

Form panel to inspect all government observation homes in State, says NGO



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A 17-year-old juvenile in conflict with law allegedly being beaten to death at a Government Special Home for Boys in Chengalpattu is only one such instance that has come out'

The Hindu Bureau

MADURAI

In the wake of a 17-year-old juvenile in conflict with law allegedly being beaten to death at a Government Special Home for Boys in Chengalpattu, Human Rights NGO - People's Watch has urged the State government to form a panel to inspect all the Government Observation Homes in Tamil Nadu in order to ascertain the condition of the inmates.

Addressing mediapersons in Madurai on Wednesday, People's Watch executive director Henri Tiphagne said that the boy's death after being beaten up by the staff at the observation home was only one such instance that has come out. A thorough inspection was needed to ascertain the condition of such inmates who are being subjected to abuse.



Henri Tiphagne, executive director, People's Watch, addressing the media in Madurai on Wednesday.

ASHOK R.

He said the panel should comprise senior women advocates and forensic experts. Though regular inspections should be conducted at the observation homes, this was not being done, he complained.

Referring to the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice and the United Nation

Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty, he said that this incident was a wake up call. He wondered why the High Court Juvenile Justice Committee of the Madras High Court had not taken up the issue *Suo Motu*. The State and the District Legal Services Authorities should have acted immediately following the incident, he said.

He demanded appropriate action to be taken against the District Child Protection Officer (in-charge) Sivakumar and Director of Social Defence S. Valarmathi. He said that the family of the boy should be provided ₹10 lakh as compensation. A government job should also be provided to a family member, he said.

When the State Human Rights Commission had taken up the matter and the investigation was also un-

der way, he wondered why the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) had proposed to conduct an inquiry.

He pointed out that Section 13 (2) of the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005 categorically states, 'The Commission shall not inquire into any matter which is pending before a State Commission or any other Commission duly constituted under any law for the time being in force'.

He said that the proposed inquiry by NCPCR was contrary to the legislation. He said that he had written to the Chairperson of the NCPCR requesting them not to carry out its own investigation as was done in Michealpatti last year. He also complained about political interference in the functioning of the national bodies.