Rajbala, 16, harbours INDIA’S PROMISE AND PERIL

In this age of democracy and opportunity, Starpur village calls her its princess.

There is nothing extraordinary about this shy girl from the ancient and historic land of Rajputana except the determination to prove to the world that no one can dictate her future. She is one of the 1.4 million children in the district of Alwar in Rajasthan who are out of school and one of the many girls who has to marry and be a mother when she is just 14 years old.

For Rajbala, the only way to turn the tide is to start studying. Unable to afford even the simplest dowry she has been sent by her parents for marriage, she is determined to study and then become a teacher, a lawyer or a doctor. She wants to be a role model for all girls who are at the mercy of the한다는

Rajbala wants to beat eacher. That seems difficul...