

**REPORT ON THE VISIT OF SHRI CHAMAN LAL SPECIAL
RAPPORTEUR TO FERROZABAD ON 7JAN.2002**

I visited Ferozabad on 7 January 2002 to conduct a workshop for disseminating the findings of the impact study of NCLP schools carried out by Dr. Bhupinder Zutshi of Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation, UP. I was accompanied by Dr. Bhupinder Zutshi.

The workshop was organised by Shri Rajneesh Gupta, District Magistrate Ferozabad. Shri Anis Ansari, Labour Commissioner UP and Shri M.N. Siddiqui, Inspector of Factories/Addl. Labour Commissioner Incharge-Child Labour also attended the workshop. Shri D.K. Singh, Asstt. Labour Commissioner had made all the arrangements.

70 NCLP schools with total sanctioned capacity of 6500 are in operation in District Ferozabad. The actual number of students enrolled in these schools is 6300. Only 29 schools are being run by the NGOs. All the rest (41) are with the Project Society. 11 NGOs attended the workshop.

Dr. Zutshi made a presentation of the summary of his findings which had brought out the following deficiencies in the operation of the National Child Labour Project (NCLP) in this District.

1. Locations of NCLP schools do not seem to have been decided on the basis of the incidence of child labour and availability of other opportunities of formal and non-formal education. The study had, therefore, recommended a thorough review of the locations of the schools.

2. The selection of the beneficiaries particularly their age profile indicated a lack of seriousness in ensuring proper utilisation of the project.
3. The project provides for accelerated primary education in 3 years. The selected children are to be imparted education of class I to class V standard in a period of 3 years. The study revealed that full period of 5 years has been spent in imparting primary education like any other mainstream school. This is a serious irregularity which had remained undetected all these years.
4. Mid-term admission presumably to extend the benefit of the stipend to a larger number of children have been detected in some schools.
5. Component of vocational training has been totally missed.
6. Serious deficiencies have been noticed in operating the Mid Day Meal Programme which is also a vital component of the project.
7. Arrangements of health check up and case of the enrolled students have been found to be inadequate and unsatisfactory.

Shri Rajneesh Gupta, DM gave a detailed account of what has been done since his posting about a year back. He claims to have removed most of the deficiencies pointed out in the impact study report. I felt happy on learning that he feels that participation of NGOs in this effort needs to be increased. He stated that he is exploring the possibility of transferring a few more schools from the Project Society to the NGOs. The Mid Day Meal Programme has been streamlined and a weekly schedule is being enforced. He accepts the need for reviewing the locations of these schools and also the sanctioned capacity at various places. He feels that with the launching of ILO Programme and expansion of the DPEP in the district, the present sanctioned capacity of 6500 children for NCLP schools is very much higher side. This would obviously affect the quality of selection of beneficiaries. He assured that he will get all these issues examined by the Project Society. He informed that the issue of vocational training is receiving his personal attention and this deficiency would be removed shortly.

Shri Anis Ansari, Labour Commissioner informed that a Child Labour Rehabilitation-cum-Welfare Fund has been constituted in 23 child labour prone districts with a corpus of Rs. 5 lakh each. The rules governing the operation of this fund have also been notified. The study report had pointed out the need for free supply of books to the children. The Labour Commissioner opined that such expenditure could be met out of this fund.

The health check up of the children is now receiving proper attention. Special arrangements are being carried out for initial medical check-up and proper records are being maintained. I suggested later to the ALC that a

special eye test may be arranged for all the children to detect the cases requiring immediate treatment.

The DM confirmed that the District is no longer facing difficulty in release of funds from the Government of India. The allotments are being received in time and utilized smoothly to ensure efficient management of the schools. There has been some improvement in the attendance rate and the incidence of drop-out has also declined.

While expressing satisfaction over the improvement effected by the District Administration, I pointed out the need for a detailed inspection of a few schools. I told the DM that I would be inspecting some of these schools in March (after UP elections).

REVIEW OF CHILD LABOUR/BONDED LABOUR SITUATION

Shri M.N. Siddiqui, Addl. Labour Commissioner and Shri D.K. Singh, ALC Ferozabad briefed me about the child labour/bonded labour situation in the district. A total of 5418 child labourers have been detected in this district since 1997. 4881 of these belong to hazardous and 537 to non-hazardous category. Only 5 child labourers were detected in 2000-01 and all belong to hazardous category. In the year 2001 (till 31 December), no child labour has been detected in hazardous category. 39 child labourers have been detected in non-hazardous category. Considering the large scale employment of children in various processes of bangle-making – straightening (sidhai), joining (judai), hardening (pakai) and colouring (rangai) – the detection of child labour is negligible.

As many as 4538 out of a total of 4881 child labourers withdrawn from hazardous work are reported to have been admitted to schools. The Collector candidly admitted that a good number of them might have dropped out since then. I suggested some sample verification might prove useful in ascertaining the true picture of educational rehabilitation of the released children.

The number of affected families in respect of the children withdrawn from hazardous work is 4133. Only 280 of them have been provided employment for rehabilitation. 3313 families were already having some means of livelihood. 124 families are migrant families which have gone back to their parent state. As such, rehabilitation of 416 families is still pending. The directions of the Supreme Court do not seem to have been complied with fully.

A total of 1842 employers are involved in detection of 4881 children from hazardous labour. 1835 prosecutions have been launched. Results of prosecutions could not be furnished. 1766 RCCs have been issued for collection of Rs. 20,000 per child labour. Out of a total amount of 6,27,60,000, a negligible amount of 52,000 has been collected till now. Only 3 RCCs involving an amount of Rs. 60,000/- have been stayed under orders from court. Recoveries are almost nil. The DM was requested to give his attention to this matter also.

W I discussed with Shri M.N. Siddiqui the Addl. Labour Commissioner UP the progress of rehabilitation of bonded labourers in the State. A total of 1882 bonded labourers have been released in UP since 1996-97. 1092 of

these were migrant and were, therefore, returned to their native districts. No information is available regarding their rehabilitation. Of the remaining 790, only 324 have been rehabilitated till now. 16 are in the process of rehabilitation 5 have died or become untraceable. As such a total of 440 released labourers remain to be rehabilitated with the following year-wise break-up:

1997-1998	- 12
1999-2000	- 251
2000-2001	- 152
2001-2002	- 25

I was informed that demand for allotment of Rs. 90.35 lakh (47.15 –Centre and 43.20 lakh State's share) has been made by the Labour Commissioner to the Principal Secretary (Labour) in July 2001. I checked up with the Director General (Welfare) Ministry of Labour, Government of India and learned that the Centre's share is not being released because of the failure of Government of UP to furnish utilisation certificates of earlier allotment and confirmation about Budget provision for the State's share. The Labour Commissioner UP is requested to look into these cases personally and arrange to send the desired information to the Union Labour Ministry.

C Lal

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(Chaman Lal)
Special Rapporteur