Teenager sexually abused by 45 men, 20 arrested

A 17-year-old girl from Pandikkad in Malappuram who survived sexual abuse twice earlier was again sexually exploited by 45 men, it is learnt.

By Express News Service

MALAPPURAM: A 17-year-old girl from Pandikkad in Malappuram who survived sexual abuse twice earlier was again sexually exploited by 45 men, it is learnt. The police have so far arrested 20 of them and charged them with Pocso Act sections. The culprits include 11 people who had online chats with the girl.

According to the police, the girl was first abused in 2016 when she was 13. After the incident, the girl was admitted to a women and child care (W&C) home in Malappuram (then known as Nirbhaya shelter home). She stayed at the shelter for a short period and returned home with the permission of the Child Welfare Committee (CWC). In 2017, she was again sexually abused and returned to the W&C home. Three persons were arrested in two Pocso cases registered, one each in 2016 and 2017.

The CWC, following a social investigation report — which gives suggestions to hand over the survivors to their close relatives — again allowed the girl to go with her relatives in 2019. However, last month, she went missing and Pandikkad police launched an investigation based on a complaint from her mother. Following a search, the girl was traced. A counselling session revealed that as many as 45 men had sexually abused her since she was sent with her family in August 2019.

Based on the counselling report, she was admitted to the W&C home. After the incident came out, child rights activists blamed the CWC and the officer who prepared the social investigation report that allowed her return to the family.