

Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi to launch Eastern stretch of Bharat Yatra from Bhubaneswar

Bhubaneswar, 1st September, Friday: The Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation announced today, that the Bharat Yatra Mr. Satyarthi will be undertaking to fight child sexual abuse and trafficking, will flag off from Bhubaneswar on the 26th of September 2017. Bhubaneswar will host the Nobel Laureate on the 13th and the march will progress to and reach Bhopal on the 5th of October via Bilaspur. The Bharat Yatra will flag off from Kanyakumari on 11th September and culminate in New Delhi on 16th October.

This Yatra, launched to work towards creating an India that is safe for our children, has received whole hearted support from the Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi.

Ms. Rozalin Patsani Mishra, Founder, Parichay Foundation and Sri Madhusudan Das, State Convener National Youth Project were hosted at the Odisha State Guest House, where they addressed all present, about the rampant problems of child sexual abuse and trafficking in the state of Odisha and expressed deep regret at the many cases that have recently come to light about the rape of minors by family members or close friends.

According to National Crimes Records Bureau and National Family Health Survey-3, child marriage is a cause of concern in Odisha with 1,21,669 girls and 1,37,464 boys being married off before the legal age.

According to the State police data, a high of 206 children (below 18 years) were being trafficked in 2016. The trafficked children numbers grew by an alarming 44 per cent in 2016 in the State.

Mr. Satyarthi has often expressed his concern about the fear that exists in the society to stop victims or their families from speaking up. This fear emboldens the criminals to roam freely and commit more heinous crimes, thereby ruining many lives.

Said Rosalin Patsani Mishra, "Odisha has grappled with issues of child labour for many years. It also faces the twin issues of increasing trafficking and rape. The time has come when the citizens of this state and across the country start acting and working towards the education and empowerment of the girl child. The Bharat Yatra should be that movement of collective action for our young girls and children across the country, to make a change."

"We must work unitedly to help eradicate child sexual abuse and trafficking in order for Odisha and India to progress both economically and socially. I appeal to the youth of this country to step forward and take charge to engineer a social revolution. The time is right to harness the power of the youth to drive this change and keep pushing for a brighter future for themselves and the generations to come", added Sri Madhusudan Das

Mr. Kailash Satyarthi has been campaigning for the freedom, safety and security for children across the globe for the past 36 years. He has led the historic Global March Against Child Labor in 1998 that prompted the ILO to pass international conventions against the worst form of child labour, in addition to

the Shiksha yatra in 2001, after which the Right to Education was included as a fundamental right in the Constitution of India. Mr. Satyarthi has, as a prolific thought leader, played a catalytic role in influencing social and political policies of our country. He won the Nobel Peace prize (2014) for his continuous efforts and struggle for the rights of children.

The Yatra will flag off from Kanyakumari on the 11th of September, from the Vivekananda Memorial, commemorating the anniversary of the great leader's address at Chicago in 1893.

Mr. Satyarthi and his foundation Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation have been preparing the ground for several months to launch the Yatra in September. As part of this ground work, Mr. Satyarthi has travelled the length and breadth of country meeting citizens, faith leaders, employees and corporates, parliamentarians, social organizations among others, all of whom have pledged their whole-hearted support to the Bharat Yatra, terming it as a necessary fight for our country to embark on and a noble cause to work towards.

The Yatra is the launch of the three-year campaign against child rape and child sexual abuse which is aimed at increasing awareness and reporting of the cases, strengthening intuitional response including medical health and compensations, ensuring protection for victims and witnesses during trials and increasing convictions of child sexual abuse in a time bound manner.

About Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation

The Foundation's mission is to create, implement and advocate child-friendly policies that ensure the holistic development and empowerment of children. For achieving these goals, the Foundation encourages government, businesses, civil society as well as children and the youth to participate in strategies and action that will safeguard children from the worst forms of abuse, including lack of education and health.

For more information, visit: www.satyarthi.org.in

For more information, contact:

Preeti Rawat

Preeti@thegutenberg.com

Paroma Bhattacharya

paroma@satyarthi.org