Poverty, illiteracy compel children to beg.

By a Staff Reporter

Mr. Biswanath Chaudhury, West Bengal Minister for Social Welfare and Jails, said in Calcutta on Thursday that poverty and illiteracy were the primary reasons behind children opting for begging and labour. Hundreds of such poverty-stricken children were being exploited every day. Mr. Chaudhury was speaking at the inaugural session of the SAARC conference on "The rights of the child", organized by the South Asian Forum for the Rights of Child and the Socio-Legal Aid Research and Training Centre.

The Minister admitted that under the prevailing socio-economic conditions in the country, the authorities were unable to fulfil the needs of children. He appealed to all non-Government organizations to come forward and render their assistance in taking up the incomplete task of the Government in this regard.

Mr. Chaudhury regretted that a "terrible discrimination" was perpetuated against the girl child, even in today's educated society.