

## Cooliyinda Shalege [Labour to School]

To free them from the bondage of child labour and admit them to school is the main object of the Cooliyinda Shalege campaign.

In the face of the law, to engage children as child labour within the age group 6-14 and it is the constitutional fundamental right to Primary Education.

So under the SSA during February-March 2003, a state level publicity campaign was taken up and during this campaign the teachers, educationist non-governmental organisation, Labour Department, Social Welfare Department, Department of women and child welfare and Police participated. With this effort should be made to bring them back to school. Around 3261 children brought to school fold. While publicity has been given on TV and AIR for this purpose.

Due to the efforts of teachers and supporters of educational initiatives the Baa Marali Shaalege campaign succeeded in bringing back to school about 224,000 children in the age group 6-14. Even then, about 340,000 children remained out of reach of the school system. Many of them are children doing hard and demeaning menial jobs for their livelihood when they should actually be involved in some productive and joyful learning. They are the victims of a cruel society that tolerates and puts up with child labour that is plainly illegal as well as officially forbidden. The basic aim of the Cooliyinda Shaalege campaign is to liberate such children from the bondage of labour and bring them to school.

### **The First Step :**

Most people seem to be unaware of the fact that it is illegal to employ children below 14 years of age for any purpose. Eight years of elementary is a fundamental right of children. Employing them would amount to denying this right and is therefore unconstitutional. As a first step it is necessary to warn employers of child labour through wide publicity to the relevant laws and court judgments on the issue. During February-March 2003 a major campaign was mounted throughout the state giving publicity through various ways – through handbills, posters, wall writings, street plays, newspapers and mass media. If the employers release the children from their employment it may not be very difficult to bring them to school.

Subsequently, teachers, students, workers, departmental officials, resource persons including those in BRCs/CRCs, SDMC members, voluntary organizations/NGOs and students in teacher education institutions have all participated extensively in the campaign to liberate children from the world of labour and introduce them to the world of learning. The state chief minister made a special appeal to all people in this regard. Employers of child labour have been told: "Employing children below 14 is an offence. Those violating the law are liable for punishment with fine or a jail term or both. Release the children from your bondage and send them to school!"

### **Tumkur district**

As per Feb 2003 children census, there were 13306 out of school children in Tumkur district. Some of the innovative strategies adopted to mainstream the out of school children like, Cooliyinda Shalege, Chinnara Angala, Baa marali Shalege, Baa Marali Shalege, Education Guarantee Scheme and so on. 10773 children were mainstreamed with these efforts.



Cooliyinda Shalege is one of the main strategies adopted to provide education facilities to the deprived working children. There were 223 working children mainstreamed through this programme in 2003. Street Play and Jhathas were conducted all over the state.



### **Bangalore City:**

There were 12 Street Plays performed to get awareness among the parents and community, live in urban slum areas to enroll their children to the formal schools, especially working children with the coordination of NGOs.

