



ALL HUMAN RIGHTS TO ALL CHILDREN

SIGNATURE CAMPAIGN

BY

THE CHILDREN OF INDIA FOR HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

1,02,000 children from across India, on behalf of ALL children in India, petition to the Government of India to promote ALL human rights for ALL children in India and in this context institutionalize human rights education in schools. Knowledge of human rights is essential for us to understand and access our rights both as children and when we grow up. The schools become the best spaces where our human rights education can begin.

Our Constitution is the living document from which we know and enjoy our rights. The rights to freedom, liberty, equality, non-discrimination, social justice, protection from abuse and violence, protection from poverty, penury, labour, trafficking, exploitation, protection against material and moral abandonment are promised to each one of us. Further, we value and hold dear the promises to education, equitable opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom, dignity and fraternity.

Article 29.1(b) of **Convention on the Rights of the Child** states that “education of the child shall be directed to the development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations”.

Paragraph 79 of the **Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action** “calls on all States and institutions to include human rights, humanitarian law, democracy and rule of law as subjects in the curricula of all learning institutions in formal and non-formal settings”

Member states in the **Universal Periodic Review (UPR)** have consistently recognized human rights education as an important dimension to protect and promote human rights. India completed its 3rd cycle of UPR on 4th May 2017. In the first periodic review held in 2008, India accepted **Recommendation No.13** made by Italy to strengthen human rights education specifically in order to address effectively the phenomenon of gender based and caste based discrimination.

Again in 2012 during the second periodic review India accepted **Recommendation No. 55** made by Sri Lanka "to continue with action to include human rights education in the school curriculum" UPR 2 Recommendation No.163 also spoke about strengthening human rights training aimed at teachers in order to eliminate discriminatory treatment of children of specific castes, as well as appropriately follow-up on the results of the training that has occurred thus far. Sadly, India did not accept this recommendation.

The United Nations has also taken measures to ensure Human Rights Education becomes an integral part of the education itself. United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training adopted in 2011 states that “Everyone has the right to know, seek and receive information about all human rights and fundamental freedoms and should have access to human rights education and training”.

Further, in preparation for the Golden Jubilee of the UDHR, the **United Nations declared the Decade of Human Rights Education** from 1995 to 2004 and then followed it up with the world program of Human Rights Education, Phase 1 (2005 -2009) Phase 2 (2010 to 2014) Phase 3 from (2015 to 2019). The latest in the series, “Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals” is people-centred and holds human rights in its core.

India is a signatory to all the above declarations and conventions. Besides all these Article 51 A(1) of the Indian Constitution 1950, imposes a duty on all citizens to develop scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform.

The National Curriculum framework drafted by the National Council of Educational Research and training (NCERT) in 2005 contains several declarations on the importance of education " as a long-term process of building up peace, tolerance, justice, intercultural understanding and civic responsibility" It did make an attempt to have “interdisciplinary approaches, promoting key national concerns such as gender, justice, human rights, and sensitivity to marginalised groups and minorities” in teaching Social Sciences.

Again the first document of the New Education Policy drafted by the Ministry of Human Resource Development states that "curriculum will cover the issues of social justice and legal measures in order to avoid social discrimination".

And yet, there is no National Action Plan on Human Rights Education in our school curricula. (<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Education/Training/Pages/NationalActionPlansHumanRightsEducation.aspx>).

The joint Stakeholders' Report submitted by the Working Group on Human Rights for UPR 3 endorsed by over 1000 civil society organizations, recommended that India "evolve a National Policy on Human Rights Education in line with the World Program of Human rights education". (page 15, Human Rights In India - Joint Stakeholders' Report).

In this context, the children of India, supported by civil society organisations and forums, petition the government of India to institutionalize human rights education in schools as a first important step to protect and promote human rights of ALL children.