

Implementation of PCPNDT Act 1994

Date: February 1-2, 2006

The Pre-conception and Pre-natal Diagnostic Test (PCPNDT) Act came into force in 1994. Subsequently following a Supreme Court order regarding its proper implementation, certain amendments were made to the Act. The declining sex ratio particularly in the 0 to 6 age group population is a matter of grave concern. It was expected that proper implementation of the PCPNDT Act would check pre-natal sex determination and elimination of the female foetus within the womb, at least to some extent.

Although, there has been ample time for implementing the Act, we find that there are grave lacunae in the actual implementation, and there is no sign that the decline in child ratio has been halted. The infrastructure set up by most states for implementing the Act is still defective. Recent studies show that in certain parts of eastern India the use of prenatal diagnostic tests spread fast. For instance, the metropolitan areas of Kolkata showed a steep decline in the 0-6 child sex ratio between 1991 and 2001.

In order to address these problems, the Institute of Development Studies Kolkata organized a regional workshop on *Implementation of PCPNDT Act 1994* on February 1-2, 2006. For the purpose of enriching the inputs a number of resource persons were invited from different parts of India, such as:

- Rattan Chand, Director (PNDT), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India
- M K Sharma, Addl. Legal Advisor, Ministry of Law, Govt. of India
- J B Babbar, Family Planning Association, New Delhi
- Malini Bhattacharya, Member, National Commission for Women
- Satish B Agnihotri, Transport Commissioner, Govt. of Orissa
- Sabu George, Centre for Women's Development Studies, New Delhi
- Arvind Kumar, IAS, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh
- Jashodhara Bagchi, Chairperson, West Bengal Commission for Women
- Bharati Mutsuddi, Member, West Bengal Commission for Women
- Sushanta Kumar Sen, Ex-commissioner, Family Welfare, Govt. of West Bengal
- Jasmine Joseph, West Bengal University of Juridical Sciences
- Ujjal Roy, Medical Practitioner
- Jayanta Narayan Chatterjee of Human Rights Law Network

The participants in the workshop were representatives of the concerned departments of the Government of West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar, and Orissa; representatives of appropriate authorities and advisory committees at the state level and the district level; representatives from concerned Departments of Medical Colleges of Kolkata; and representatives of organisations of doctors, lawyers, activists.