**Children are the building blocks of our country-Kailash Satyarthi**

*Over 5000 citizens join the Nobel Peace Laureate in his hometown to fight for children*

**Vidisha, 5th October 2017, Thursday:** The [Bharat Yatra](http://bharatyatra.online), launched by Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi on 11 September, reached Vidisha on 5th October, the twenty-fifth day of the 35-day long march across the country to build unprecedented awareness on combating child sexual abuse and trafficking.

Earlier in the day at Sanchi University, the Nobel Peace Laureate stated that he felt at peace back in his hometown and appealed for support from the citizens to unite and combat the menace of child sexual abuse and trafficking. At Agarwal academy, Mr. Satyarthi emphasised on how the children of India, are the ‘building blocks of the country’ and that India will only be safe and secure, when it can provide that guarantee to our children.

The Bharat Yatra and the core-marchers walked from Olympus High School, Sanchi Road till Vidisha Railway Station. Over 5000 people participated in the rally and pledged for Surakshit Bachpan-Surakshit Bharat.
Slogans of ‘child trafficking down’ and ‘stop child abuse’ resonated across the Nobel Peace Laureate’s hometown, joined in by slogans chanted by school going children who participated in the Yatra to raise their voices and concerns about the state of the country. The Market Association wholeheartedly declared support for the Yatra.

Later in the evening, addressing the gathering at Madho Ganj Jai Prakash chowk, Mr Satyarthi said, “Every day we read incidents of child rape and sexual abuse in the newspaper and our heads hang in shame. In the past few years, the number of child sexual abuse cases has increased. The Ryan school incident is a recent example. Our march is to put an end to such incidents. Give children the right to speak for themselves. Make Vidisha, safe Vidisha! Only then can we Make India Safe for our children.

The power of the Bharat Yatra can be felt through instances of positive action. A young girl child who has been abused by a member of her family member, had not spoken to anyone regarding her ordeal earlier. She heard of the Bharat yatra on radio Mann in Vidisha, and straight away proceeded to the radio station to share her story. This matter was heard out by the S.P and an inquiry has been actioned on this.

 “Mr. Satyarthi has spent his childhood here and he is marching at his birthplace fighting for eradication of child sexual abuse. We are proud of his endeavour and support this noble cause,” added, Shri. Gyan Singh, Sikh Samaj Head.

 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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