

ASSAM

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What NCPCR needs at the

Moment

WEST BENGAL

Strategic Analysis & Futuristic Solution Report

TAMIL NADU

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Introduction

Dr. R.G. Anand is a former **Member of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)** (2018–2021) and a distinguished public health and child welfare expert with over 20 years of service. His tenure on the NCPCR was marked by proactive interventions and policy advocacy to safeguard children's rights across India. Given the pressing challenges in child and women welfare – particularly in states like **Assam, West Bengal, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu** – there is an urgent need for experienced leadership at the helm of NCPCR. Dr. Anand's proven track record, deep understanding of grassroots issues, and familiarity with **Prime Minister's welfare schemes** position him uniquely to immediately take charge as NCPCR Chairman and drive impactful changes.

Track Record of Achievements in NCPCR (2018–2021)

As an NCPCR member, Dr. R.G. Anand accomplished numerous initiatives that demonstrate his capability to lead the Commission:

- **Healthcare & Nutrition for Children:** Conducted over **250 health camps for orphans** across Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, providing medical check-ups and care to vulnerable children.

He personally **adopted 60+ children**, supporting their health and education needs, and organized weekly food assistance programs for disadvantaged communities.

- **Educational Upliftment:** Established **100 tuition centers** that help ~2,500 underprivileged children annually to improve their studies. Through these centers (run in partnership with Seva Bharathi, Tamil Nadu), he has boosted school enrollment and learning outcomes in rural and urban slums.
- **Outreach on Government Schemes:** Organized **100+ awareness camps** to educate the public about **Prime Minister's welfare schemes** and linked thousands of eligible children and families to government benefits. Notably, he led a dedicated team in Tamil Nadu focused on enrolling citizens in programs like health insurance, scholarships, and child welfare schemes, ensuring that entitlements reach the needy.
- **Nationwide Inspections & Interventions:** Traveled extensively – covering **20 states and 175 districts** – to inspect child care institutions, schools, and shelter homes. During these visits he **interacted with over 5,000 children**, promoting positive behavior and gathering feedback on their conditions. He convened numerous district-level meetings with local authorities to resolve issues in childcare facilities, ensuring

proper care for children in shelter homes and observation homes.

- **Policy Initiatives and Innovations:** Launched the “**Samvedna**” **toll-free tele-counseling helpline** to support children’s mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. This initiative provided psychological first aid to children affected by stress, trauma, and grief, reflecting Dr. Anand’s focus on child psychology and emotional well-being. He also pioneered the use of technology like the NCPCR’s MASI portal (Monitoring App for Seamless Inspection) to log real-time data from institution inspections, enhancing transparency and accountability in childcare facilities.
- **Women’s Welfare Support:** Complementing his child-centric work, Dr. Anand undertook **women’s empowerment initiatives** in his public service career. For instance, he delivered nutritional support kits to 500 pregnant and lactating mothers during Breastfeeding Awareness Week and held over 100 camps educating women about welfare schemes and health practices. This holistic approach recognizes that improving mothers’ welfare directly benefits child health and development.

Through these achievements, Dr. R.G. Anand has demonstrated effective leadership, ground-level experience, and commitment to the mission of child rights protection. His familiarity with the Commission's workings and successful track record would allow him to seamlessly assume the Chairmanship and accelerate progress.

Key Challenges in Children & Women's Welfare Across Regions

Despite numerous schemes and efforts, several states continue to face serious issues in protecting children and empowering women. Dr. Anand's immediate appointment as NCPCR Chairman would ensure focused attention on these challenges, leveraging his regional insights and experience. Below is an overview of critical problems in **Assam, West Bengal, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu** – and how his leadership can address them:

Assam: Strengthening Child Protection

In Assam, pockets of insurgency, trafficking, and inadequate service delivery have left many children vulnerable. During his NCPCR tenure, Dr. Anand personally visited districts like **Baksa (Assam)** to review child protection activities. He worked with local authorities – Deputy Commissioners, Police Superintendents, child protection

officers – to assess implementation of laws and schemes in place. For example, **Dr. Anand emphasized enforcement of the Right to Education Act** (ensuring children from marginalized groups are admitted to private schools) and monitored the formation of district inspection teams for schools. He also highlighted the need for effective use of central programs like:

- **SAMVEDNA mental health helpline:** Promoted this tele-counseling service in Assam for children traumatized by COVID-19 and conflict, sharing the toll-free number and encouraging its use for psychological support.
- **Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK):** Reviewed how health department teams were identifying and helping children with illnesses or developmental needs. By pushing for better RBSK coverage, he aimed to catch health issues early among Assam's children (including those in remote tea garden areas and tribal communities).
- **Operation Muskaan:** Advocated strengthening this mission to rescue missing/trafficked children, given Assam's challenges with child trafficking across borders. He urged proactive search and rehabilitation efforts for missing children.

- **Child Care Institutions (CCIs):** Inspected homes for orphans and juveniles, addressing issues of infrastructure and care. He even introduced the idea of making districts “child-friendly” by coordinating all departments to prioritize children’s needs.

With Dr. Anand as Chairman, Assam’s child welfare will be further bolstered through diligent monitoring and support. He will ensure that **Prime Minister’s schemes** like **Poshan Abhiyan** (nutrition for mothers and children) reach Assam’s malnourished kids in flood-prone areas, and that **Mission Vatsalya** funds (the central child protection services scheme) are utilized to upgrade childcare facilities. His collaborative approach with state officials would help bridge gaps swiftly.

West Bengal: Upholding Child Rights and Education

West Bengal is another state where systemic issues in child welfare have been identified. A recent special report by NCPCR to Parliament (Dec 2023) accused the West Bengal government of **neglecting child protection obligations and violating legal procedures**. Key findings included: failure to enforce **RTE Act Section 12(1)(c)** (which mandates private schools reserve 25% seats for underprivileged children), lack of cooperation by local officials in cases of violence against children, and even dismissal of incidents

where children died in blasts (brushed off as “cylinder blasts”). The NCPCR noted with concern that West Bengal has **not been implementing central child welfare laws and schemes properly**, leading to a “pathetic” state of child rights in the view of the Commission.

Dr. R.G. Anand’s leadership can **rectify these shortcomings through assertive and strategic action**:

- **Enforcing Education Rights:** He will work to ensure West Bengal implements the RTE Act fully, giving poor and marginalized children access to quality education in private schools as intended by law. By coordinating with the state education department and leveraging judiciary if needed, he can push for compliance so that no child is denied schooling due to government inaction.
- **Protecting Children from Violence:** Under his chairmanship, NCPCR would proactively investigate incidents of child harm (such as civic violence or accidents affecting children) and hold authorities accountable. He would insist on proper inquiry and justice in cases where children have been victims, rather than allowing them to be swept under the rug.

- **Combatting Trafficking and Exploitation:** West Bengal, unfortunately, has been a hotspot for child trafficking rackets (due to international borders and migration issues). Dr. Anand is likely to launch dedicated drives in coordination with the Ministry of Home Affairs and NGOs to **identify, rescue, and rehabilitate trafficked children**, and tighten monitoring of childcare homes to prevent abuse.
- **Implementing Welfare Schemes:** Many central schemes can directly benefit West Bengal's children if implemented earnestly – for example, “**Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao**” to promote girl child education in districts with high female dropout or child marriage rates, and **Childline 1098** services to report child abuse. Dr. Anand, who has experience linking people to PM schemes, would ensure West Bengal's officials utilize these programs for the state's children. He will also encourage the state to use **Mission Vatsalya grants** to improve infrastructure of children's homes and observation homes.

By taking charge now, *Dr. Anand would bridge the trust deficit between the central child rights body and West Bengal's administration.* His approach would be firm on child rights but constructive – offering the state guidance and support to fix issues

rather than merely pointing out failures. This balance can lead to tangible improvements in **West Bengal's child welfare indicators**, from education inclusion to safety and health.

Kerala: Combating Substance Abuse and Ensuring Well-Being

Kerala boasts high literacy and human development, yet it faces an **alarming surge in drug and substance abuse among children and teenagers**. Recent data has raised red flags: in the first two months of 2024 alone, **588 children (under 18) in Kerala had to seek therapy at de-addiction centres**, and over the full year 2024 nearly **2,880 minors were admitted for substance de-addiction – a 45% jump from the previous year**. A government survey even found that shockingly **9% of users had tried drugs before age 10**, and 70% by age 15, indicating how early the exposure is happening. This drug epidemic is fueling violent crimes and ruining young lives, prompting the state to plan a massive anti-drug campaign.

Dr. R.G. Anand's background in public health and experience in child psychology make him ideally suited to tackle this crisis in Kerala's youth. As NCPCR Chair, he would:

- **Coordinate a Targeted Anti-Drug Initiative:** Working with the central **Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan** (National Drug-Free Campaign) and Kerala's own programs, he would spearhead awareness drives in schools and colleges about the dangers of narcotics. His strategy would involve parents, teachers, and community leaders to create a social movement against youth drug abuse. Given his expertise, Dr. Anand can introduce counseling interventions for at-risk adolescents and push for compulsory anti-drug education in curricula.
- **Strengthen Rehabilitation and Monitoring:** He will advocate for more de-addiction centers specialized for juveniles and ensure that children who fall into addiction are not criminalized but given proper treatment and counseling. The **Kerala State Commission for Protection of Child Rights** is conducting a study on this issue; Dr. Anand can support these efforts by providing national-level resources and ensuring implementation of recommendations. Additionally, he may deploy NCPCR's monitoring tools (like surprise inspections) to ensure that schools are free from drug peddling – possibly collaborating with law enforcement to dismantle networks that target schoolchildren.

- **Holistic Mental Health Support:** Recognizing that substance abuse often ties to stress or mental health issues, he would expand initiatives like **Samvedna (tele-counseling)** to Kerala in regional languages, so that children and parents can call for guidance on drug problems or emotional distress. This aligns with his focus on mental health as a key part of child welfare.
- **Other Child Welfare Issues:** Kerala has pockets of issues like child sexual abuse and cyber exploitation as well. Dr. Anand's approach would include tightening the implementation of the **POCSO Act** (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) by training police and sensitizing institutions – building on his precedent of instructing officials during inspections in other states. He will ensure that even in a progressive state like Kerala, any lapse in child protection (such as orphanages not following standards or incidents of child labor) is addressed promptly.

By proactively addressing Kerala's emerging challenges, *Dr. Anand would help secure the future of an entire generation that is at risk.* His immediate leadership could catalyze a multi-stakeholder response to contain the drug menace and reinforce a safe environment for children in Kerala.

Tamil Nadu: Protecting Children and Empowering Communities

Tamil Nadu is a state close to Dr. R.G. Anand's home base, and it stands to gain immensely from his stewardship of NCPCR. While Tamil Nadu has historically had strong social welfare programs, there remain critical gaps and issues in child welfare that need urgent attention: child marriage in certain communities, infrastructural lapses in juvenile homes, isolated cases of child rights violations, and the need for greater outreach of central schemes in the state's rural pockets.

Dr. Anand has already contributed significantly to Tamil Nadu's child welfare during his tenure and beyond:

- **Preventing Child Marriages:** Thanks to awareness initiatives, Tamil Nadu has seen increased reporting of child marriages, allowing enforcement agencies to act. In Coimbatore district, for example, a concerted campaign (Project Pallikoodam by the rural police) reached 250,000 children with information about the **POCSO Act and the illegality of child marriage**, resulting in **250 child marriages being stopped by authorities**.

Dr. Anand praised such efforts and as Chairman, he would replicate and support these models across Tamil Nadu's

vulnerable districts. He will work closely with local Child Welfare Committees and police to ensure underage marriage prevention is a priority, especially in rural and economically weak communities.

- **Improving Juvenile Justice Facilities:** Recent incidents in Tamil Nadu highlighted infrastructure issues in government-run observation homes. In one case, **multiple juveniles escaped from a Vellore rehabilitation home due to inadequate security and staffing**, revealing lapses in monitoring. Dr. Anand personally inspected the facility in April 2023 after six youths escaped, and pointed out the **poor perimeter security and lack of counselors**. His intervention led to immediate corrective steps – the compound walls were raised and an extra inspector post sanctioned to prevent recurrences. As NCPCR Chairman, he will systematically review all shelter homes and observation homes in Tamil Nadu, push for modern infrastructure (CCTV, secure perimeters), adequate staffing (counselors and caretakers), and vocational training for the juveniles. He will make sure **Mission Vatsalya** funds are utilized by the state to upgrade these institutions so that children in conflict with law or in need of care are housed safely and rehabilitated effectively.

- **Rapid Response to Child Rights Violations:** Dr. Anand has shown that he responds quickly to individual cases of child rights being violated. For instance, in 2019, a tragic incident came to light in Coimbatore where a 2-year-old girl contracted HIV allegedly from a hospital blood transfusion. **Dr. Anand immediately ensured the child received necessary medical treatment and launched an inquiry** into the incident, vowing that such lapses should never recur. This compassionate, decisive action exemplifies how, under his chairmanship, NCPCR would handle incidents in Tamil Nadu – be it a case of abuse, medical negligence, or denial of education – with prompt intervention and solutions.
- **Outreach & Community Engagement:** With deep roots in Tamil Nadu's civil society, Dr. Anand has leveraged NGOs and volunteer networks for child welfare. He has organized free medical camps, tuition centers, and scheme awareness drives in nearly every district of Tamil Nadu. As Chairman, he would continue working at the community level – from Chennai's urban poor neighborhoods to remote villages in Tirunelveli – ensuring that **Central schemes for children and women (like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Sukanya Samridhi Yojana for girl child savings, and Poshan nutrition programs)** are effectively

implemented in the state. His familiarity with local language and culture will enhance NCPCR's accessibility – for example, he has proposed holding **Bench hearings in Coimbatore** where children and parents can directly bring grievances to the Commission. This kind of initiative can significantly boost awareness of child rights among the public in Tamil Nadu.

Political and Social Impact: By intensifying child welfare efforts in Tamil Nadu, Dr. Anand's leadership could also have a positive political ripple effect. Tamil Nadu is gearing up for its next state assembly elections in 2026, and visible improvements in the lives of women and children can enhance public goodwill towards the government. A credible push on child rights and welfare, led by someone who is both a policy expert and a native of Tamil Nadu, will **showcase the Central Government's commitment to the state's social development**. This can be a major contribution to the Bharatiya Janata Party's narrative in Tamil Nadu, a state where the party is working to gain trust. In short, *empowering Tamil Nadu's children and mothers not only fulfills a moral and legal duty, but also strengthens the bond between the people and the government – potentially improving the BJP's electoral prospects in*

2026 through earned goodwill. Dr. Anand's appointment comes at a critical time to drive this synergy of social welfare and public trust.

Leveraging Prime Minister's Welfare Schemes for Women and Children

One of Dr. R.G. Anand's strengths is his extensive experience with **central government welfare schemes**. He has actively promoted and implemented these programs at the grassroots, as evidenced by his 100+ camps linking families to **PM schemes in Tamil Nadu**. As NCPCR Chairman, he would effectively marshal all relevant schemes and missions launched by the Prime Minister and central government to address state-specific issues. Some key schemes and how he would leverage them include:

- **Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (BBBP):** This flagship initiative aims at welfare of the girl child – preventing female foeticide, ensuring education, and empowering girls. Dr. Anand will strengthen BBBP in regions with poor child sex ratio or high dropout rates among girls (for example, parts of West Bengal and some rural belts of Assam). He would organize awareness programs to change mindsets about girl children and push state authorities to strictly punish child marriage and gender-based

discrimination. By partnering with local schools and anganwadi centers, he can ensure that more girls are enrolled in school and receive scholarships under BBBP.

- **Poshan Abhiyaan & Nutrition Schemes:** Malnutrition and anemia among children and mothers are still prevalent in many districts. Through the **Poshan Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission)** and related programs (like **Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana**, which provides cash support to pregnant women, and the **Mid-Day Meal/PM Poshan** scheme in schools), Dr. Anand will aim to improve nutritional outcomes. In Assam's tea garden areas or tribal hamlets, he will push for 100% immunization and growth monitoring (echoing initiatives like Mission Indradhanush). In Kerala, where substance abuse might affect nutritional health, he will integrate de-addiction with nutrition rehab for affected teens. His prior initiative of providing nutritional kits to new mothers demonstrates his understanding that healthy mothers raise healthy children – an approach he will institutionalize via these schemes.

- **Mission Vatsalya (Integrated Child Protection Services):** Launched by the central government, Mission Vatsalya is designed to support states in running Child Care Institutions,

emergency outreach, foster care, and other protective services. Dr. Anand will ensure that Mission Vatsalya's resources are fully utilized to upgrade infrastructure and capacity of all child protection units – from children's homes in West Bengal to observation homes in Tamil Nadu. He will set benchmarks for states to improve caregiver-to-child ratios, security measures (CCTV, secure boundaries), and rehabilitation programs (counseling, skill training) using Mission Vatsalya funds. Through regular audits (backed by the MASI app data he helped implement), he can identify gaps and recommend fund allocation where needed most.

- **SAMVEDNA & Mental Health Programs:** While not a PM-branded scheme, SAMVEDNA (the child tele-counseling service launched during COVID) is a critical initiative that Dr. Anand brought forth. As Chairman, he will expand mental health support for children by collaborating with the Ministry of Health. This could include introducing counselors in schools under the **School Health Program** of Ayushman Bharat and ensuring that every state has toll-free helplines like SAMVEDNA for psychological support. Such measures will especially help

children in conflict areas of Assam or those dealing with trauma from abuse/violence in any state.

- **Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan:** To combat the drug abuse crisis among youth (particularly acute in Kerala), Dr. Anand would synchronize NCPDR's efforts with the Nasha Mukh Bharat (Drug-Free India) campaign run by the Ministry of Social Justice. This means organizing de-addiction camps for minors, cracking down on narcotics availability around educational institutions (with Home Ministry coordination), and running large-scale social media campaigns targeted at teenagers about the perils of drugs. His goal would be to protect the "Generation Z" from substance abuse through both enforcement and education.
- **Mission Shakti and Women's Safety:** Mission Shakti is an umbrella for women's safety and empowerment schemes (including One-Stop Crisis Centers for abuse victims and women helplines). Dr. Anand recognizes that protecting children often goes hand-in-hand with protecting women (mothers, girl children, female caregivers). He will liaise with the National Commission for Women (NCW) and state women commissions to ensure that any overlap issues (like teenage girl

trafficking or abuse of young mothers) are holistically addressed. By strengthening One-Stop Centers and fast-track courts for sexual offenses (as part of Mission Shakti), he indirectly also creates a safer environment for children at home and in society.

- **Education and Skill Development Programs:** Dr. Anand will also leverage schemes like **Samagra Shiksha** (for school education quality) and **PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana** (skill development) for older adolescents. For example, rescued child laborers or juveniles from conflict with law could benefit from skill training under these programs to integrate them productively into society. His pilot initiative of providing typing and painting training to juveniles in the Vellore home can be scaled up with support from such central schemes.

In summary, *Dr. R.G. Anand's plan is to use every tool at the government's disposal to improve child welfare – effectively “saturating” the system with support.* His hands-on experience with these schemes ensures no learning curve; he can immediately direct NCPCR to work with state administrations for better implementation. This multi-pronged, **policy-plus-action approach**

will rapidly address the gaps in women and child welfare across various regions.

Conclusion: A Vision for Dynamic Leadership at NCPCR

The challenges facing India's children – from malnutrition and lack of education to abuse and new-age problems like drugs – require a leader at NCPCR who is **experienced, proactive, and passionate**. Dr. R.G. Anand embodies these qualities. Throughout his career and NCPCR tenure, he has shown an unwavering commitment to the rights and well-being of children, backed by deep knowledge of public health and policy. He has built a solid rapport with stakeholders at all levels – children, parents, NGOs, local officials, and national ministries – which will enable him to hit the ground running as the Commission's Chair.

Why the appointment is needed immediately: Currently, the urgency is two-fold. First, the states highlighted (Assam, West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu) present acute issues that, if left unaddressed, could lead to irreparable harm to a generation of children. Delays in action mean more children trafficked, more girls married off early, more kids falling prey to drugs, and more education opportunities

lost. Dr. Anand's familiarity with these issues means he can formulate and implement remedial action without delay – whether it's sending NCPCR teams for inquiries, rolling out awareness drives, or coordinating with police to rescue victims. Second, from a governance perspective, having a vacuum or less dynamic leadership at NCPCR could slow down the momentum on child rights built in recent years. With his proven **“on-ground” approach (175 district visits, etc.) and policy acumen, Dr. Anand will ensure the Commission is both** visible and effective in all corners of the country.

Under Dr. R.G. Anand's chairmanship, we can envision:

- Faster response times to complaints of child rights violations (with helplines and bench hearings making NCPCR more accessible to the public).
- Closer collaboration with state governments to implement welfare schemes and legal protections (turning adversarial relations into cooperative ones for the sake of children's interests).
- Innovative programs building on his initiatives like smart classrooms in childcare institutions and tele-counseling, ensuring India's child protection framework adapts to modern needs.
- A boost in morale for field officers and child welfare committees

across India, as they get a chairman who understands their challenges and guides them – essentially **a leader who leads by example and empathy.**

Finally, Dr. Anand's appointment would send a strong message that **the nation prioritizes its youngest citizens.** His blend of compassion and rigor will help not only in resolving current issues but also in laying down robust systems to prevent future problems. By investing in our children's safety, health, and education today through capable leadership, India secures its tomorrow. For the central government and particularly the Ministry of Women & Child Development, placing Dr. R.G. Anand at the helm of NCPCR now would be a timely decision that aligns with both moral duty and enlightened governance.

In conclusion, Dr. R. G. Anand's extensive experience, achievements in child welfare, and region-specific insights make him the ideal candidate to take charge as NCPCR Chairman immediately. His leadership promises to transform national child rights efforts – protecting vulnerable children, empowering mothers, and thereby strengthening the social fabric of the country – a legacy that will reflect positively on the government's commitment and can win hearts across states. It is a step that will yield rich

dividends in terms of social justice, developmental outcomes, and public trust in the administration's ability to care for its most precious resource: its children.