

## **World Day against Child labour observed- Quality Education and Awareness can bring change**

**Date. 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2015, Bhubaneswar**

A large number of children still are engaged in labour. Children are not meant to be labourers. This takes away their childhood. Every child must be stopped from stepping in to any form of labour – this is hazardous for any child, anywhere. It is every child's right not to be a labourer.

"We often come across child labour incidents in television and news papers which are only tip of the iceberg many more remains unreported. The number of child labour in the state is much higher than the statistical data we have. Complete elimination of child labour is only possible by understanding the situation of a child in which a she/he pushed to become a child labour and addressing the issue through appropriate means" **opined by Sri Arun Kumar Sahoo, Minister, Panchayatiraj & Law, Government of Odisha.**

On the eve of World Day against child Labour People's Cultural centre (PECUC), a leading civil society organisation, National Centre for Child Rights (NCCR) organised a Public Discourse on "Elimination of Child Labour Through Quality Education-Reality, Challenges & Prospects" at Jayadev Bhawan, Bhubaneswar in cooperation with TdH(G) and AEI.

Education can be prerequisite for eliminating child labour opined by S. Ranjan Kumar Mohanty, secretary, PECUC and Chairman, NCCR while sharing the purpose and introductory note. He also focused although the number of child labour is reducing but in a slow pace. The reduction rate is 2.2% per year only.

S. Mahendra Kumar Mallick, State Project Director, OPEPA briefed the audience about various government interventions to reduce child labour and to increase attendance. Mrs. Rajalaxmi Das, Member, OSCPCR said OSCPCR has important role in rescuing and rehabilitating child labours in the state and also monitoring schools for 100% enrolment upto age of 14. Mr. P.K Mohapatra, Assistant labour Commissioner focused on convergence among different stakeholders highly required to end child labour. Eminent Trade Unionist Mr. Souribandhu Kar, said there is a need of legislation to complete ban on child labour along with budget allocation. He also focused for appointment of trained and equally remunerated teachers to ensure quality education. Dr. Debiprasanna Pattnaik gave importance on mother tongue education from childhood to ensure quality learning of a child. Prof. Adaramani, Boral, Chairperson, PECUC said each and every citizen need to be responsible enough for elimination of child labour from our society.

The technical session chaired by Prof. Prabir Pattnaik on a note the child labour situation can be changed if parents and duty bearers act sensitively. In this session experiences on eliminating child labour and quality education shared by Mrs. Anuradha Mohanty, PECUC; S. P.K Mohapatra, ALC; Mr. Sribachha Patel, OPEPA, Usharani Behera, BGVS, Pratap Chandra Swain, HM & Bijay Kumar Pradhan SMC Member, Bangdagaon primary school.

Amongst other panellist Dr. Bijay Ku. Bohidar; Prof. Shribatsa L. Jena, former Director, SCERT; Dr. Bikash Das, Advocate spoke on the issues promoting social protection measures to encourage school attendance; fostering safe and quality learning environment - challenges and prospects and ensuring coherence and enforcement of laws on child labour and school attendance.

More than three hundred participants from NSS Volunteers & Programme Officers from Utkal University and +2 council, PRI Members, Educationists, civil society group members, teachers, academics, trade unionist, media etc participated in the programme. Ms. Jyoti Mohapatra, Sunanda Biswal from PECUC extended vote of thanks. Mr. Jyoti Mohanty, G.Singh, Anisha Mitra, Jayashree Moharana from PECUC supported in organising the programme