

NATIONAL

India may miss international target of eliminating child labour by 2025

A parliamentary standing committee on labour, textiles and skill development in its 52nd report on 'National Policy on Child Labourer's has said that it was "practically not possible" to meet the international commitment to eliminating child labour by 2025. The panel took into account the current prevalence of child labour to reach its conclusion. The report was recently submitted in Parliament.

The committee has impressed upon the Ministry of Labour and Employment to take up the elimination of child labour in a mission mode by devising a systematic action plan-based policy to meet International commitments. The committee, chaired by Bhartuhari Mahtab, has stated in the report that the government should take effective measures to eradicate forced labour, human trafficking and the elimination of child labour by 2025. After wider consultations with state governments and other stakeholders, the committee has stated in the report that "despite a revision of penalties, there is no deterrence on the employer and as informed by NGOs, children after being rescued are again employed in the same jobs."

Alarmed at the recurrence, the committee has emphasized making laws more stringent for employers and violators. It suggested increasing at least 3-4 times the penalty with stricter punishment in the form of cancellations of license and attachment of property. It has also cited data collected from the Ministry based on the census 2011 that 1.01 crore children are working in various fields. The main children workers are those who have to work more than six months and those who work less than 6 months after being employed. They are called working children.

According to data, cited by the committee as per the 2001 census, 57,54,201 children are main workers in the age group of 5-14 years in agriculture, mining and 8 other industries.

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