

High dropout rate among girls

Address the core problem

A government report has revealed that the dropout rate of girls at the secondary level stands at 42 percent. It is higher than the dropout rate of boys at secondary level, which is 33.43 percent. When the overall secondary school dropout rate has been declining, this high dropout rate of girls is worrisome.

In 2015, 45.92 percent of girls left school at secondary level, against 33.72 percent boys. This means although a little progress has been made in keeping the girls at schools, we still have a long way to go.

While poverty is the main reason behind such a high number of dropouts among girls, because it forces them to leave school and work as domestic help, another major reason is child marriage. Also, girls have to face many forms of sexual harassment on their way to and from school.

The education minister has said that the government has been providing the students with all necessary support including free textbooks and stipends. While we believe that these are very important steps taken by the government, we also believe that in order to keep our girls at school, the government must take the issue of child marriage seriously and stop it at all costs. To do so, annulment of the special provision in the Child Marriage Restraint Act is a must. In addition, child labour must be banned so that girls are not forced to work as domestic help. Also, the safety of girls must be ensured so that they can attend school without any trouble. If the government can ensure these, the dropout rate of girls at secondary level should come down considerably.

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