

Security And Justice For Poor School Children

Here is yet another case of a school boy, kidnapped while on way to school, son of a poor rickshaw-driver who managed to help his son on to class ten of a local school. Both mother and father are heart-broken. The boy stays untraced so far, about a fortnight or so. And police action warranted by the case lacks the speed and seriousness that could help recover the boy. Maybe, the police have their reason to run out of steam, maybe for lack of the usual incentives that flow from relatively rich parents losing their children to kidnappers or child lifters.

We have dealt with the subject earlier including cases of baby-lifting from hospitals such as the one recently reported in the newspapers. Security of school-going children, on way to, or back from, school daily is a serious problem and calls for as serious action by the police, in the first place. It is not a case that can be shelved in common with cases of hijacking and rape etc that has become so common and the administration seems to have come to terms with them.

One point specifically to be made in the context of the case we have quoted (of kidnapping) is that standards of security generally speaking seem to be different as between the poor and the rich victims of these crimes, specially at the hands of the police. It needs no elaboration. It is as well-known as many other cases of deprivation and denial suffered by the poor in society. This discrimination, that is now so widespread, and long-running must go. Justice for the poor must be ensured as well as security—for them at work, for the members of their families, their children at school along with the equal distribution of opportunities and facilities.

The pity is these look like disappearing from our world leaving a stretching vista of increasing insecurity of slow or no-justice and similar other deprivations. The administration could raise its popularity rating indeed by doing a good turn to them. This sounds naive, but will serve them better, even politically, than all the talk about poverty-alleviation of which not much is in evidence on the ground.

As for school-going children the police administration could help with specific instructions issued to police on patrol, (or by deployment) to keep an eye on the anti-social elements of this stripe now on the prowl for game.