

**Faith leaders pledge for safe childhood in Telangana**  
*Over 3000 marchers join in Hyderabad, with total number crossing 3 lakhs*

**Hyderabad, 21<sup>st</sup> September 2017, Thursday:** The [Bharat Yatra](#), led by Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi reached Hyderabad in Telangana on the eleventh day of the 35-day long march across India.

The Nobel Peace Laureate and his co-marchers were welcomed at the capital by Shri. Naini Narshimha Reddy, Home Minister, Telangana, to join the Bharat Yatra to ensure the realization of Surakshit Bachpan-Surakshit Bharat. Shri. Keshav Rao, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, Shri. Vishweshwar Reddy, Member Parliament, Lok Sabha, Shri. B. Vinod Kumar, Member Parliament, Lok Sabha and Smt. Amala Akkineni, actress and welfare activist were present at the march with Mr. Satyarthi.

Mr. Satyarthi's Yatra was also joined by numerous faith leaders like Shri. Hari Kishan and Shri. Vithal Rao- Aarya Samaj, Ms. B.K Rajni-Brahama Kumari, Brother Varghese and Maulana Agha Mujahid Hussain in Hyderabad, who committed to ensure that those following them would participate in the Yatra, and strive to make India safe for our children.

Said Maulana ji, "Children are unblemished and pure. They are akin to God. It is the fault in our society that we are unable to see their purity"

The march saw the participation of over 3000 youth and dignitaries, ranging from Government officials, NGO's, activists and actors, walk from Mozahmjahi market to demand necessary rights for the youngest citizens of our country.

The spirit shown by Hyderabad, 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.

The Yatra marchers called upon the youth of the country to step up and fight for children across India. They urged people of Hyderabad and the state of Telangana to strive towards building a safe childhood and a safe India.

Said Kailash Satyarthi, "The people gathered here, have come to change this nation, to make India safe. You have come here to wage a war on rape, on sexual abuse, on child trafficking and we will win this war. The country's youngest state, Telangana must lead the way in protecting the youngest citizens of the country, our children."

"If you keep quiet, you are letting the perpetrators roam free without any guilt or recourse to punishment. Your silence is an encouragement to them to go down this heinous path. Break your silence now! I am calling on each and every one to wake up. Citizens must move from silence to freedom of speaking out and from darkness of fear to justice" he added.

Addressing those present, Dr. Keshav Rao, said, "We need action now. Child protection is a process. There is a problem which we are not able to solve in spite all of all stringent laws to protect child rights. The problem is that the society should change. This campaign is greatest movement today as it is an open discussion of awareness. I feel proud and privileged to walk with children in the Yatra. I wish this movement all the success"

Mr. Satyarthi also addressed a seminar organized by the ministry of Woman and Child Development in Telangana, emphasising on the need to implement the already existing laws in a more structured manner.

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](http://www.satyarthi.org.in)

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