**Lawyers should reduce fees for victims of child sexual abuse-Kailash Satyarthi**

*Nobel Peace Laureate appeals for a cultural revolution*

**Lakhimpur Kheri, 8th October 2017, Sunday:** The [Bharat Yatra](http://bharatyatra.online), launched by Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi on 11 September, mobilized the masses in Lakhimpur on 8th October, the twenty-eighth day of the 35-day long march across the country to build unprecedented awareness on combating child sexual abuse and trafficking.

The Nobel Peace Laureate and his Bharat yatra were received at Krishak Samaj Inter college, where Shri. Ravi Prasad Verma, Member Parliament, Lok Sabha said “Childhood is in danger. Today even relatives and families are abusing the trust that children place in them. We must come together to protect our values and our cultures.” Calling upon the people of Lakhimpur he added, “The world is going to change and you are going to drive this change till the end.”

Mr. Satyarthi said, “Our fight is against fear. Our mission is to make India fearless. We want to break this culture of silence and ensure that no perpetrator will find shelter in Gola. In this country talking about sexuality, crimes of abuse is taboo. Talks of shame and honour are societal tools created to silence the victims and humiliate them. No victim, no girl ever loses her honour in these situation. I appeal to bring about a change in the mindset, to fight for a cultural revolution”

Shashank Verma, Member, Legislative Council, emphasised on the need to break the silence prevalent in the society.

“Abuse and exploitation of children will affect everyone. Turning a blind eye will not solve it. Today it could be your neighbours child, tomorrow it could be yours. It is now your responsibility to break the pattern and be the voice of those who have been silenced”

The Bharat Yatra at Lakhimpur saw the support of many students and faculty of various colleges and schools, demand justice and safety for children. Judicial officials, parliamentarians and academicians joined the Nobel Peace Laureate in his mission to eradicate the growing menace. Over 1500 people of the district pledged for Surakshit Bachpan-Surakshit Bharat and to strive for a country free from the menace of child sexual abuse and trafficking.

 Mr. Satyarthi, made an appeal for special courts for the children of the state. He added that “Lawyers should provide legal assistance to victims, especially from the lower economic backgrounds for free.”
Mr. Satyarthi appealed to doctors at an earlier date to treat victims of child sexual abuse for free as well. His firm belief in rehabilitation and proper care of the victim extends to the provision of all facilities required to assist in trauma management.

Earlier last month, Union Home Minister, Shri. Rajnath Singh, gave his assurance on passing the anti-trafficking law, which aligns with one of the key demands of the Bharat Yatra.

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.

The Karnataka High court will pay special attention to POCSO cases so the children can get justice.

The Yatra was also supported by Andhra Pradesh and Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu walked with the Foundation to promote awareness about the cause. He also announced that the state of Andhra Pradesh would house a global policy institute dedicated to the well-being and security of children across the country.

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)

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

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