

Efforts to Combat CST in India

EQUATIONS, India

24th Meeting of the UNWTO Task Force for
the protection of children in tourism

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overview

- India's children : 440 million (19% of the worlds children
- 53% are sexually abused (National Study on Child Abuse, 2007 Ministry of women and child development, Government of India
- Growing tourism , growing concerns. However no reflection in tourism polices
- Busting the myths
- Weak Laws and lax implementation
- Challenges and Imperatives

Busting the myths

- The Myths
- CST - a phenomenon that is sporadic, mostly limited to Goa & Kerala
- linked only to a small section of foreign tourists
- The realities
- Kerala, Goa, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, and Pondicherry, Karnataka.
- Large number of domestic tourists , evidence of male child abuse

Male Child Sexual Abuse

- **EQS Research 2008**
- **In revered pilgrim sites – Tirupati, Guruvayoor, Puri**
- Children between 8 and 18. Some abused even younger . Very poor families , abused at young age and forced into full time prostitution.
- On the streets, on the beach, in seedy bars, lodges, rooms on hire, massage parlours, desolate places.
- Those working in small hotels and lodges were sexually abused by the senior boys and men in the hotel
- family pressure to survive – could not get out of the clutches. Shame + stigma +Humiliation+ no protection/recourse
- Offered them goodies that they could not get otherwise

Weak Laws + lax implementation

- Child abuse not defined, most cases under 377 (criminalising homosexuality, male child abuse , “age” of the child varies under different laws
- Very poor record of convictions –crimes against children are treated as minor crimes, added to that delay, victims , witness turn hostile , threats pressure
- No extradition or extraterritorial laws offenders escape with impunity

what hope for India's children?

- pervasive and widespread abuse linked to tourism
- impunity of abusers
- apathy and hypocrisy of officials
- Complete indifference of the industry
- Weak and ineffective legal system

Imperatives -UNWTO

- Examine the effectiveness of its current strategies – influence impact and accountability
- Work with different sections of the industry – particularly those where the abuse is most rampant – small medium informal. Voluntary codes serve a limited purpose. Not in my backyard!
- Research , data from the ground – engage more with those who work on the issue.
- Statement in a Code of ethics –is not enough. How is the UNWTO actually changing the realities for these children?