

NHRC, India takes a serious view of 'Nata Pratha' under which the girls in some communities are sold

NHRC calls for action taken report from the Union Ministry of Women & Child Development, and the States of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat within eight weeks

How 'Nata Pratha' Started

If husband of any women dies. She can live with man of her choice with the consent of both families without marrying each other.

At the start of this pratha it was good and women can continue living her life that is better to live widow for her rest of life.

A woman wearing a red sari with a yellow and white patterned border is sitting on a wooden floor. She is surrounded by several black handprints that are arranged in a circle around her. The background is a light blue and white gradient.

***Nata Pratha or
Live-in relationship?***

How it evolved over time

The problem arose when it was clubbed with child marriage.

Husband of girl who has done child marriage leave her and do Nata with another girl.

Victim girl return back to her parents house. She will be burden on her parents if has children. If not she has to do Nata with another man.

Her family takes money in return of Nata.



**There are thousands of women
in the villages of **Rajsamand,
Chittorgarh, Bhilwara, Alwar
and Tonk districts** of Rajasthan
where a short-lived child marriage
is followed...**

Choice of girl doesn't matter

Family of both girl and boy sit along with villagers and decide where she has to do Nata in presence of other people of their cast.

Girl does not know where she is being sent and with whom she has to live for rest of her life.



'Nata Pratha'

An Unusual Marriage

That Overrides

'Spousal Desire'

What if Nata doesn't work

Both families and villagers decide a price that has to be paid if the boy or girl leaves after Nata.

If a boy leaves a girl, the family of the boy will pay a certain amount to the girl's family.

If a girl leaves, the family of the girl will pay a certain amount to the boy's family.


How chain continues

If girl come back to her parents house with children. They keep her child and send her to another Nata.

If the child is a girl she is treated as burden on family and she is done child marriage and process repeats.

Condition of girls

- No education and knowledge due to early child marriage.
- Totally dependent on families.
- Families treat them as a burden and send them again to Nata.
- Cannot even live with her child.
- Healthcare condition is very poor due to unawareness.



**I have been socially boycotted,
I am not allowed to work in the field and arrange fodder for animals.**

NHRC takes Nata Pratha seriously

NHRC, India takes a serious view of 'Nata Pratha' under which the girls in some communities are sold in the name of marriage in parts of Rajasthan and the adjoining areas in the States of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat.

NHRC takes action

Given the unethicial and immoral consequences of the 'Nata Pratha' on the women and minor girls, the Commission has called for its eradication and abolition and issued notices accordingly to the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development and the States of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat.

They have been directed to submit a report on the measures taken or proposed to be taken in this regard within eight weeks.

How commission was involved

The Commission's directions have come following its intervention in a complaint dated 15th July, 2020 from the father of a minor girl who he claimed was allegedly kidnapped in Rajasthan's Pratapgrah and her body was found in Banswada.

It was found that the father of the girl himself had sold her for marriage to a man for Rs 2.5 lakh under a purchase deal signed by their families under 'Nata Pratha' in the presence of the villagers on 11th July, 2019. The groom paid Rs 60,000 and the remaining amount was to be paid by 10th January, 2020.

Case of 2020

When he failed to pay the remaining amount within the stipulated time, the father brought his daughter back and fixed her 'Nata' with another man for Rs 32,000.

The girl objected to this and went to live with her earlier husband at Gagarwa.

She also made a complaint with the SP, Banswada against her father alleging that he was an alcoholic and had made several attempts to fix her 'Nata' against her will with many boys to earn money and that he had also threatened to kill her.

The police failed to take any action on her complaint, and she committed suicide on 16th June, 2020 by consuming poison.

Way Forward

Research wing observed that the 'Nata Pratha' is comparable to modern forms of prostitution.

It suggested that besides enacting a law, the individuals involved in forcing women to go for 'Nata Pratha' must be prosecuted under laws relating to human trafficking and for selling the minor girls under the relevant provision of the POCSO Act to check this menace.

It also suggested setting up a board or a group at the village level to register the cases of 'Nata Pratha' in addition to building awareness and providing education and employment to improve the economic and social status of girls and women.

What is POCSO Act 2012 ?

- The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act 2012 is applicable to the whole of India. The POCSO Act 2012 defines a child as any person below the age of 18 years and provides protection to all children under the age of 18 years from sexual abuse. It also intends to protect the child through all stages of judicial process and gives paramount importance to the principle of "best interest of the child".