



International
Labour
Organization



Press Briefing

Dear Journalists from Print and Electronic Media,

On behalf of the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MOLE) of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, I welcome you to this Press Conference being held on the eve of the World Day Against Child Labour (WDACL) 2010.

Tomorrow, 12 June, the 9th World Day Against Child Labour will be observed in Bangladesh, as elsewhere in the world, under the theme **"End Worst Forms of Child Labour by 2016"** and under the slogan **"Let's Eliminate Worst Forms of Child Labour, Let's Ensure Education for Children"**.

It is my pleasure to let you know that this year the WDACL being observed under the leadership of the Ministry of Labour and Employment in collaboration with the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, ILO and UNICEF. This joint initiative indicates that the relevant key stakeholders are brought together in the fight against child labour, especially the worst forms of child labour in Bangladesh.

As you are aware, the estimated number of working children in Bangladesh is 7.4 million. Out of these, 3.2 million children are considered as child labour, of which 1.3 million children are engaged in hazardous labour (BBS, 2003).

The Government of Bangladesh is fully committed to fight against child labour and has taken series of initiatives over the years. The last significant initiative taken by the Government was the adoption of the National Child Labour Elimination Policy in March this year. Other initiatives include, ratification of ILO Convention No. 182 on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour enacting the Labour Act 2006, which restricts employment or permission of any child aged less than 14 year of age to work in any occupation or establishment, and any adolescent, who has not completed 18 year of age, for any hazardous work; adopting the National Education Policy in May 2010, which extends the compulsory primary education till grade 8; mainstreaming child labour issues into national development plans, including the Poverty Reduction Strategy, supporting implementation of various programmes and projects by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Ministry of Social Welfare, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education and other institutions.

Dear Journalists,

We all know that child labour is a very complex issue and there are many factors directly and indirectly contribute to the existence of child labour in a developing country like Bangladesh. I like to acknowledge the fact that despite various efforts made by the Government and stakeholders concerned, we have got to do more and work harder in order to achieve our desired goal. For example, the country needs to undertake a fresh national assessment on child labour to determine the scope, nature, characteristics and working environment of child labour in different sectors, as you know that the last survey was carried out in 2003. We also need to determine the hazardous occupations in the context of Bangladesh, which is one of the obligations following the ratification of ILO Convention No. 182. Besides, we need to develop a Plan of Action with specific time-frame and required resource, and clear roles and responsibilities of the key stakeholders in order to materialize the goal of the National Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010.

Dear Journalists,

On behalf of the MOLE of the Government of Bangladesh, I would like to reaffirm the people of the country through media that the Government of Bangladesh, through the Ministry of Labour and Employment which is a focal Ministry on Child Labour, has already started to implement and is committed to those working strategies and main strategic pillars highlighted in the National Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010, Labour Act 2006, and other relevant policy, rules and regulations with other government ministries and stakeholders. We are fully committed to end worst forms of child labour within the given time-frame.

I would like to specially request ILO, UNICEF and other development partners to continue their technical and financial assistance in addressing the problems of child labour. I also urge for strong cooperation and coordination among the relevant ministries so that we can ensure hazardous child labour free Bangladesh.

Finally, I seek for all-out support from the print and electronic media in order to create mass awareness against the negative consequences of child labour as well as to highlight the successes of the initiatives sponsored by the Government and concerned stakeholders in the fight against child labour.

On behalf of the organisers, I would like to invite you all to the national seminar titled "National Child Labour Elimination Policy and Next Steps" to be held tomorrow 12 June at the BIAM Auditorium.

Thank you all

Arun Kanti Aich
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Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh