

**"LEGAL AID EVENT: SMILING CHILDREN-  
OPPRESSED CHILDHOOD"  
AN AWARENESS PROGRAMME AGAINST  
CHILD LABOUR**

*[Report on the event conducted in  
Durgabasti, Kota (Rajasthan) July 02, 2017]*

**Abstract:** This event was conducted by Para-legal volunteer from Legal Aid Centre, S.L.S.-Noida. Firstly, the participants from a poverty-stricken area in Kota were informed about the pathetic life that the children belonging to low paid class are forced to live because of the restrictions imposed upon them by their parents due to monetary needs . Then, the participants were informed about the 'rights' that the 'law' in India provides to such children. They were further informed about their moral duties in such situations.

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## **1. Concept Note:**

The Legal Aid Centre at Symbiosis Law School, NOIDA conducted various awareness programme to sensitize the society towards different legal and social issues. As an extension of the above initiative I, student of the college and a Para-legal volunteer at Legal Aid Centre conducted a program in Durgabasti area of Kota (Rajasthan) on 02<sup>th</sup> July 2017.

The problem of Child labour is a global problem and is present specially in under developed countries / developing countries. The problem of child labour in India is the result of traditional attitudes, urbanisation, industrialisation, migration, lack of education, poverty (main cause) etc. Preference of child labour by many employers is mainly due to the fact that it is cheap, safe and without any liability. Many children take up the job just because of the non-availability of schools in their areas and thus rather than sitting idle, they prefer to go to work. Illiteracy and ignorance of parents is also an important factor. The prevalence of child labour is a blot on society. It is economically unsound, psychologically disastrous and ethically wrong. Thus, sensitizing the society towards the rights of children irrespective of their economic background is the need of the hour.

## **2. Objectives:**

The main objective of the Legal Aid Centre of SLS- NOIDA was to make society sensitize towards the child labours. In order to achieve the ultimate goal, interlocutory measures were undertaken the most important of which were educating and reminding the people of their legal & moral duties towards children.

- a) To remind people (especially parents of children aged 7-18 years) that they have a fundamental duty to educate their child.
  
- b) To create awareness in the minds of people about existing laws against child labour in India and about the actions that could be taken against them if they don't follow these laws or if they avoid/ ignore these laws.

### **3. Preliminary Preparations:**

Before conducting the event few important preparations were made:

- a. Visiting the industries located in Durgabasti area so as to check or find out the number of child waged as labours in those industries.
- b. Making charts and posters for the awareness programme.
- c. Making various other arrangements like arranging for the refreshments to be served after the event, arranging for the gifts to be given to the children

### **4. Conducting the program:**

The event was conducted in the Kota city of Rajasthan. The area where the event had to be conducted was selected on four basis **a)** The number of industries located in the area **b)** Number of people living in that area **c)** The number of children in that area working as child labours **d)** The educational and economic status of the people. Finally, Durgabasti area was selected.

After the area was selected the next step taken by the Para Legal Volunteer was to visit an industry (Broom manufacturing industry) and check the number of children waged there. Fortunately, the volunteer noticed and tried to interact with 2-3 children (aged 14-16 years) working there in the industry. However, due to the restrictions a long interaction was not possible. Next day the awareness programme was done near that industry only.

People living in that area were not unaware about the fact that children were waged as labourers in that industry so they initially were not willing to participate but slowly and slowly after hearing the voices and seeing the posters/ charts they gathered around.

The volunteer discussed with the participants the existing laws against child labour in India which the public had ignored/ forgotten completely and explained them that what action could be taken against them if they don't follow such laws. There was discussion about Articles (Art. 23 & Art. 24) given under the Indian Constitution, Child Labour (Prohibition & Abolition) Act,

1986, Indian Penal Code 1860 and the changes made in it in the year 2013 with respect to trafficking and exploitation of children, etc. Discussion about 'Child helpline number' given by the organization viz., 'Childline India' and Anti Human Trafficking Unit (Kota) was also made.

Last but not the least, sloganeering against child labour was done by the volunteer along with the participants and chocolates & toys were distributed among children to make them happy.

### **5. Response of the target population**

The population of the city was not completely unknown about the concept as there were many incidences which came up before the residents of the city and where the children were found waged in industries, messes, tea stalls and restaurants. The concept was therefore unsettled and for the same reason it had to be taken up for creating awareness in the minds of the people.

Initially, the people belonging to the poverty stricken area were not willing to participate in the event but after hearing the voice and seeing the posters they gathered around to become a part of the event. When there was sloganeering against child labour ('Koi Baal Shramik Nahi' & Hum Padhai karenge aur aage badein ge') by the Para legal volunteer much to the surprise was the participation of the children, men and women in that sloganeering.

### **6. Future plan of action**

One session/ event was not enough to make every resident of the city aware about the concept and therefore it is suggested that more programs like these should be organized in future.

### **7. Suggestions/Feedback:**

Various ways in which the program could be better conducted in future are as follows:-

- **No. of Volunteers** - The number of volunteers for the program should be definitely more than one, because if there are more helping hands, then the objective could be better served and achieved.

- **Association with NGOs** - A prior association with NGO functioning in the particular area would help in a great way to execute the program successfully because they could help to accumulate groups and they could also improve the techniques of the execution of the program.
  
- **Information to the Police Department**- An association with lot more volunteers and a larger target audience and a proper street display of banners and posters requires a prior information to police department so that operation and program could be conducted without any hindrance to the society.

#### **8. Conclusion/Remarks:**

Overall this was a great experience and learning process as Para-legal volunteer and it indeed did make me aware of the society's mind-set at a very basic level, which is needed and useful for every law student for their comprehensive and holistic understanding of Law. It made me more equipped with handling twisted legal dilemmas.

**(The photographs relating to this program are attached as annexure 'A')**

ANNEXURE 'A' : PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE EVENT dt: 02.07.2017

















