

# Eradication of Poverty - Eradication of Child Labour

## Need for a comprehensive strategy

### *Irrelevance / Inadequacy of Labelling - Rigmark strategy together with consumer boycott of goods*

#### Introduction :

Child labour has become a mode of perpetuating extra-economic exploitation and it ensures the continued availability of submissive, illiterate labourers who do not have the power to question the system which deprives them of their basic rights. Thus child labour is a concrete manifestation of denial of all other rights of the children. It is a situation in which they are denied their right to a dignified childhood; their right to education; their right to free mental and physical growth; their right to protection against exploitation

In this respect child labour in India is by no means a fringe phenomenon. It occupies an important place in the economy. Though the issue of child labour is gaining more and more attention these days, it is not a declining phenomenon. Notwithstanding the increase in the enrollment of children in elementary schools and increase in literacy levels in India since Independence, the phenomenon of child labour has been persisting side by side and has received little attention as a separate category of social evil. It was only during '80s, the problem of child labour entered the public consciousness and discourse.

#### Varying estimates of child labour in India :

SOURCE OF DATA	NUMBER OF CHILD WORKERS (IN MILLION)
1981 Census	13.60
Operation Research Group (1983)	44.00
NSS data estimates (5-14) 1987-88	17.58
NSS data estimates (5-14 years) 1991-47 <sup>th</sup> Round	24.44
Census Data 1991	11.28
Balai Data Bank, Manila.	111.00
Commission on Labour Standards and International Trade, Government of India, 1995	77.00

*Note: Of the NSS estimate (1991) of 24.44 millions 13.95 million are principal status workers and the rest subsidiary status workers.*