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ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು: NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: Indian Express amos: DATE 7-12-79

POCSO convicts should have no right to mercy: President

RAJESH ASNANI @ Jaipur

PRESIDENT Ramnath Kovind on Friday said those convicted under POCSO Act should be deprived of the right to file mercy petition as "demonic attacks on daughters" shakes the soul of the country.

Expressing anguish over increasing sexual crimes against women, he said it's time the country considered this issue. Women's safety should be treated as a very serious matter, he said.

Kovind was speaking at the inaugural ceremony of 'National Convention on Empowerment of Women for Social Transformation' at the headquarters of a spiritual institution in Mount Abu, Rajasthan.

"Many things are being suggested in this context. The accused have been given the right to petition for mercy in the Constitution and I have said it should be reconsidered. The right to mercy petition should be denied in incidents involving the Pocso Act. They do not need any such right," he stated.

He, however, added, "It all depends on our Parliament be-

cause there is a Constitution and a Constitution amendment process, but we all are thinking in that direction."

With one of the largest population of children in the world, India enacted the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 to provide a robust legal framework for the protection of children from offences of sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography, while safeguarding the interest of the child at every stage of the judicial process.