



Press Statement

United Nations condemns gang-rape and murder of teenage girls in Uttar Pradesh and calls for justice

Statement by Lise Grande, United Nations Resident Coordinator; Dr Rebecca R Tavares, Representative, UN Women's India Multi Country Office and Louis-Georges Arsenault, UNICEF Representative to India.

New Delhi, 1 June 2014: The UN in India condemns the brutal gang-rape and murder of two teenaged girls on the night of May 28 in Katra village in Uttar Pradesh's Badaun district and calls for immediate action against the perpetrators and to address violence against women and girls across India.

Ending violence against women and girls is a fundamental goal of the United Nations. The UN system in India stands united with people across the country to do what it takes to ensure that every woman and every girl can live safely and with dignity everywhere.

"There should be justice for the families of the two teenaged girls and for all the women and girls from lower caste communities who are targeted and raped in rural India. Violence against women is not a women's issue, it's a human rights issue," said Lise Grande, Resident Coordinator of the UN system in India.

"Every girl and woman should be able to live safely, feel protected and grow up free of violence," stated Dr. Rebecca Tavares, UN Women Representative. "Amongst the many actions that need to be taken, the UN encourages the speedier application of the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2013, including the establishment of the one-stop crisis centres. The justice system is key to addressing the problem."

"Many progressive reforms and changes have resulted following the brutal gang-rape and murder of a young woman in Delhi in December 2013 and the historic Justice Verma Committee report," stressed Lise Grande. "But having the laws in place are only one part of the solution - their implementation also matters as does changing mind-sets. Violence against women and girls is preventable, not inevitable. Sustained

implementation of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO), 2012 and the setting up of Special Courts and child friendly procedures for victims under 18 years of age are also key priorities."

The latest brutal act of violence against the girls in UP also highlights the dangers girls and women all over India are exposed to due to the lack of toilets. Louis-Georges, UNICEF Representative stressed that: "Around 65% of rural population in India defecates in the open and women and girls are expected to go out at night. This does not only threaten their dignity, but their safety as well."

Notes to the editors:

The United Nations system in India includes 27 organisations that have the privilege to serve in India. The Resident Coordinator, the designated representative of the UN Secretary-General to the Government leads the UN Country Team to advocate the mandate of the United Nations, while drawing on the support and guidance of the entire UN family. Please see <http://in.one.un.org/>

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