

MEETING ON ESCORT SERVICE WEBSITES HELD AT RAJ BHAVAN

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Governor, Dr.(Smt.) Mridula Sinha convened a meeting today on the issue of Escort service websites promoting sex tourism in Goa. The meeting was attended by various stakeholders including Dr. Muktesh Chander, IPS, Director General of Police; Shri Rupesh Kumar Thakur, IAS, Secretary to Governor; Shri J. Ashok Kumar, IAS, Secretary Women and Child Development; Prof. Y. V. Reddy, Registrar Goa University; Shri Karthik Kashyap, I.P.S. , Shri Dipak Desai, Director Women and Child Development; Shri Harshad Pawar, Manager IT; Smt. Shaila D'Souza, Head of Centre for Women Studies, Goa University, Guardian of Girl Student, two girls students representatives from Goa University, Smt. Lorna Fernandes, Convenor, Goa Womens Forum, Shri Arun Pandey, ARZ, and Smt. Sushma M. Pawar, Director Children's Rights in Goa. Governor while reviewing various measures taken/being taken by Government authorities to prevent sex tourism in Goa said in her opening remarks that Goa is one of the safest places for women and

Government is taking various measures for ensuring security of women in Goa. However, if at all, there is any aberration like proliferation of websites promoting sex trade in Goa, then same needs to be tackled in co-ordinated, concerted and effective manner. The D.G.P., Dr. Muktesh Chander briefed the matter by power-point presentation about the action taken/being taken to redress this issue. Further, he highlighted the legal impediments particularly limitations under Section 69(A) of IT Act for closing down these websites. He further highlighted the action taken/being taken by the Police department in co-ordination with various Government authorities at Centre as well other States of the country for tackling the issue.

Prof. Y. V. Reddy, Registrar Goa University informed that so far no such incident involving the Goa University girl students have been noticed and they are vigilant enough to prevent occurrence within the campus of University. He also highlighted the need of compound wall around the Goa university complex which they are pursuing with the Government. The DGP also endorsed that no college girls have been identified amongst the girls rescued, so far, and all of them are found to be from outside the State.

The meeting concluded with the remarks of the Governor that online promotion of sex trade is a complex social issue which requires response from all the stakeholders such as Law Enforcement Agencies, Social Welfare Department, Women Commission, parents, teachers, voluntary organizations and members of the society. All stakeholders should take concerted action to prevent and stop this trade. She further added the legal mechanism for tackling this issue should be strengthened for which State needs to take up the matter with the Central Government. Apart from that vigilance of the parents and teachers and members of the society and creation of awareness are vital so that the girls don't fall prey to such ills .