

to i a b n e u d e n e l b e t e i a b n e u d e n e l b e t e i a b n e u d e n e l b e

South Asian Child Labour News

Dear friends,

Greetings from **GLOBAL MARCH AGAINST CHILD LABOUR**, South Asia Regional Secretariat!

Child labour is a serious problem in today's world. Though in recent days some efforts have been directed to combat this evil, its still persists at a threatening magnitude.

Even in media, though the trend of reporting on the issue concerning Child Labour is increasing, it still forms an auxiliary news item. The South Asian Child Labour News is an attempt to give it its due recognition.

Information is key to knowledge building. And the in depth knowledge and understanding is crucial for developing effective intervention strategy. This news service is an attempt to facilitate this process.

The South Asian Child Labour News is the compilation of news, articles and opinion on Child Labour and related issues from different source of electronic and print media, managed by **GLOBAL MARCH AGAINST CHILD LABOUR**, South Asia Regional Secretariat. (The source of the information is sited at the end of each piece.) It is an endeavour to streamline the information on Child Labour and related issue in South Asia.

If you want to make your views and articles (on child labour and related issues) available to the larger audience, we'll be happy to put it on the board. Please send your contributions to globalmarch@mail.com.np.



GLOBAL MARCH AGAINST CHILD LABOUR
South Asia Regional Secretariat
PO Box 4374, Rabibhawan
Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel - 009771 4278064 / 4282255
Fax - 009771 4278016
Email - info@globalmarchsouthasia.org

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SPECIAL

TRIANGULAR PARADIGM FOR CHILD LABOR ISSUES

2004-11-06 19:58:31

Divisha Gupta

Ever wondered why the seven year-old who serves you tea at the neighborhood kiosk chose to take up the job that he is doing? Why that bright faced, shy looking girl carries a broom instead of a pencil? What forces many young children to drop out of their schools at a tender age to take up petty jobs for paltry wages? These are only some of the many unanswered, uncomfortably difficult questions, which stare the developing world in face. Behind them lie three crucial issues, which are common to all nations striving for a better, more developed tomorrow.

These three issues, namely, poverty, child labor and education will be the agenda of the second 'Triangular Paradigm' meet in Brazil on November 8 wherein the representatives from over 150 donor countries, education and labor ministers and heads of United Nations will brainstorm over future strategies for holistic development. This meet is a follow-up to the first one, which was held in New Delhi on November 18 last year. Poverty alleviation was taken up as a global agenda and one of the prime areas of focus were the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set to be achieved by 2015. The deadline for mid-term goals was set for 2005.

Another key focus area is education. The Dakar Framework for Action, drafted in the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal in 2000 marks out definite objectives. They aim at achieving Education for All by the year 2015.

The third and one of the most crucial issues is child labor eradication. Over 150 nations have come together and are now obliged to eliminate the worst forms of child labor with any excuse for further delay.

This unique concept of Triangular Paradigm has been initiated by Kailash Satyarthi, India-based child rights activist, who had also led a team of journalists and activists in raiding a circus in Gonda in Uttar Pradesh state of India and rescuing over two dozen Nepali girls exploited there in June this year. A veteran child rights campaigner for over two decades, Satyarthi is also the Chairperson

of Global March Against Child Labor. He is of the belief that those who are closest to the problems are closest to their solutions." The challenge, thereby, lies in devising a holistic technique to arrive at the solutions of these gargantuan problems.

In the prevalent scenario, the immediate concern lies in identifying the crucial linkages between child labor, poverty and education (or rather, the lack of it). This ingenious proposition establishes the relation between these three. It reinforces the fact that there exists a vicious circle of poverty and child labor and illiteracy and child labor. Unemployment among adults is another established truth in the developing countries.

None of these problems operate in isolation but are inextricably linked. The simultaneous cause and effect process among the three have contributed to the burgeoning of all three of them in their respective spheres, especially in the developing nations.

There are two aspects of the theory. The first is availability of children as a cheap workforce. Since adult unemployment in the third world is on the rise, children come in handy as they demand less and are willing to put in more work hours for a relatively lesser pay packet. The reason is that adults do not get easy employment in the first place, and even if they do, they cannot be provided the legal minimum wages. Studies reveal that a child works for five times lesser wages than those demanded by an average adult. Moreover, children are also forced into work by the families who are infested with abject poverty and a big family to feed.

Although education is a handy tool to tackle this problem, many countries have not integrated the 'Education for All' program in their poverty reduction efforts. Schools, learning centers, colleges are the gateways to a prosperous democracy, a smoothly functioning administration and for the effective execution of the various developmental policies. The lack of coordination between the various rungs of the administrative ladder has led to the ignorance of education as a tool for removal of poverty and child labor. Dakar Framework for Action and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) will remain distant dreams if they are not put into action and remain restricted to papers. Satyarthi says that although a lot of nations are making serious efforts towards the eradication of child labor, almost none of them has taken into account the other two factors. Many nations do not even spend two percent of their income on education. However, despite spending about 17 per cent of annual budget in education in Nepal, the state of children's education is not satisfactory at all. Another aspect

of the issue is poverty. Poverty alleviation programs are being undertaken and are in full swing in many societies, both at the micro and macro levels. Nepal too has set poverty reduction as the main objective in its national five-year plans. But again, the programmers have failed to see the issue as the cause and effect of increasing illiteracy and hence child labor.

A narrow vision coupled with ineffective planning and implementation techniques at a macro level have actually led to the increase in magnitude of the issue instead of arriving at its logical solution. The need of the hour, as Satyarthi has said, is, therefore, to synergize the three issues into one and adopt an integrated approach towards dealing with them. It is imperative that the policy formulators do not lose sight of the others while dealing with one issue. He also suggests an active thread of coordination, both at the local and the national levels as also with international agencies like UNICEF and ILO.

The Triangular Paradigm is a highly implementable model in the existing circumstances in the Third World. But it will function only when set into action and is not just restricted to papers. Satyarthi strongly believes that this highly practical approach towards dealing with key issues will go a long way in providing satisfactory solutions to the challenging questions mentioned in the beginning.

Source: <http://kantipuronline.com/kolnews.php?&nid=21625>

1. GLOBAL ISSUE

CHILDREN RIGHTS SUFFERING

Accra, Nov. 24, GNA - About 1.27 million children in Ghana aged between five and 17 years are engaged in activities classified as child labour, Mr Emmanuel Otoo, an International Labour Organization (ILO) representative in Ghana said on Tuesday.

He noted that currently about 1.031 million children in child labour were under the age of 13 years.

Most of them are involved in activities such as prostitution, drug peddling, domestic work, farming, fishing, street hawking, stone breaking, sand winning, forestry, animal rearing, Trokosi and "kaya kaya" and are working in very dangerous and hazardous working environments.

Mr Otoo, who is the Country Programmes Coordinator (Capacity Building Project) of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) of the ILO, said this at the opening of a two-day Child Labour Workshop for 30 chief fishermen, drawn from the Greater Accra and Volta Regions to sensitise them against child labour.

The workshop, jointly organized by IPEC and the Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council (GNCFC), is the first in a series of similar forums planned for fishermen, farmers, the Police Service, Parliamentarians and civil society organisations involved in child labour issues, to ensure that the fight against child labour was on course.

Mr Otoo said the workshops were planned to enhance the capacities of relevant stakeholders to adequately contribute meaningfully towards the progressive and sustainable elimination of child labour, through legislation, law enforcement and peer sensitisation.

He said according to the 2001 Ghana Child Labour Survey, 2.47 million Ghanaian children aged between five and 17 years were economically active.

Mr Otoo said Ghana had ratified a number of international protocols against child labour, including the ILO Convention and the African Union (OUA) Charter on the Rights of the Child.

In addition, the 1992 Constitution and the Children's Act of 1998 also guaranteed the protection of children's rights.

"Our focus and resource must now be on the operationalisation of the details of those conventions and laws. This is the responsibility of all stakeholders including the GNCFC."

Mr Otoo said experiences of IPEC-funded action programmes as well as research reports have cited several reasons as causes of child labour. These included poverty, loss of a parent or both parents, inability to pay school fees, working to gain experience and children being forced to work.

He noted that IPEC was assisting four civil society organizations in Accra, Kumasi and Tamale to physically withdraw 2,000 child labourers and reintegrate them into school by the close of the year.

This, he said, was being done in collaboration with their parents and guardians, who would benefit from micro-credit loans from ILO to undertake income-generating activities.

Nii Abeo Kyerekuanda IV, Executive Secretary of GNCFC and Chief Fisherman of the Ga State, cited poverty and the need for children to gain working experience at an early age as the reasons for child labour in the fishing industry.

He noted that in the past it was not illegal to send children fishing on the high seas, as fishing was seen an occupation for illiterates. Moreover the high seas were not as turbulent and unsafe for children as they are now.

"Now the high seas are very turbulent and fishermen fight on the high seas, which are not safe for children. Moreover children's education and health have become paramount these days so we need to sensitise our people to stop engaging their children in fishing at that tender age." Nii Kyerekuanda said as chief fishermen, "we can only advise our members to stop abusing the rights of their children but the Government should ensure that laws against child labour are properly enforced so that when we catch any of our members violating the law and send him to the Police, he would be dealt with."

Source: <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?>

2. SOUTH ASIA

9 September 2004

ASIA

CHILD ILLITERACY AND CHILD LABOUR ARE THE CONTINENT'S MAIN SOCIAL ILLS

One fifth of India's GNP is generated by exploited minors working in farming sector.

Geneva (AsiaNews) – As the school year began yesterday in many Western countries, the world celebrated International Literacy Day. Organised under the auspices of UNESCO, the event had “Literacy and Gender” as its main theme. According to the UN agency's own data there are 860 million illiterate adults, more than two-thirds women. The number of minors not attending school exceeds 110 million, 56 per cent girls.

Illiteracy is directly related to poverty and underdevelopment, circumstances that force millions of children to leave school before they become fully literate and work in conditions where they are easily exploited. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has estimated that throughout the world, 250 million children, aged between five and 17, were engaged in child labour, 155 million in Asia alone.

In Asia child labour has become a virtual system that is particularly abusive of girls. Sexual exploitation has in fact become a major social ill in many Asian societies. Many girls are forced into prostitution in countries like Cambodia, Bangladesh, Nepal, India and Pakistan. “About one million children are lured or forced into the sex trade in Asia every year,” reports Child Workers in Asia, an organisation fighting child exploitation. “A more alarming fact is that people known to them introduce many of these children into the work,” it adds.

Children in Asia are used in different types of work: farming, making leather goods, stone-cutting, mining, toy making, textiles, making brick in kilns, construction, dumpsites. Western multinational companies setting up Asian branch plants in many manufacturing sectors, especially textile, accentuate the problem.

The many wars in Asia compound child exploitation for they provide opportunities to recruit boys into armies. Tens of thousands of them have thus been recruited and are being recruited, often by force, by armies and paramilitary groups. Human Rights Watch reports that many, very young children are serving as soldiers in Afghanistan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Cambodia. Many others have been recruited by groups such as the *Tamil Tigers* in Sri Lanka and *Abu Sayyaf* in the Philippines.

Worse still is the situation in India where human rights activists have denounced child debt bondage. At least 5 million children are forced to work to repay debts their parents

contracted or for the cash advances they received. According to Human Rights Watch, very few children are ever ransomed from bondage. Asian Labour Monitor estimates that one fifth of India's GNP is generated by exploited minors working in the farming sector, mostly children of landless families. With 44 million minors working, India has the unenviable world record in child labour. (MA)

Source: <http://asianews.it/view.php?l=en&art=1448>

3 . NATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

BANGLADESH

BANGLADESH: POVERTY CONDEMNS MILLIONS TO CHILD LABOUR

Sharier Khan
OneWorld South Asia

09 July 2004

DHAKA, July 9 (OneWorld) - Attempts by government and nongovernmental organizations to curb child labor in Bangladesh are failing miserably as poverty and social ignorance continue to drive a staggering seven to eight million children to work.

Child rights activists are clamoring for a change in strategy geared to the country's socio-economic realities. They stress that it will never be possible to curb child labor unless adults voluntarily resist it.

A significant number of children are working as prostitutes, helpers in auto, painting or engineering workshops, blacksmiths, brick or stones crushers, construction workers, saw mill workers, tannery factory workers, public transport workers, as well as in hazardous professions like welding.

Their sub-human lifestyle deprives them of education, limiting their employment opportunities, according to a survey by the Ministry of Labor and Manpower in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef).

The study names 27 economic activities considered hazardous for children, saying poverty is the most important factor responsible for child labor in Bangladesh, where 55 million people live below the poverty line.

Children comprise one-fifth of Bangladesh's labor force.

"Child labor in Bangladesh has increased alarmingly in recent years," remarks Fakrul Islam, a child labor researcher and teacher in the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology in the capital Dhaka.

He says traditionally children have always worked in rural agriculture. But the numbers employed in the urban, industrial and commercial sectors has risen sharply.

Since most children are forced to work because of poverty, the prospects of eradicating child labor are dim, Islam explains.

For instance, 13-year-old electrical assistant Jainal takes care of half the expenses of his family of six, with his daily earnings of US \$1.5. "My father is ill and can't work. My mother works as a domestic help and now my younger brother has joined me," he says.

Child labor in Bangladesh came into the limelight in the mid-1990s when a US senator lobbied for a bill to restrict the import of Bangladeshi garments that used child labor.

At that time, the \$1.3-million, export-oriented garments industries, which employed around 300,000 children, decided to stop employing them and offer an education program for some of the working children.

But there was very little follow up on this phasing out of child labor.

The government and groups like the International Labor Organization and Unicef have also made some attempts to stop child labor in hazardous professions.

For instance, there will be no child labor in the country's tannery sector from August thanks to the ILO. Around 500 children working in 140 tanneries in Dhaka and Chittagong have been provided with alternative jobs like tailoring, shop keeping, bookbinding and TV/fridge repairing.

These children came into close contact with chemicals like sulfuric acid, sodium sulfide and chromium in tanneries.

"I often suffer from cold, fever and skin diseases and have to make frequent trips to the doctor. But I do not get any medical facilities from my employer," rues 15-year-old Hiru, a tannery employee. He cannot stop working because he has to support his family.

The ILO, with the help of NGOs, also concluded a two-year pilot project last month to educate 5,000 children who work as domestic helpers in Dhaka.

But these initiatives are just specks in the sand. According to the Unicef, about 300,000 children, mostly girls, work as domestic helpers in Dhaka alone, exposing them to the risks of sexual abuse, exploitation and trafficking.

"Millions of girls are trapped in poorly paid jobs as domestic servants," says Unicef executive director Carol Bellamy, adding, "Not only are these children forced to work long, hard hours but they are at increased risk of sexual abuse and of being trafficked within and across borders."

Activists say the situation calls for realistic measures like letting children work in less taxing, non-hazardous jobs so they can continue earning.

"A model of learning and earning should be introduced so that we can take measures in conformity to the pragmatic socio-economic conditions of the country to stop child labor," says Dr Hamidul Haq, chairperson of the leading child rights platform Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum.

Leading child rights activist advocate Salma Ali also suggests limiting the sectors

where children may work in Bangladesh. "Bangladesh is an agricultural country, with most families dependent on farming. Children can do light work such as weeding, watering in the field, and carrying crops home," she notes.

"Children may also be engaged as part-time workers in non-hazardous factories such as food and garments. Girls could undertake light domestic work such as cooking, house decoration, cleaning, watering or gardening," Ali adds.

But the president of the Bangladesh Human Rights Journalists' Organization, Khairuzzaman Kamal, emphasizes, "Poverty is no excuse for not eliminating child labor, especially since poverty is the root of most problems in Bangladesh."

Adds Kamal, a member of the Shishu Adhikar (Child Rights) Forum, "Child labor can't be eliminated for good — not even with the combined forces of the government, NGOs and donors. It needs the participation of adults."

Minister for Labor and Manpower Amanullah Aman says, "We are doing our best (to eradicate child labor). But this is a poverty issue."

The government has begun a program with ILO under which three NGOs have been deployed to train, educate and provide finances to 20,000 children in Dhaka.

A similar program is being run for 5,000 children in hazardous professions outside Dhaka. This project has been on for two years and will continue for another three.

"If these yield positive results, we plan to set a 15-year deadline to eliminate child labor by implementing such initiatives," says Aman.

BURMA/MYANMAR

FORCED LABOUR ISSUE ILO THREATENS SANCTIONS AGAINST MYANMAR

On Friday Nov 19 – Geneva The International Labour Organisation on warned Myanmar’s government that it was ready to revive sanctions, after the agency concluded that the military junta had shown little political will to stop forced labour, reports AFP.

The ILO’s governing body decided late Thursday to send a high-level delegation to evaluate the military junta’s commitment to work with the international community on the issue, officials said.

The mission will report back to the governing body’s next meeting in March 2005, which will then “draw the appropriate consequences,” the ILO’s Myanmar liaison officer, Richard Horsey, told journalists.

It will “either return to special measures which were taken against Myanmar in 2000, or on the other hand go ahead with the plan of action against forced labour,” he added.

Horsey said the recent ousting of premier Khin Nyunt last month had “left a certain number of questions about the continued willingness of the Myanmar government to tackle this very serious problem”.

Khin Nyunt’s removal was reported to be a move by Than Shwe, the head of the junta, to consolidate control over the leadership and promote military hardliners.

The ILO’s governing body took the unprecedented step of recommending the measures—trade and other sanctions—in 2000 because of a lack of cooperation by Myanmar authorities in tackling rampant forced labour.

Although the sanctions remain legally in force, the UN’s labour agency adopted a wait-and-see approach after Myanmar allowed an ILO official into the country and agreed to discuss a plan of action against forced labour.

“Now the question is to send a signal that this process of dialogue and cooperation has not produced the required impact,” Horsey said.

“The mission will not evaluate forced labour, it is to evaluate the will of the Myanmar government at the highest level,” he added.

The climate was also soured by the arrest of three people in Myanmar on treason charges because they had been in contact with the ILO, and other similar incidents, Horsey said.

The three were sentenced to death earlier this year, but the country’s supreme court later commuted the sentence to two or three years in jail.

Myanmar’s military government on Thursday announced it had begun releasing 3,937 prisoners who may have been wrongly imprisoned by a recently disbanded military intelligence unit. Horsey had no idea if the three were among those due to be released.

The military has ruled Myanmar since 1962 despite the opposition National League for Democracy winning a landslide election in 1990.

Horsey reiterated in a report to the governing body this week that forced labour was still widespread in the country, especially in border areas with a major army presence.

Apart from continuing complaints about the practice for construction work and on plantations, he also signaled allegations of forced recruitment of children into the army, including a 13 year-old boy snapped up from the streets of the capital Yangon.

ILO agreed with Myanmar on a plan of action to eradicate forced labour last May 28, but shelved it two days later when the junta detained pro-democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi after a clash between her supporters and junta-backed mob.

Myanmar has repeatedly rejected criticism of its human rights record, while ILO complaints on specific cases of forced labour have been denied.

The ILO is a tripartite organisation involving more than 190 governments, as well as labour unions and employers.

Source: The Bangladesh Observer, November 20, 2004

Forwarded by: Khairuzzaman Kamal
Executive Director
BMSF
Dhaka, Bangladesh

INDIA

KERALA BOY FIGHTS CHILD LABOUR

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov 12: Ten-year-old Mishal intends to highlight Kerala's rampant child labour problem by embarking on a 750-km cycle expedition across the state on Children's Day.

"I'm sad to see children of my age working in hotels and workshops. My main aim is to open the government's eyes and have this evil practice banned," Mishal told reporters here Friday.

He took up cycling when he was eight. He regularly cycles six kilometres to his school, Attingal Mother India International.

Mishal, who is also a gifted dancer and mimic, plans to visit a large number of schools en route and hold awareness talks to emphasise that children should not be engaged in any form of labour.

He expects to cover the entire distance in two weeks. Former chief minister A. K. Antony, Labour Minister Babu Divakaran and senior police officials are among those who plan to cheer the boy as he embarks on his mission.

Source: <http://news.newkerala.com/india-news/?action=fullnews>

ELIMINATION OF CHILD LABOUR AND ACHIEVING EDUCATION FOR ALL

The New Delhi Declaration, November 13, 2003

The international community's efforts to achieve Education For All (EFA) and the progressive elimination of child labour are inextricably linked. On the one hand, education – and, in particular, free and compulsory education of good quality up to a minimum age for entering into employment – is a key element in preventing children from working in dangerous or hazardous conditions. On the other hand, child labour is one of the main obstacles to EFA and poverty alleviation. Girls' work is a serious impediment to achieving gender parity in primary and secondary education by 2005.

The education sector has a great potential to contribute to the prevention and elimination of child labour, which should be an integral part of education policies worldwide. In addition to preventing child labour, the education sector can provide special measures to reintegrate children withdrawn from hazardous work into school. Still, policies that focus exclusively on the education system without accounting for the economic environment of households and the general state of the labour market will be insufficient to reduce child labour and achieve EFA over the long term. This underscores the importance of addressing the root causes of child labour and the poor quality of and access to education within a broader poverty reduction strategy in line with the Millennium Development Goals.

We acknowledge the significant efforts that are already being made by the international community for achieving EFA, the elimination of child labour and the reduction of poverty. However a more accelerated effort will be needed to meet our 2015 targets including increased levels of education funding and the improved targeting of these resources to better respond to the needs of working children.

Great coordination between education initiatives, social protection programmes to combat child labour and poverty reduction measures is also important. In order to promote stronger linkages between these important development areas and to further the agenda in terms of mainstreaming and monitoring, we propose the formation of a global task force on child labour and education consisting of representatives from the ILO, UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank, Global March Against Child Labour, key agencies, donors and governments and the Global Campaign for Education, a broad network of teachers' organisations and civil

society groups. We thank the Brazilian government for inviting us to meet again and report progress on the occasion of next year's High-Level Group meeting in Brazil.

NEPAL

CWIN ORGANISES NATIONAL PEACE RALLY

On the occasion of the 15th International Child Rights Day and 17th Anniversary of CWIN, it organized a National level 'PEACE RALLY' on 20th November with the active participation of various organizations, institutions and individuals. There was involvement of more than 3,000 people from different sectors as social organizations, schools, press, police, disabled children to etc.

**CZOP ISSUES AN OPEN LETTER WITH AN APPEAL TO THE
GOVERNMENT AND THE MAOIST COMRADE ON 20TH
NOVEMBER**

OPEN LETTER

**Children are zone of peace; lets make schools free from
violence.**

Today, November 20th 2004 has marked the completion of 15th year; the United Nations signed the Child Rights Treaty in the year 1989. It is already known to all that Nepal also signed the treaty on the 14th of September 1990 and has committed to work for the protection and promotion of the Child Rights.

The notions like, best welfare of children should be kept in mind while making any decisions, there should be no discrimination between the children on any basis, every activity should support the life and development of children and the thoughts and feelings of children should also be respected are included in the main principles of the treaty. But there has been continuous violation of the Child Rights. Today, on the occasion of International Child Rights Day we appeal the government to give utmost priority to the protection of the Child Rights.

Almost half of Nepal's population is children. Because of the present conflict situation in the country, they have been affected the most. Children, who are supposed to have peaceful, affectionate and secure environment to grow and learn are today forced to live in an environment full of violence. During the armed conflict 305 children have already lost their lives. Thousands of children have either been displaced from their homes or separated from their families. The children have been witnessing bomb explosions gun fires and killings almost every day either directly or indirectly through mass media like television, papers etc. The culture of violence is rapidly making every one terrorized. In a situation like this we cannot imagine how negatively the children are affected mentally and psychologically. What must they have been learning from the violence they observe everyday?

Today, on the occasion of the International Child Rights Day, we wish that the war and violence to stop. Even when war is going on everyone should at least

confirm the minimal Human Rights. The children should be protected from the effects of violence and armed conflict. Therefore, children should be declared as zone of peace. It is the responsibility of both the conflicting parties to protect the children.

**APPEAL TO THE HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER,
THE GOVERNMENT OF NEPAL.**

It is the responsibility of the state to ensure the education and health of children as well as humane treatment. The government should give first priority to the protection of children no matter how complicated the situation may be. The Geneva Convention as well as many other International manifestos has made it clear that children should be given special consideration.

We are glad that the Government has accepted the fact that the children are zone of peace and schools should be made free from violence. But these notions should not be limited to words in speeches or a show in papers. Definite programs should be brought forward related to it. Therefore, we request the government to implement at least the points mentioned below to save schools from the effects of armed conflicts:

Armed personals should not be present near the school area; there should be no armed encounter or explosions in or around the schools.

Schools should not be used for any type of military purposes in any way. The schools that are presently being used for such purposes should be freed immediately.

Activities that panic the teachers and the children should not be done in schools. They should be treated humanely.

APPEAL TO COMRADE PRACHANDA, PRESIDENT CPN MAOIST.

Geneva Convention– Universally accepted as The War Law, has made it clear that children should be given special consideration. They should not be used in war in anyway and their education should not be interrupted. Similarly, many other Human Rights related International manifestos have also given their first priority to the protection of children no matter how complicated the situation may be. In correspondence with the Human Rights related International manifestos it has been recognized that children are zone of peace and they should be saved from the effects of armed conflicts. Time and again your declaration about respecting to Human Rights and abiding by the Geneva Convention have been publicized but in practice various examples of violation of Child Rights have been noticed very often.

As this conflict has been said to be for the better future for the children it does not seem appropriate to put their present at stake. We appeal CPN Maoists to remain as a responsible rebel party by ending the on going violence all around and give their first priority to the protection of children. In this context, today on the occasion of International Child Rights Day, we request CPN Maoists to consider the following points to make children as zone of peace and to make at least schools free from violence:

No individual or group should enter school premises carrying arms.

No explosives should be kept or no explosions should be made in or near the school area.

Schools should not be used for any activity related to the armed conflict.

Students as well as teachers should not be abducted or threatened.

The regular functioning of the schools should not be interrupted.

PEACE RALLY-2004
Children are Zone Of Peace National Movement.
Po.Box.1187, Kathmandu, Nepal.
Fax: 5527280 5535393
Email: czop_Nepal@yahoo.com

PAKISTAN

CHILD TRAFFICKING

November 22, 2004

KARACHI: Children continue to be trafficked from Pakistan to be used as camel-jockeys in the UAE. The use of children as jockeys in camel racing is highly dangerous and can result in serious injury and even death, disclosed the Center for Research and Social Development (CRSD) on the occasion of International Children's Day.

The CRSD recently completed a comprehensive research study on child trafficking entitled "Child trafficking for camel races: a perspective from Pakistan" which highlights this heinous crime in the name of sports.

The CRSD has urged the governments of Pakistan and the UAE to take action to stop the inhuman practice. The barbaric practice of using little children as jockeys in camel races has been going on as usual, even after announcing internationally ban on the use of children below the age of 15 years. Even the enforcement of the human trafficking ordinance in Pakistan has made no major change in the trend of child trafficking.

Reported cases in past six months of deported and repatriated children prove this phenomenon further. Once in the Gulf, the children are treated as no better than the animals they ride. Many of them suffer serious mental and physical injuries, even deaths in being used as camel-jockeys.

As recently a young child's death was reported. Kaleem Hussain died after falling from a camel during a race on Sept 28. His body was flown back on Oct 13 and buried at his native town in Dera Ghazi Khan. The boy and his brother were sold to an employer. The other boy was deported on Oct 21 following the tragic incident.

Some children are also abused by traffickers and their employers. The children's separation from their families and their transportation to a country where the people, culture and usually the language are completely unknown leaves them dependent on their employers. The trafficking of children for use as camel-jockeys is prohibited by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and by the ILO Conventions 29, 138 and 182 — all of which have been ratified by the UAE.

Sheikh Hamdan bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and also the Chairman of the Emirates Camel Racing Federation, promulgated Order No1/6/266 on July 22, 2002, which prohibits children under 15 or weighing less than 45kg from being employed in camel racing.

It also specifies that all camel jockeys must have proof of their age through their passports and be issued with a medical certificate by the Camel Racing Federation. The minister announced that the ban would come into effect on September 1, 2002. A fine of 20,000 dirhams (US\$5,500) will be imposed for a first offence and a second offence will lead to a ban from camel racing for one year.

A prison sentence of three months along with a fine of 20,000 dirhams will be imposed for subsequent offences. Since the promulgation of the order of 22 July 2002, use of child as jockeys is still continuing and rules are being violated. So far more than 60 children have been repatriated from the UAE through government departments and NGOs. A recent report aired few weeks ago on HBO's Real Sports includes footage of appalling living conditions at camel-training camps and alleges that boy camel-jockeys – some as young as three – are kidnapped or sold into slavery, starved, beaten and raped.

The report said HBO received a letter from unnamed UAE officials who said that they were “shocked that this is happening” and that they “are adamantly against it.” The Government of Pakistan has no data how many Pakistani children have been serving there as camel-jockeys. The CRSD's research study has shown that the issue is multi-dimensional and requires multi-sectoral approach, therefore successful implementation of local, international laws, conventions and protocol is the main thrust of the issue.

Similarly implementation and interventions as highlighted in the section of consequences and strategic interventions need to be address and implemented in the light of local experiences and culture. The research study suggested a few focused recommendations at different levels as strongly recommended by the Anti-Slavery International, at different forums and platforms of the Government of the UAE:

Carry out regular unannounced inspections to identify, release and rehabilitate any child who is being used as a camel-jockey. The government must ensure that all those responsible for trafficking, employing underage jockeys are prosecuted under the existing laws; provide details of the number of

prosecutions brought and the number of successful convictions obtained with details of the sentences passed against those trafficking and employing camel-jockeys since September 1, 2002; introduce, as a matter of priority, legislation that prohibits and punishes the employment of children under the age of 18 in hazardous work or work that could jeopardise their health or safety, including as camel-jockeys; ratify and implement the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (2000), supplementing the Convention on Transnational Organised Crime.

Source: http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=story_21-11-2004

SRILANKA

RIGHTS GROUP CHARGES SRI LANKA REBELS CONTINUE TO USE CHILD SOLDIERS

Nov 11, 2004 New Delhi

The international rights group, Human Rights Watch, says Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels are still recruiting child soldiers, despite a ceasefire with the government.

The Sri Lankan government signed a ceasefire with the Tamil Tiger guerrilla group in February 2002.

Even though the fighting has stopped, Tejshree Thapa from Human Rights Watch says the rebels continue to abduct and illegally recruit children to join their forces.

"What is particularly disturbing, of course, is that despite the ceasefire, the recruitment seems to be continuing, and in government-controlled areas, increasing."

In a report released this week, Human Rights Watch estimates that at least 35-hundred child soldiers have been forced to join the rebels since the ceasefire -- often as a result of threats against their families. Ms. Thapa says the rebels have used child soldiers for years as a means of increasing their ranks. But they also take children as a means of keeping the local population in rebel areas under their control.

A child soldier is classified as any combatant under the age of 18. The report documents children between the ages of 12 and 14 years old being deployed in frontline situations.

Ms. Thapa says even those who have not seen combat are badly mistreated and punishments are severe.

"Children who ask to see their parents, children who dare to run away, children who refuse to obey, children who collapse because they cannot keep up with the pace of physical training and military training are beaten, often beaten in front of others. Some children report seeing their comrades being beaten so severely that they were unable to walk afterwards."

The report comes as Norway's Foreign Minister Jan Petersen visits Sri Lanka to try to force both the government and the Tamil Tigers back to the negotiating table to hammer out Tamil autonomy in Sri Lanka. Norway brokered the 2002 ceasefire between the two sides and has facilitated the now-stalled peace talks.

Ms. Thapa of Human Rights Watch says, Norway and the rest of the international community should put pressure on the rebels."We believe that with adequate pressure from the international community ... the Tamil Tigers can be given incentives to cease the recruitment... And we believe that with sustained pressure they will - and they should - be made to before peace talks can continue."

Twenty years of fighting between the government and the Tamil Tigers has claimed more than 60,000 lives.

Source: http://www.politinfo.com/articles/article_2004_11_11_5106.html

4. DISCUSSION

IS PEPSI GLAMORISING CHILD LABOUR??

**The Director
PepsiCo Ltd**

Sub: Is Pepsi Glamorizing Child Labour??

Dear Sir/ Madam,

The Global March Against Child Labour is an International movement against child labour, consisting of two thousand member partners spread over one hundred and forty four countries worldwide, and the International Secretariat based in New Delhi, India. Our movement is involved in lobbying and advocacy with international bodies such as the ILO, UNICEF and the World Bank to bring about concrete policies to combat the issue of child labour and evolve synergies in their policies related to child labour, education for all and poverty alleviation. A direct result of our campaigning was the ILO convention 182 against Worst Forms of Child Labour, which has been ratified by 150 countries so far.

We are gravely concerned about an advertisement that your company has been running on television prime time off late, showing the entire Indian Cricket team being served Pepsi by a young boy, who is clearly shown to be a child labourer. It is appalling that a company of your stature and repute would use such a campaign to promote it's product which is in gross violation of a child's basic human right...his right to be free from work, exploitation and abuse.

What is worse is that you have also managed to get the endorsement of the Indian Cricket team in this entire business, sending out the message to millions of children and young adults who worship these cricketers as idols, that the concept of children working for a living and serving adults in the process, is a completely acceptable proposition!! Did you give no thought to the impact this advertisement might have on the masses viewing the ad and that you might actually be aiding and abetting the entire concept of employing child labourers in the process of forwarding your gains?

We would urge you to not only withdraw this advertisement with immediate effect , but also to issue a public apology in print and electronic media to vindicate yourselves of the tag of being a company in favour of child labour, whose only goal and objective is it's profit margin even if it comes at the cost of human lives.

We hope to receive a prompt and effective reply to our letter, informing us of what actions you propose to take in future. In the absence of an appropriate response, we will be forced to take this campaign to a more active and Global level, involving our network of 2000 partners.

With faith and goodwill,

Kailash Satyarthi

Chairperson – Global March Against Child Labour

Source: <http://globalmarch.org/index.php>

PEPSI'S REPLY



PEPSICO INDIA HOLDINGS PRIVATE LIMITED

October 19, 2004

Global March Against Child Labour

L-6, Kalkaji, New Delhi – 110 019

Attn: Mr. Kailash Satyarthi, Chairperson

Dear Sir,

This has reference to your letter dated 8.10.04 with regard to our advertisement.

At the outset, we would like to assure you that there was no intent on our part to promote child labour or any other unethical trade or labour practice. The TVC prepared for the Champion Trophy revolved around a theme of making cricket fans and children central to this huge international cricket tournament. Our experience has been that cricket matches generates considerable excitement amongst children and young people and provide entertainment to them. The subject TVC was prepared with the above theme as underlying tone for it.

In the TVC, an ardent cricket fan (a boy) carries Pepsi to the Indian Team every time they are huddled to celebrate the fall of a wicket. In the ad the captain finishes his drink and asks the boy for another Pepsi and the boy cheekily banter and responds that he will get him another Pepsi only after another wicket falls. There is no exchange of money. The boy is obviously delighted to have the opportunity to deliver drinks to the idolised team members. It is unfortunate that a TV commercial which is based on a healthy theme has caused some anxiety despite the fact that there was no such intention on our part to depict him in the manner in which some have perceived it to be.

In deference to the feelings generated, we had immediately taken steps to stop the airing of TVC way back at a point of time when ICC Trophy was still on and the TVC has thus been off air since long.

PepsiCo as a responsible corporate would not promote or support any practice, which goes against the letter and spirit of law. We trust that you will appreciate the above.

Thanking you,

For **PEPSICO INDIA HOLDINGS PRIVATE LIMITED**


AUTHORISED SIGNATORY

5. SPECIAL

EVENTS:

International Conference on "Out of Work and Into School - Children's Right to Education as a Non-Negotiable"

Final Statement

We, the participants of the conference "Out of Work and Into School - Children's Right to Education as a Non-Negotiable" (2-5 November 2004, Hyderabad) would like to conclude this two day event with the following statement:

1. The conference has brought together many different members of the extended family that constitute the MV Foundation together with the Alliance 2015 - Stop Child Labour Campaign - in a joyful sharing and learning experience. The enthusiastic participation of over 5000 delegates has brought energy to the conference and confirmed the strong roots and widening coverage of the movement for the elimination of child labour and education for all children. The conference has also demonstrated that ownership of the movement is vested in the parents and children, in youth groups, in women's groups, in trade unions, in the local panchayats, in the child rights protection committees and most remarkably in the teachers and the thousands of volunteers who work ceaselessly for this cause.
2. The conference has provided a reaffirmation of the Non-Negotiables. These Non-Negotiables have stood the test of time and the test of practice in the field. Their appropriateness as a platform for future development of the movement has been confirmed.
3. The conference has provided a platform for mutual exchange and sharing of experiences between participants from Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe. It was apparent from the testimonies presented by these participants that the non-negotiable approach, duly adapted to take account of contextual differences, has a very wide relevance. The conference has provided an opportunity to widen and deepen earlier contacts between all those involved in abolishing child labour and bringing every child to school and has taken these to a new level of knowledge sharing and exchange. Virtually every delegate - national and international - has expressed solidarity with the non-negotiables and endorsed their relevance for their own work.

4. International and other donor organizations have confirmed their support for the movement to abolish child labour and bring every child to school. The relevance of all partners - both international and national - in influencing and shaping policy on the related issues cannot be overemphasized.
5. Against this backdrop it was very significant that senior politicians from across the political divide expressed unequivocal support and commitment for the further expansion of the movement within Andhra Pradesh, within India and worldwide. The conference demonstrated a remarkable rapport between the senior politicians and the masses on this issue.
6. The participation of local partners - approximately over 100 NGOs and trade union delegates - from different states of India, as well as from Africa, Latin America, Europe and other parts of Asia demonstrated the commitment of these organizations to the elimination of child labour.
7. The conference provided an opportunity and forum for a broad-based evaluation of both ongoing practices as well as exploration of new areas of work related to the mandate of MV Foundation. Three extremely important areas discussed in some detail were: children affected by HIV/AIDS, street children, and children affected by conflict. Significantly, all three are major global issues where there are considerable opportunities for experience sharing and developing effective strategies. These discussions benefited greatly from the specialist inputs of colleagues from other countries from Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe.
8. The one-day workshop on Trade Unions and Child labour also reaffirmed the commitment of trade unions to the abolition of child labour and the attainment of free, full-time, and formal and quality education for all children. Trade unions view such commitments as part of promoting fundamental principles and rights at work for adults, including the right to organizing and collective bargaining, the right to work in freedom, dignity and security, and the right to be free from child labour.
9. The conference also highlighted urgent necessities with regard to the policy framework for education and child labour. This applies both to the national as well as the international levels. Three specific areas of concern were specially emphasized.
 - The role of new partners, especially the corporate sector, was discussed. Attention was given to the need to take on board the role of child labour along the entire supply chain, and particularly in the informal economy where child labour predominates.
 - In the context of education becoming a fundamental right under the Government of India, the existing Child Labour (R & R) Act, 1985 has become untenable and needs to be repealed. A new law which incorporates the non-negotiable principles adopted by this international conference and

on the lines of the indicative legislation suggested by the 2nd National Commission on Labour needs to be adopted as a central legislation.

- The conference also noted that the emerging movement, which is inspired by the non-negotiables, has produced extraordinary results on the ground and hence we call upon the International organizations and agencies to re-examine their own policy positions and intervention strategies such that the experiences that have emerged from the ground are not diluted or obstructed from above.

This statement reflects the spirit of the conference.

For further information:

GLOBAL MARCH AGAINST CHILD LABOUR
South Asia Regional Secretariat
PO Box 4374, Rabibhawan
Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel - 009771 4278064 / 4282255
Fax - 009771 4278016
Email - info@globalmarchsouthasia.org