

Kailash Satyarthi advocates for comprehensive anti-trafficking law
Guwahati saw over 3000 citizens join the Nobel Peace Laureate and the Bharat Yatra

Guwahati, 22nd September 2017, Friday: The [Bharat Yatra](#), led by Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi flagged off from Guwahati on the twelfth day of the 35-day long march across India.

The Nobel Peace Laureate and his co-marchers were welcomed at Guwahati by Dr.Mridul Hazarika, Vice Chancellor, Guwahati University, who pledged to join the Bharat Yatra to ensure the realization of Surakshit Bachpan-Surakshit Bharat.

Emphasising on the need to push for a strong anti-trafficking bill, one that will adequately define punishment for the perpetrators and modes of redressal for the victims, the Nobel Peace Laureate said, "We are in this fight together and must fight against the darkness of abuse. The North-East is the mirror of the country and if we want to change India's mind-set, we must start with a change in the North-East. The environment will change, when the ordinary people like you and me push for a change! Let us strive towards better, stronger and smarter laws for our children".

The march saw the participation of over 3000 youth and dignitaries walk to demand necessary rights for the youngest citizens of our country, with over 3 lakh people participating in the Yatra, within its first 12 days.

The marchers joined Kailash Satyarthi to call upon the youth of the country to step up and fight for children across India. They strongly urged people of Guwahati and the state of Assam to strive towards building a safe childhood and a safe India.

The spirit shown by Guwahati, to pledge and join the Bharat Yatra to make India safe for our children is what is needed for the country to take its steps towards combating this growing menace.

Dr. Hazarika, welcoming Mr. Satyarthi and speaking on the Bharat Yatra said, "It is an alarming indication of the progress of our country that we are in a situation where we have to have a program to save children, that we cannot say that our children are safe."

"Kailash Satyarthi is an Indian born Nobel Laureate and got a Nobel Prize after close to 80 years, since last was 1930. His efforts to protect the future of our country and safeguard the rights of our children are an inspiration to us all. We are grateful to him for protecting humanity's future. Let us join him for the Bharat Yatra and pledge to make India safe for our children" he added.

Addressing thousands of youth at the Guwahati University campus, Kailash Satyarthi said, "Incidents of child rape and child abuse are occurring frequently, all around the country. The worrisome part is that most people don't raise the issue when it happens with them and the whole epidemic is hidden under the garb of respect, honour, dignity of the boy's and girl's family. Parents do not report to the police about the abuse their children face. They keep silent about it. Let us change this mind-set and speak out because child sexual abuse is tearing the moral fabric of our society and our silence is emboldening the perpetrators of these crimes."

The Bharat Yatra launched on 11 September at Kanyakumari by Mr Satyarthi is marching across the country to build unprecedented awareness on combating child sexual abuse and trafficking.

Ever since its launch, Bharat Yatra has been drawing enormous support from citizens across India, including celebrities like Amitabh Bachchan who tweeted to his fans to support the Yatra.

People cutting across faith, geography, profession and vocation are coming together to support the Yatra and the creation of a safe India for our children. They are collectively striving for better laws, stronger implementation and faster modes of redressal for victims of abuse and trafficking

Earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had sent a personal letter to Kailash Satyarthi extending his support to the Yatra, which will cover 11000 kilometres across 22 States, including Tamil Nadu. Some of the key cities it covers include Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Guwahati, Bhopal, Jaipur, Srinagar among others.

At Kanniyakumari during the flag off Mr Satyarthi had declared, "I will not rest till children of this country are not safe. I am not going to stop fighting if the raping and abuse do not stop. I cannot sleep in peace until we win our war against rape and abuse. This moral epidemic haunts our nation, and it is time we fight against it, together."

Re-iterating his mission behind launching the Bharat Yatra, he said "Why am I marching? Because my children are being raped. I refuse to accept that eight children go missing and two are raped every hour. Each time if a single child is in danger, India is in danger. Bharat Yatra is to make India safe again for our children." Kailash Satyarthi has been campaigning for the freedom, safety and security for children across the globe for the past 36 years. His Nobel Peace Prize (2014) was for his continuous efforts and struggle for the rights children.

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

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