

State Level Workshop – “Impact of Crisis on Child Labour” – Webinar Organised on the occasion of World Day against Child Labour to culminate 44 Days Campaign to End Child Labour

Bhubaneswar (12-June-2020): A state Level Workshop on virtual platform on “Impact of Crisis on Child Labour” – was organised by People’s Cultural Centre (PECUC), a leading voluntary organisation of Odisha on the occasion of World Day against Child Labour to mark the culmination of 44 Days Campaign to end Child Labour. This e-workshop was attended by many participants including Govt. officials, NGOs, Women PRIs, teachers’ association, CWC members, CSOs, media, INGOs etc of Odisha as well as from different states of India. The present pandemic can push millions of vulnerable children into child labour. Globally already, there are an estimated 152 million children in labour force, 72 million of which are in hazardous work. These children are now at even greater risk of facing circumstances. The entire world is terrified. The crisis due to COVID19 effects on the existing child labour and it may contribute to the possible rise in the number of child labour in the coming years. All the educational institutions are closed due to the pandemic situation. The children of vulnerable class would be forced to leave school and go for earning to support the family. These are few concerns raised by the speakers. Ms. Anuradha Mohanty, Executive Director of PECUC gave the welcome address. Chairing this workshop Mr. Ranjan Kumar Mohanty, Secretary, PECUC gave introductory remark and shared the purpose of this workshop. He briefly stated that COVID19 has indeed increased the risk for children and lots of effort needed to lessen the risk and save the children from the impact of COVID19.

Sj. Pradeep Kumar Mohapatra, Divisional Labour Commissioner, Labour & ESI Dept., Govt. of Odisha discussed about the challenges created due to COVID19 pandemic and also about the enforcement of laws to combat child labour situation. This pandemic has accelerated the process of child labour and other child right related issues which needs to be curtailed for the safety and security of the children. Other notable guest speakers of this workshop were Mr. Pradeep Kumar Bisawl, IAS (Retd.), Mr. Jatin Dash, Senior Journalist, & Ms. Madhumita Das, Consultant, WCD Dept., Govt. of Odisha. They discussed in detail about the child labour situation in this pandemic time, challenges, disruption of children education, violation of child rights, SDG & children rights, problem faced by the children with disability, issues of children on move, various socio psychological aspects to deal with the children and speakers stressed on the combine effort of all including community, civil society organisation & all line departments of Govt., media, corporate houses to overcome this challenging situation and keeping children safe. Speaker also stressed on the need of alternative to online teaching and strategic action to combat child labour. Anil Pradhan, convenor of RTE Forum also spoke on this occasion and gave emphasis on opening of school with all safety measures. Dr. S Jena, CWC member and Kabita Kanungo, Teacher and CWC members, child right activists and experts also put forward their view points in this workshop.