

Stop child labour, says Bihar assembly speaker

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Patna: Child labour is a social evil and everyone should make maximum efforts to make the world a better place for children to live in, said Bihar assembly Speaker Vijay Kumar Choudhary on Monday at a function organized at the Vidhan Sabha as part of The Times of India and Unicef joint campaign against the menace. A large number of MLAs and MLCs participated in the event.

"When a child is abused in public, we publicly condemn the act, but very few people really work for eradicating this evil practice. A large number of children are employed in the agriculture sector. It is really heart-wrenching," Choudhary said.

The Speaker lauded the TOI and Unicef efforts of highlighting the issue. "Tokenge (pointing out) is the first step to counter child labour. Rokenge and Badelenge (will stop and change) are the next steps to abolish the age-old practice of engaging child labour," he added.

Unicef (Bihar) head Yameen Mazumder and his team of experts explained the various facets of child labour which not only require awareness, but also need implementation of the laws by the enforcing authorities. Unicef officials revealed that over 10 lakh children from Bihar were employed in different parts of the country. Maximum number of child labourers from Bihar hail from Gaya district. Experts also rued the fact that children get displaced because of weak social status of their families.

Social scientist Shaibal Gupta said child labour is the modern form of slavery to provide cheap labour to the production process. "The state should develop a knowledge-based economy that will go a long way in abolishing child labour. Developed nations are knowledge-based economy with little scope for this kind of social evil," he said.

