

Nation-wide Bharat Yatra reaches Solapur

DAV Institutes Law College launches Bachpan Bachao, Desh Bachao legal aid committee, helpline in Solapur to support Bharat Yatra

Solapur, 25th September 2017, Monday: The [Bharat Yatra](#), launched by Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi on 11 September, reached Solapur on 25th September, the fifteenth day of the 35-day long march across the country to build unprecedented awareness on combating child sexual abuse and trafficking.

The Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation and the marchers were received by leaders of Dayanand Institutions, Bal Kalyan Samiti, Child Line and Bal Nyay Mandal.

Solapur's Mayor Smt. Shobha Banshetti joined Rear Admiral (Regd) Rahul Shrawat, MD, Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation, Shri Bhuwan Ribhu, National Secretary, Bachpan Bachao Aandolan and other core marchers to pay floral tributes to the four martyrs of Solapur at Char Hutatma Chowk.

Citizens of Solapur marched with the Foundation to raise their voices against the injustice meted out to children in our country. They called upon the youth of the country to fight against child sexual abuse and trafficking to make India safe for children. They were supported by Ashamant Foundation, Police Commissioner and Medical Officer of Civil Hospital, Solapur.

The Yatra in Solapur culminated at DAV College and was followed by a street play by the students, titled Bachpan Bachao to mobilize the people of Solapur to break their silence and participate in this non-violent war against child sexual abuse and child trafficking.

Addressing over 5000 students, noted child rights activist and national secretary of 'Bachpan Bachao Andolan', Shri Bhuwan Ribhu said, "Maharishi Dayanand raised voice against injustice and inequality and demanded Swarajya much before anyone else. But that dream has still not been achieved. We have not got independence in the true sense even after 70 years of freedom. It is imperative that we begin a second war of independence, one from the fear in our mind. People think that such cases of child sexual abuse and trafficking do not occur in small cities like Solapur. But a recent news said that a 13-month old girl was brutally raped by a 19-year-old boy. There should be no place for such savages in Solapur, Maharashtra and India. The society should collectively boycott such perpetrators of child sexual abuse and trafficking."

The children of Solapur also released nitrogen balloons with message on Surakshit Bachpan-Surakshit Bharat in the hope that their voices and pleas for a safe, secure and happy childhood will be heeded by the citizens of India.

"More than 50,000 children have gone missing in Maharashtra in the last 3 years. DAV Institutes is not only educating students but is building the character of 10000 citizens. Why is it that the best of lawyers passing out of such prestigious institutions always represent the accused and never the child survivor? It is the death of the Constitution and not the child abused sexually. Pledge that no student passing out of DAV Institute will ever take the side of the perpetrator of child sexual abuse or trafficking. If our children are suffering, our country will continue to suffer," added Mr. Ribhu

Rear Admiral Rahul Shrawat (Rtd.) Managing Director, Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation and Bharat Yatra core marchers also visited Rashtramata Indira High School and Undergraduate College, Mohol, Solapur, where more than 1700 students took the pledge for a safe childhood-safe India.

Ever since its launch, Bharat Yatra has been drawing enormous support from citizens across India, including Amitabh Bachchan who tweeted to his fans to support the Yatra. Earlier, Union Minister for Shipping and Finance Mr Pon Radhakrishnan had flagged off the Yatra from Kanyakumari along with Mr Satyarthi. In Trivandrum, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan assured whole hearted support from his government in eradicating the menace of child sexual abuse and trafficking.

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 Karnataka. 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

Support the Bharat Yatra through - <http://ket.to/bharatyatra>

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