchanges, climate change, workforce development and health security, according to the White House.

"This historic visit offers a valuable opportunity for India and the U.S. to further deepen a comprehensive and forward-looking global strategic partnership," the MEA said.

The Hindu had reported that Mr. Modi and Mr. Biden are also expected to interact multiple times later in May – at the G7 meetings in Hiroshima, in Papua New Guinea, and at the Quad Summit in Sydney.

(With inputs from Kallol Bhattacharjee)

ICMR conducts trial run of blood bag delivery by drone

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) on Wednesday successfully conducted a trial run of delivery of blood bags under its iDrone initiative.

The trial run has been undertaken for the first time in the country by the ICMR; Lady Hardinge Medical College (LHMC); Government Institute of Medical Sciences (GIMS), Greater Noida; and the Jaypee Institute of Information Technology (JIIT), Noida, a release issued by the Health Ministry said.

The inaugural trial flight carried 10 units of whole blood samples from the GIMS and the LHMC in visual line of sight.

"The i-DRONE was first used during the COVID-19 pandemic by the ICMR for



The inaugural flight carried 10 units of whole blood samples.

distributing vaccines to remote areas. Today, we are transporting blood and blood-related products which are supposed to be kept at a low temperature. After the experiment, we found that not only can we maintain the temperature, there was also no damage to the products transported," Rajiv Bahl, Director-General, ICMR, said.

More drone flights will be conducted to validate the quality of blood products transported.

Indian Council of Medical Research

- It is the apex body in India for the formulation, coordination and promotion of biomedical research.
- Its mandate is to conduct, coordinate and implement medical research for the benefit of the Society; translating medical innovations into products/processes and introducing them into the public health system.
- It is funded by the Government of India through the Department of Health Research, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

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i-Drone Significance:

- Drones can be used in delivering important life-saving medicines and collecting blood samples in critical situations and in tough geographical areas.
- Over the last decade, drones, or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), are being increasingly used for
 - law and order,
 - courier services,
 - surveillance and
 - attack in the military domain.
- Modern drones have been used militarily since the 1990s, including by the US during the Gulf War.
- In India, the most commonly known drones are:
 - Quad- and hexacopters used for civil and commercial purposes,
 - Heron drones used for military surveillance.
 - Different UAVs operate under various technologies ranging from the remote control by a human operator to using GPS and radio frequencies, and autopilot assistance

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