



**RAJIV GANDHI NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**  
(INSTITUTE OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE BY THE ACT OF PARLIAMENT NO. 35/2012)  
MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS & SPORTS, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
SRIPERUMBUDUR, TAMIL NADU - 602105, INDIA

## **A REPORT ON NATIONAL GIRL CHILD DAY 24 JANUARY 2022**



**Organized by  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY  
AND  
CENTRE FOR TRAINING, ORIENTATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

**[www.rgnyd.gov.in](http://www.rgnyd.gov.in)**

***"We must tell girls their voices are important."***

**- Malala Yousafzai -**

## Background of the Programme

As an initiative of the Government of India to celebrate and commemorate 75 years of progressive India, the glorious history of its people, culture and achievements, we are observing Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. The Department of Sociology and the Centre for Training, Orientation, and Capacity Building, RGNIYD jointly organized the National Girl Child Day on 24th January 2022. The National Girl Child Day was initiated in 2008 by the Ministry of Women and Child Development and the government of India with an aim to create awareness and sensitization about the various discrimination and biases faced by the girl child in the society. The day signifies the society's commitment to save, educate and empower the girl child in every aspect and is celebrated every year on 24 January across the country. Over decades, girls and women are discriminated in various ways due to the patriarchal order of the society. Even before the birth of the girl child is born, there is discrimination through technology enabled sex selective abortions. After she is born, she faces discrimination starting from the family regarding health, education and nutrition, and the society at large, etc. There is a need to create awareness among the public for the safety, development and empowerment of the girl child.

## Objectives of the Programme

Department of Sociology and Centre for Training Orientation and Capacity Building organized National Girl child day programme with the objectives:

- To create awareness about the rights of the girls children
- To support the girl child of the nation and remove gender-biases
- To promote awareness about the inequalities that a girl child face
- To orient the participants about the significance of girl's education
- The main focus is on changing society's attitude towards girls children and to address gender discriminations which impacts on the adverse imbalance in sex ratio etc.,

## Inaugural Address by Prof. Sibnath Deb

Prof. Sibnath Deb in his inaugural address highlighted that there are plenty of evidences on gender discrimination. He is of the opinion that there is no doubt about the strength of the girl child, but in reality, it needs to be practiced. Citing his research work of Children in rural, urban and semi urban areas specially in marginalized population he highlighted the way the girl child is been perceived. Prof. Deb elucidated that consistent in geographical boundaries girls are deprived from education, health with the set notion that girls will move to their in-law's house and there will be no returns to the parents' family. Unconsciously in the urban societies girls face discrimination due to the patriarchal nature of the society. There are unfolding factors which leads to discrimination such as interactions of mothers and grandmothers with the girl child and preference for a male child.

In the name of the male taking forward the generation injustice is granted to the girl child consciously. Women are abused by their husband and their in-laws for bearing a girl child. He talked about the misconception about the society in determining the sex of the child. Prof. Deb explained through instances from states of India how gender disparities operate in urban and rural society, he also highlighted on the plight of the polygamous marriages in some backward states. He emphasized on the consequences of denial of sending girls for education and work opportunities to urban cities. There is a need for social consciousness and support of community leaders in order to reduce the level of gender disparity across states.



Prof. Deb elucidated that education has a positive co-relation with quality of life, in his study on 'Education for level of enrollment among girls from class 1-9', it was found that lot of gender disparity was prevailing while understanding the level of enrollment. In his study on parents' perception among children in the urban areas of Kolkata, he said that there is a preference for a girl child because of their caring, trustable, accessible and empathetic nature in the time of crisis. He also emphasized the nuisance of child trafficking and street children and sexual abuse faced by children in institutional setups. There is a need for a self-conscious attitude from all stake holders including policy makers, media, academicians, educational institutions for a gender equal society.

### Special Lecture by Ms. Bharti Ali

Ms. Bharti Ali, Co-Founder & Executive Director, HAQ: Centre for Child rights, New Delhi delivered a special lecture on the occasion. In her lecture, Bharti highlighted the various issues faced by the girl child in the society and underlined the increasing trend of violence in the society as disturbing. She emphasized on the various issues and complexities surrounding the right to nationality and identity of the girl child. It starts with the basic process of birth registration of the girl child which will ensure that every girl has a name, a nationality and have access to many other entitlements.

Ms. Bharti further mentioned the steadily improving sex ratio in the country though it is still a concern in some of the states. She pointed out the need to move beyond the child sex ratio and to look deeper into the adolescent sex ratio which is way below the child sex ratio especially for the adolescent girls which should be understood in line with the existing socio-cultural practices of the society. For instance, the ongoing debate regarding increasing the age of marriage for girls cannot be looked in isolation from other existing socio-cultural factors which are at play because many at times the law itself cannot be the answer to address gender imbalances in the society since a number of socio-cultural factors are operating at the same time and how some of the social problems be it early marriage, teenage pregnancy, etc. cannot be addressed by the law alone.



Further, she flagged the issue of health and nutrition among adolescent girls, how malnutrition and anemia is predominant among adolescent girls which is also inter-generational and that our approach towards adolescent girls as prospective mothers needs to change. Regarding education, though there are more girls enrolled than boys even in learning achievements, the question was how many girls are able to pursue higher education as the situation on the ground is very different. Besides issues concerning the digital divide and gender inequality; engagement of child labour especially girls in the agriculture sector; sexual offences against girl children largely by family members and persons known to the child. Ms. Bharti also pointed out the normalization and the gap in reporting for sexual offences against the boy child and the need to recognize sexual violence against boys and men as much. Though the POCSO Act talks of support services yet we should also address the problems at the family level. Besides, the issue of trafficking was also highlighted and there is trafficking beyond flesh trade for domestic labour, etc. Ms. Bharti also highlighted the various laws and government programmes for the welfare of girls and women such as, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme, Scholarship schemes, One Stop Centres, Nirbhaya Fund, Scheme for working women, Ujjala scheme, Integrated Child Protected Scheme, etc but underlined the need for proper and sufficient budget allocation as there has been a reduction in budget allotment across all schemes. Poor allocation and underutilization of funds are hurdles to work towards equality. In conclusion, Ms. Bharti stressed on the importance to not to criminalize the choices of people, of girls and boys but the need to educate them.



## Sharing Moments

In commemoration of the Day, the organizers invited the RGNIYD fraternity to share photos of Selfie-with-my Daughter as part of the celebration which was compiled into a small video and screened during the session.



Besides 'Sharing moments with daughters' were also invited from the faculty and staff where in fathers and daughters shared their experiences about each other and a few of these moments are captured below:

***"Today, there is some change happening and girls are given equal importance and girls are equally important, I am a proud father of a girl child."***

**- Dr. Ram Babu**

***"A girl child is as valuable as a boy child, we should not discriminate them on the basis of gender."***

**- Dr. Suresh Sundaram**

***"My daughters mean the world to me, and I always extend my full support for their education and well being. I am a proud father of two wonderful daughters."***

**- Prof. Inderjeet Sodhi**



Mr. Rajendran, MTS, CTOCB, RGNIYD expressed that he is bringing up his daughter without any gender prejudice. He had also given the priority for giving her good education and now she stands as a engineering graduate very proudly.

Smt. Srilegha, Stenographer, Engineering Section, RGNIYD shared in the forum that she faced many obstacles from her own family itself to get higher education viz., denial of going to the nearby town for college or to pursue technical education or skill training. But she had decided to give higher education to her daughters at any cost and she also appreciated the government's initiatives for the empowerment of women and girl children.

The programme was well taken and appreciated by the participants (around 186 participants) including students and Faculty members and non-teaching staff members of the institute and other colleges and universities.

The programme was well concluded with the vote of thanks proposed by Dr. Anbu Kavitha, Assistant Professor, Dept of Sociology, RGNIYD.

## Recommendations

- Awareness programmes at grass root level.
- Institutional and Care homes for the destitute
- Welfare and developmental programmes for Street children
- Addressing the gender digital divide in the education sector

## Way Forward

- The need for sexual and reproductive rights
- Right to education, which do not curtail the rights of girls but promote the rights of girls' education
- Various mechanisms need to be established to bring behavior change, gender sensitivity
- Develop communication modules, gender sensitization modules
- The scope for research in critical sex ratio particularly of adolescent girls
- The change to start from our families

## Inaugural Address By



**Prof. Sibnath Deb**

Prof. Sibnath Deb is currently the Director of RGNIYD. Before joining the RGNIYD, he served as a professor at the Department of Applied Psychology, Pondicherry University (a central university), India. Prof. Deb has received national and international awards in recognition of his contribution to the field of psychology including the "Visitor's Award 2019" from the Hon'ble President of India. His current areas of research interest include child abuse and neglect, child rights, inequality in educational opportunities, students' mental health, adolescent reproductive health, domestic violence and adolescent risk behaviour. He has produced more than 20 PhDs in addition to publishing more than 100 research articles/ book chapters in the leading national and international journals. Prof. Deb is a dynamic personality and inspires people with his positive approach.

## Special Lecture By



**Ms. Bharti Ali**

Ms. Bharti Ali is a development professional and social activist working on issues concerning the rights of women and children for over 29 years. She is one of the Co-Founders and currently the Executive Director of HAQ: Centre for Child Rights, a Delhi based NGO working towards the realisation of human rights of children. She is also the Trustee and President of the Child Rights and Sustainability Trust (CRST), a Bangalore based non-profit focusing on children's ecological rights and a Member of the Governing Board of Jamghat, a Delhi based NGO working for creating an enabling environment for the growth and development of street and homeless children.

While her area of expertise is research, training and advocacy on child protection and justice for children, some of her other critical research has been on involuntary displacement due to development, women's participation in local self-governance, right to adequate housing for women and children, reproductive health, gender-based violence and right to education. She has authored several publications, articles and reports, and developed training and education materials and modules for police academies, judicial academies, National and State Legal Services Authorities, the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, Tezpur University, UNICEF and other civil society organisations. Bharti has engaged with both Central and State governments in the drafting of laws, policies, plans and programmes for children. She has been part of various government committees and statutory bodies such as the Supreme Court's Gender Sensitization and Internal Complaints Committee, the Delhi Services Authority and the NHRC's NGO Core Group on Child Rights.

## Programme Schedule

Time	Programme	Details
11:00 AM - 11:10 AM	Welcome Address	<b>Prof. Vasanthi Rajendran</b> <i>Professor, Centre for Training, Orientation and Capacity Building, RGNIYD</i>
11:11 AM - 11:30 AM	Inaugural Address	<b>Prof. Sibnath Deb</b> <i>Director, RGNIYD</i>
11:31 AM - 12:30 PM	Special Lecture	<b>Ms. Bharti Ali</b> <i>Co-founder &amp; Executive Director HAQ: Centre for Child Rights, New Delhi</i>
12:31 PM - 12:55 PM	Sharing Moments	<b>Ms. Avinu Veronica Richa</b> <i>Assistant Professor Dept. of Sociology, RGNIYD</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prof Inderjeet Sodhi</li><li>• Dr. S Suresh</li><li>• Dr. Rambabu Botcha</li><li>• Ms. Sreelega</li><li>• Mr. Rajendran</li><li>• Ms. Rajeswari</li></ul>
12:56 PM - 01:00 PM	Vote of Thanks	<b>Dr. Anbu Kavitha</b> <i>Assistant Professor Department of Sociology</i>



## Acknowledgement

The Department of Sociology and the Centre for Training Orientation and Capacity Building, RGNIYD sincerely thank the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India for giving us the opportunity to organize the programme. We sincerely thank Prof. Sibnath Deb, Director, RGNIYD for his immense support and guidance towards the success of the programme. Our sincere thanks to the resource person Ms. Bharati Ali for her enlightening and throwing light on the topic in a detailed manner. We thank the Registrar, ICT team and the administrative staff for their cooperation and support. The Department and the Centre thank the faculty members, admin staff and students for their participation.



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