CHILD LABOUR IN KASHMIR

Magnitude and the extent of Government Intervention
Chapter III

Child Labour in Kashmir:
Magnitude and the Extent of Government Intervention

Kashmir valley, like other parts of the globe, is also beset by the problem of child labour and child servitude. Though this problem is very grave in the valley but it is not being felt with such intensity as is the case with many other parts of India and the world. The reason being the position of its landscape with a clumsy topography, coupled with hardships of climatic conditions which throw into oblivion the ugly state of affairs of many children working in hazardous and non-hazardous jobs in the valley. Kashmir is inhabited by different races that put up on hill tops and hard-to-reach places. The valley being a part of Jammu and Kashmir (Special Category State) is inhabited by poor people, some of whom are living even below poverty line within scheduled caste, scheduled tribe and other backward categories. Lack of adequate and proper educational facilities, difficult monitoring and enforcement of law, rampant poverty has lead to high incidence of child labour with impunity. The development of cottage level industries in the shape of famous handicrafts of Kashmir have found favour among local people due to the fact that these can be practised in any nook and corner of the valley and people need not to go outside every day for a livelihood which is very difficult and even sometimes impossible due to long and difficult terrain between remote and urban/town areas. The situation gets even worsened when weather behaves its own way and many areas remain decayed with snow for nearly half of the year. There are even such areas in Kashmir where up and down journeys to hilly areas are to be undertaken with the help of ponies. The problem of child labour under such circumstances becomes a matter of serious concern as no law can guarantee the children of these areas a right to enjoy themselves with their childhood by dint of the fact that enforcement machinery cannot discharge its responsibilities in letter and spirit. The state of affairs is very alarming as it is even worse than the close confines of domestic labour. The children in these cottage level industries are not immune from dangerous effects of these trades. Carpet weaving is rightly held as a hazardous job deforming body structure of workers making them weak and invalid. Research
studies reveal that in carpet industry alone we have nearly 25% child labourers (Mir 1991). The job of carpet weaving is quite hazardous having an adverse effect on the health of children. A study conducted by UNICEF in carpet industry in Iran in 1981 reveals that girls in carpet industry of Iran, worked in doubled up postures and squatting planks, this leads to deformities in lower limbs. Due to poor illumination and fineness of the work there is blurring of vision also. Another study titled “Health status of school age children employed in carpet weaving in Ganderbal Block of Srinagar” reveals that ‘school going children have better hemoglobin than carpet weaving children. Majority of children complain of head ache, blurring of vision, backache and abdominal pain.’ The shawl and chain stitch embroidery also blurrers the vision of workers. Forced economic necessity has caught many children in domestic labour where they are being oppressed and suppressed by the well-to-do oblivious of the public eye, labour inspection and media attention. These children are separated from their families at the cost of affection of their parents and relatives, which they deserve and also need. Contrarily, they are put to a work environment where they are treated as inferior lot and supposed to obey the dictates of their masters and work even if it exceeds their physical and mental capacity. These children sleep late and wake up early in the morning to dredge for the household and to provide comfort to the children of superior fathers. Devoid of affection, these children feel that they have fallen from sky unto earth and are not born to enjoy the affection of elders and the sweet moments of life. This state of mind which is opposed to principle of natural justice and equity accompanies them throughout their life. Even in areas which are in the neighbourhood of the power centers of Government of Jammu and Kashmir, the children are working in automobile units, restaurants, and the worst of all being trash collecting. The trash collecting children seen on the roadsides of Kashmir valley are generally migrant labourers and hail from families which come from outside the valley and settle here temporarily for a few months every year. The child labour in Kashmir is likely to increase in future times to come as Government is striving every nerve to multiply the cottage level handicrafts units in the State. The Government has launched various incentive schemes for establishment of cottage and tiny units and there are apprehensions that with every increase in the number of these units, the number of child workers may increase.
because handicrafts sector, as according to labour survey of selected areas (1993), employs more than 90% of the child workers in Kashmir. The cause of concern being that handicrafts units are spread over the entire State including inaccessible areas and the areas difficult-to-reach for any inspection by the law enforcement agencies and the non governmental organizations. The handicrafts sector in the valley thrives on the labour of these tender hands and that is why the General Manager of Handlooms and Handicrafts Corporation has gone on record opposing a ban on child labour in the carpet industry as according to him “it would be suicidal for the carpet industry” (Lolika 1986 quoting Patel)²

A selected districts research report prepared by a UK based NGO “Save the Children” in collaboration with Srinagar based NGO “Better World” reveals that there are 22000 child labourers in Srinagar and Budgam districts only facing long list of health problems. The children working in carpet industries confront lack of basic amenities, wage disparities on the basis of sex, absence of definite wage structure and six day working week. Nearly 80% of them suffer from myopia and retinal detachment due to constant eye strain. The children are also vulnerable to throat infection, joint pains and headache. According to the study, more than 3000 children working in automobile sector in Srinagar and Budgam districts faced immediate and long term implications including accidents, cuts and burns, chronic bronchitis, chest pain, cough, dysphasia and bacterial endocarditis. Many children are thus entrapped in hazardous occupations. In 1997, the State Government admitted that about 24000 child labourers are working in hazardous conditions in Kashmir valley.³

One more cause for increase in child labour in Kashmir is the prevailing strife in the valley. The ongoing armed struggle in the valley with political background has snatched patronage of many children making them orphans and increasing the number of widows with resultant increase in the number of households with female headship. The loss of breadwinners is bound to compel the children of such families to adopt menial occupations for subsistence and survival of the families.

The natural calamities also bear an impact to force the children to work. The devastating earthquake which struck the Kashmir valley on October 8, 2005 with

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² Lolika 1986 quoting Patel

³
7.6 measurements on the Richter scale and epic centre in Muzaffarbad (POK) made many children as orphans and thousands of families destitute for food, clothing and shelter which may force the children of such families to work even under inhospitable conditions. In fact children in quake-hit areas have started looking for work to overcome the crises they are confronted with after they lost their home and hearth.

"I have to help my family because we have big problems. We lost every thing we had" says Mohammad Irfan a fourteen year old boy in a small town of Pakistani Kashmir where he got a job as a shop delivery boy.

UNICEF fears many more such cases. “It is a concern for us and we are trying to asses the situation” said Zaffrin Choudhury a spokesman for the agency in Muzzarafad, the capital of Pakistani Kashmir.

An international report jointly prepared by the World Bank and Asian Development Bank (2005) reveals that the earth quake has left the large number of unattended children and women who are vulnerable to exploitation. “Unattended children constitute a group which will require special protection immediately and continuing in the medium and long term particularly to help them overcome trauma and prevent exploitation” the report says.

The report further suggests about raising awareness and training on child rights and child protection, targeting all concerned actors given the fact that the single headed households led by widows without any male support in the quake hit areas is bound to increase.

**Rights of children vis-à-vis J&K Constitution.**

The Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir has provided for the educational rights of children and their protection against unpleasant work situations.

Article 20 of the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir 1957 provides that the State shall endeavour:
a) To secure to every permanent resident the right to free education up to the university standard;

b) To provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of this constitution, compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years and

c) To ensure to all workers and employees adequate facilities for adult education and part time technical, professional and vocational courses.

Under Article 21 of the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir, the State shall have to strive to secure…

a) to all children the right to happy childhood with adequate medical care and attention; and

b) to all children and youth equal opportunities in education and employment, protection against exploitation and against moral or material abandonment.

The above constitutional directives to the State are in consonance with the provisions in the Constitution of India and also judicial precedents which seek to protect children against exploitation in view of their docile nature. In *M.C.Mehta v State of Tamil Nadu* (1991) it was provided that children should not be employed in hazardous jobs in factories for manufacture of match boxes and fire works and possible steps should be taken for the welfare of such children as well as for improving the quality of their life. Providing for child education is a step which goes far beyond than mere providing for regulation of working conditions of children once they are employed.

**Magnitude and Concentration of Child Labour in Jammu and Kashmir:**

The child labour in Kashmir is a cause of concern for the government and the social set up of Kashmir. Like other States, the State of J&K is also beset with the problem of child labour in view of its unique geographic features and other peculiarities. According to 1981 population census, the State of Jammu and Kashmir had highest number of child workers. See table 3.1 below:
Table 3.1

Position of Child Labour as per 1981 Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Name of the State</th>
<th>%age Child Labour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jammu &amp; Kashmir</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sikkim</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>W.Bengal</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Meghalaya</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Maharashatra</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Gujrat</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>U.P</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: “Rehabilitation of child labourers in India”

The latest census figures of 2001 indicate that there are 1,75,630 children economically active in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. This includes all the children working under family set up arrangement. The State comprises of 6652 villages and 68 urban areas which means that on an average there are 26 children working in hazardous and non hazardous jobs per village/urban area.

A relevant study has revealed that 43% of total children in the age group of 6-14 years in Jammu and Kashmir are engaged in various labour activities.

Both the above figures come into question in the light of following facts and figures:

Total child population in the age group of 5-14 in Jammu and Kashmir as per 2001 census................. 26, 53,422

Total enrolment in primary and middle schools as in the year 2001-02 ........................................... 14,52,300

Nowhere and working children in Kashmir..............12, 01,122
Given the census figure of 1,75,630 as the working children in Kashmir, it can be taken to mean that from “out of school children of 12,01,122”, a total of 1,75,630 children are working and the remaining 10,25,492 children are no where children i.e., they are neither in labour sector nor in school.

If the study on “JK’s army of orphans engaged in menial jobs” is to be taken authentic then 43% of the child population of 26,53,422 i.e., 11,40,971 children are working in J&K which is far away from census figure of 1,75,630. The nowhere children in J&K according to latter study are 60,151 which widely varies from census inferences.

Other researches have shown that the nowhere children are substantially larger......in fact three to four times greater than full time child labourers in India. This finding leads us to conclusion that out of 12,01,122 nowhere and working children, there are nearly 2,40,000 children economically active in the State of Jammu and Kashmir as divided in the ratio of 1:4. The difference of estimates can be due to difference of methodologies adopted and the age of the child workers prescribed for the survey. It is however, to be admitted that there is a large population of working children in different types of work centers in J&K State. A substantial number of these children are working in the valley due to presence of cottage level units in every nook and corner of the Kashmir.

Majority of child workers in Kashmir valley are confined to handicrafts sector, the reason being that the work centers are spread over the entire geographical area of the valley despite its difficult terrain and topography and are easily accessible to the workers. The work centers are private and government owned. The Government of Jammu and Kashmir, in order to broad-base its handicrafts production and to preserve its cultural heritage, launched a massive handicrafts training programme a few decades ago throughout the State under the auspices of Department of Handicrafts and at present 553 training centers are operating in different areas where the aspirants are trained in different handicraft skills. The craft wise break up of the training centres is give below:
Table 3.2
Craft wise Status of Handicrafts Training Centres

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Craft</th>
<th>No. of training centres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sozni</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stapple</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crewal</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papier machie</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zari</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tapestry</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood carving</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabba</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namdha</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chainstitch</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phool Kari</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bamboo</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massive carpet (MCS)</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leather</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpet</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>553</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Out of these training centres, 359 are in Kashmir valley alone while as Jammu and Ladakh provinces have 160 and 34 training centres respectively. Some other agencies like the Handlooms Department, Social Welfare Department and many voluntary organizations are running about 100 training centers in different trades where the aspirants are imparted training to become skilled craftsmen. The evaluation reports indicate that these programs have not stood the test of time and there is saturation for a response to training. As a result of saturation, children at many places have made their inroads into the training program and they are working in these centres for the allurement of meagre amount of stipend which is
being paid by the government to the trainees of these training centers. The authorities, in order to avoid a threat of closure of these centres, are admitting children as trainees to keep the water of training as boiling which has become more a political consideration rather than industrial. Besides these government run centres there is a large number of private work centres operating in the valley of Kashmir. This is verily the reason why majority of the child workers in the valley are confined to handicrafts sector which has kept them away from education, made them weak and invalid and subjected them to other health hazards associated with these activities. Most of these child workers are concentrated in carpet weaving which has been identified as a health hazardous job.

Table 3.3

Sector wise Proportion of Child Labourers in Selected Areas of Kashmir

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>No of areas surveyed</th>
<th>No of establishments surveyed</th>
<th>%age workers in handicrafts sector</th>
<th>%age workers in other sectors</th>
<th>%age child carpet weavers to handicrafts sector</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baramula</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>98.87</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>95.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Srinagar</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>nil</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anantnag</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>83.99</td>
<td>16.01</td>
<td>60.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kupwara</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulwama</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>2043</td>
<td>96.16</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>99.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgam</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>883</td>
<td>91.42</td>
<td>8.58</td>
<td>92.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>4373</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The above table reveals that on an average about 94% of the child workers in Kashmir are concentrated in the handicrafts sector. The survey being ‘selected areas survey’ has not been adequately conducted in Srinagar as otherwise a good number of child labourers are working in district Srinagar in the handicrafts sector.
Many child workers are bonded laborers against meager advances obtained by parents from employers and thus they are under the iron heels of these employers to the absolute prejudice and exploitation of these little workers.

**Child Labour and Educational Scenario in Kashmir:**

In spite of making a good headway in the literacy rate from 1981 to 2001, enhancing it by 23.82% during this period by raising it from 30.64% in 1981 to 54.46% in 2001, the J&K State still lags behind the national average of literacy by 10.82%. The national average cannot be met if the problem of child labour persists keeping our budding buds away from education.

*Table 3.4*

**Percentage of Literacy 1981 and 2001 in J&K**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>25.01</td>
<td>48.22</td>
<td>36.35</td>
<td>60.34</td>
<td>12.19</td>
<td>35.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>5.112</td>
<td>72.12</td>
<td>59.87</td>
<td>80.30</td>
<td>41.05</td>
<td>62.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(The literacy percentage of 1981 excludes age group 0-4 while that of 2001 excludes age group 0-6)

Source: census of India 2001, Series 2 J&K, Directorate of Census operations, J&K

Among all the three regions of J&K State, Kashmir valley is the lowest in terms of literacy rate of both rural and urban population. The average literacy rate of various districts in Jammu region, Ladakh region and Kashmir region is 54.93, 46.17, 40.28 per cent respectively in respect of rural population while as the same in respect of urban population is 85.02, 81.43 and 61.90 respectively which speaks volumes about the neglect of the valley on educational front. The higher rate of illiteracy is said to spawn more child labour. Study the following table:
The above table 3.5 reveals that Srinagar has the lowest literacy rate in J&K State in respect of rural population and Budgam district has the lowest rate as far as the urban population is concerned.

In Kashmir valley, all the six districts have higher urban literacy as compared to rural literacy rate. The reason seems to be that in city and town areas, the people have better accessibility to education and there is a good exposure to modern way of living. The people in urban areas have come to understand that a difference of literacy and illiteracy means difference of dignity in the social set up. More so, the people in these areas realize that the activities like agriculture, horticulture or floriculture, diary farming, poultry, cattle raring and like activities do not constitute their domain and they strive every nerve to educate their children to prepare them for State employment or different professions and other forms of non agro based commercial activities...trade, industry and commerce. As against this the people in rural areas particularly the areas with a difficult terrain do not have sufficient educational facilities available and they mostly remain busy with agro based activities. The rural people do possess the real estate in the shape of agricultural
land which they are supposed to toil with own and hired labour. These people do engage their children with agriculture at an early stage. During winter and slack agricultural season the village people engage their children in different cottage level activities to supplement the family income. The constraint imposed by snow fall on free movement of people in hard to reach areas with difficult terrain makes them inclined to cottage level work activities. Study the following table:

**Table 3.6**

**Literacy Rate in the year 2001 of Urban and Rural People of Kashmir Valley… A Comparison.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Total/Rural/Urban</th>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40.80</td>
<td>53.55</td>
<td>26.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>39.84</td>
<td>52.54</td>
<td>26.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>62.88</td>
<td>73.82</td>
<td>46.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kupwara</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44.57</td>
<td>56.39</td>
<td>31.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>41.00</td>
<td>53.06</td>
<td>27.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>61.24</td>
<td>71.38</td>
<td>49.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baramulla</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>59.18</td>
<td>68.85</td>
<td>47.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>36.06</td>
<td>47.32</td>
<td>23.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>65.09</td>
<td>74.16</td>
<td>54.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Srinagar</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40.94</td>
<td>52.51</td>
<td>28.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>38.09</td>
<td>49.46</td>
<td>25.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>57.11</td>
<td>72.83</td>
<td>46.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgam</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>47.76</td>
<td>59.24</td>
<td>35.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>45.78</td>
<td>57.09</td>
<td>33.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>63.57</td>
<td>75.59</td>
<td>49.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulwama</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44.10</td>
<td>55.56</td>
<td>31.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>41.04</td>
<td>52.37</td>
<td>28.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>61.50</td>
<td>72.62</td>
<td>47.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India, Series 2 J&K 2001

The reasons for this difference have been noticed as absence of proper educational infrastructure and lack of exposure to modern way of living and the happenings outside, as most of the villages are located in remote and hilly areas which virtually remain cut off from urban agglomerations. Their secluded position keeps the people confined to households and the seasonal agricultural occupation as a result of which their children have no alternative but to work in cottage level handicrafts units. Although government of Jammu and Kashmir is making all possible efforts to ensure that free educational facilities are provided to people at their easiest

Socio-Economic and Ethical Dimensions of Child Labour in Kashmir
convenience lest the treading of long distances emerges as an impediment in the way of proper schooling of children. At the same time efforts are underway to ensure the adequate attendance of teachers in all schools for which the government has launched a massive drive to appoint local teachers commonly known as ‘Rehbar-i-Taleem’ in all the areas. Study the following table:

Table 3.7
Spread of Schools in The Valley of Kashmir

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Area in Sq. Kms app</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Density per Sq km</th>
<th>No of Pry schools</th>
<th>No of idle schools</th>
<th>Child population 0-6 age</th>
<th>Worked out as %ages to total pop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anantnag</td>
<td>3988</td>
<td>1172434</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>616</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>171762</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulwma</td>
<td>1397</td>
<td>652607</td>
<td>467</td>
<td>627</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>95607</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Srinagar</td>
<td>2227</td>
<td>1202447</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>1036</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>176158</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgam</td>
<td>1371</td>
<td>629309</td>
<td>459</td>
<td>699</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>92193</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baramulla</td>
<td>4587</td>
<td>1169780</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>1224</td>
<td>541</td>
<td>171373</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kupwara</td>
<td>2382</td>
<td>650393</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>874</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>95283</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15952</td>
<td>5476970</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>5076</td>
<td>2301</td>
<td>802376</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The above table (3.7) reveals that for a child population of 8,02,376 in the age group of 0-6 years, there are 5076 schools in the valley of Kashmir which indicates that there is one school for a child population of 158. The number will stand reduced if the private institutions are also taken into account. The most encouraging part of the government run school system in J&K is that education is being imparted free of cost to aspirants which is the biggest attraction for the educationally and economically backward sections of the society.

Child Labour and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in Kashmir:
Child labour and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme have a dovetail connection in so far as the latter is a programme for universal elementary education of Ministry of
Human Resource, Department of Elementary Education and Literacy of the Government of India. The programme is time bound with community ownership of the school system involving the Panchayati Raj institutions, School Management Committees, Village and Urban slum level Education Committees, Parents, Teachers Associations, Mother Teacher Associations, Tribal Autonomous councils and other grass root level structures in the management of elementary schools. The programme is intended to provide useful and relevant elementary education for all children in the 6 to 14 age group by 2010. There is also another goal to bridge social, regional and gender gaps, with the active participation of the community in the management of schools. The main objectives of the programme are:

All children complete five years of primary schooling by 2007.
All children complete eight years of elementary schooling by 2010.
Focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life.
Bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage by 2007 and at elementary education level by 2010.
Universal retention by 2010.

The programme is a composite whole integrating various earlier elementary education programmes launched by the government as a follow up of National Policy on Education 1986 like Operation Blackboard, Teacher Education, Non Formal Education, Mahila Samakhya, National Programme for Nutritional Support for Primary Education, State specific Education projects etc.

Education of girls, especially those belonging to the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes is the primary focus in Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The programme recognized the need for special efforts to bring the out of school girls, especially from disadvantaged sections to school. The programme has been started in the State of Jammu and Kashmir in the year 2002 through Ujala society, a society registered under the Societies Registration Act of 1860. The society has guidelines for
different types of interventions to bring about universalisation of elementary education. These include guidelines for implementation of civil works component of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, guidelines for implementation of National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) and guidelines for Operationalisation of Cluster Resource Center (CRC), Zonal Resource Centre (ZRC) and District Resource Group (DRG). The Society claims that there were 3,22,000 children in the age group of 6-14 years out of school in the year 2002 which has gone down to 1,12,000 children in the year 2006.

In order to build up a sound educational infrastructure to carry out the programme, the Society is executing various civil works which include construction of primary schools, middle schools, additional class rooms, cluster resource centers, toilet facilities and drinking water facilities undertaken by the village Education Committees with the active participation of School Management Committee concerned.

**Table 3.8**

**Cumulative Progress Report of Civil Works Up To 30-6-2006**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Completed</th>
<th>Not taken up</th>
<th>Under progress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACR</td>
<td>2206</td>
<td>1432</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS</td>
<td>2069</td>
<td>1159</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRC</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRC</td>
<td>611</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>423</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Office of the State Project Director Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Srinagar

The above table (3.8) reveals that the programme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is much progressive to meet the targets for development of proper infrastructure to ensure that every effort is made to catch hold of out of school children far and near and in hard- to- reach areas in all the districts of the State of J&K with the following details of construction of additional class rooms:
Table 3.9
Year-wise District wise Progress in construction Of ACRs
From 2002-06 Under SSA On 30-06-06.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Completed</th>
<th>Not Taken up</th>
<th>Under progress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Baramulla</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Srinagar</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Anantnag</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Budgam</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kupwara</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Pulwama</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Poonch</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Kathua</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Rajouri</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Jammu</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Udhampur</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Doda</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Leh</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Kargil</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2206</td>
<td>1432</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>754</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Office of the Project Director Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Kashmir

Besides construction of additional class rooms, a target of construction of 251 middle school buildings and 2069 primary school buildings was fixed from 2002 to 2006 in order to help in developing an adequate educational infrastructure in the State and to correct any imbalance among different districts of the State of Jammu and Kashmir so that the children who are out of school are provided most convenient means and equal opportunities of receiving education in all the districts. As per official records, the programme has achieved most of the targets as on 30-06-2006 and some buildings are still under construction.

The detailed break up is exhibited in the following table:
### Table 3.10
District wise Progress In Construction Of M/S Buildings From 2002-06
Under SSA As On 30-06-2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Completed</th>
<th>Under progress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baramulla</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Srinagar</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anantnag</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgam</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kupwara</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulwama</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poonch</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathua</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajouri</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jammu</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Udhampur</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doda</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leh</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kargil</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>251</strong></td>
<td><strong>42</strong></td>
<td><strong>209</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Office of the Project Director Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Srinagar.

The above table reveals that there is every effort to complete the targets set forth under the programme to ensure that there is no let up in developing a proper infrastructure for elementary education in the State of J&K. More thrust is on development of infrastructure for primary level education so that out of school children under the age of 12 years have quite easy access to educational institutions.
Study the following table:

**Table 3.11**

**District wise Progress In Construction Of P/S Buildings From 2002-06**
**Under SSA As On 30-06-06**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Completed</th>
<th>Under progress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baramulla</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Srinagar</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anantnag</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgam</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kupwara</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulwama</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poonch</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathua</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajouri</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jammu</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Udhampur</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doda</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leh</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kargil</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building less</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS against DW&amp;T Facility</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2069</strong></td>
<td><strong>1159</strong></td>
<td><strong>910</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Office of the Project Director Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Srinagar.

The above table reveals that every effort is being made to complete the targets so that higher targets are fixed for coming years to bring about universalisation of primary education in the State of Jammu and Kashmir through a time bound approach in partnership with the State Government. Under this scheme a total outlay of Rs.35,453.99 lakh has been approved for the State of Jammu and Kashmir for 2006-07 for the following approved activities:
New school....148  Teachers................. 444  
School buildings....2236  Teacher Grant..........63557 teachers  
School Grant....16320 schools  Additional classrooms....3336  

Inclusive Education for 34825 disabled children.  
Education Guarantee Scheme/Alternative and Innovative Education covering 199230 children (this includes Maktabs/Madarsas).  
Additional investments for promotion of girls’ education in 198 clusters of 84 educationally backward blocks in 13 districts.  

14 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs), residential schools for girls at upper primary level, with a minimum 75% seats for SC, ST, OBC & minorities.  
The government has approved a new programme called “National Programme for Education of Girls at elementary Level” as an amendment to the scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) for providing additional components for education of girls at elementary level. The NPEGEL will form part of SSA and will be implemented under the umbrella of SSA but with distinct identity. NPEGEL has been formulated for education of under privileged/disadvantaged girls from class I to VIII as a separate and district gender component plan of SSA. The gender component is necessary to achieve UEE for girls in educationally backward areas. The specific targets of the programme are out of school girls, drop-out girls, overage girls who have not completed elementary education, working girls, girls from marginalized social groups, girls with low attendance and girls with low level of achievements.

Unemployment in Kashmir....a Co-relate of Child Labour:  
The menace of child labour is increasing adult unemployment in the society particularly in the valley of Kashmir where cottage level units are the major provider of employment opportunities due to absence of modern industrial boom for varied reasons. The growing unemployment of educated youth makes many parents pessimistic about the reinforcement and reward after completion of education and they are constrained to prefer early employment of their children in various labour practices than educating them at a cost in the form of educational expenditures. In view of the secluded character and the political uncertainty prevailing over a long period, the State particularly the valley of Kashmir could not achieve the requisite industrial development which could have opened multiple
employment opportunities for the youth and the unemployment problem could have been controlled to a great extent. The unemployment rate in J&K is at 4.21% as against national average of 3.09%. As per the State Department of Employment there are 1,13,426 persons on the live register as on the last day of the year 2004.11

Table 3.12
Qualification wise Number of Persons on the Live Register of Directorate of Employment, J&K Government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>18518</td>
<td>18187</td>
<td>37312</td>
<td>13426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below Matric</td>
<td>31719</td>
<td>31224</td>
<td>27854</td>
<td>25130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matric above</td>
<td>636990</td>
<td>49687</td>
<td>35358</td>
<td>33961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates</td>
<td>21637</td>
<td>19075</td>
<td>147099</td>
<td>15211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post graduates</td>
<td>8538</td>
<td>8171</td>
<td>6727</td>
<td>7171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree Engineering</td>
<td>4785</td>
<td>3753</td>
<td>5390</td>
<td>4062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma Engineering</td>
<td>5182</td>
<td>3042</td>
<td>5294</td>
<td>5815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITI trained</td>
<td>5114</td>
<td>4618</td>
<td>2959</td>
<td>2644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled other than ITI/others</td>
<td>8267</td>
<td>8200</td>
<td>4748</td>
<td>6006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total on live register</strong></td>
<td><strong>167450</strong></td>
<td><strong>146857</strong></td>
<td><strong>140351</strong></td>
<td><strong>113426</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The above official figures are based on registrations of unemployed youth made from year to year. There are many other unemployed people without any registration and thereby the number of unemployed educated youth could be much higher than the official figure. The Government of Jammu and Kashmir, in order to provide the educated unemployed youth an environment in which they can work after completion of education has launched the scheme of ‘Self Employment for Educated Unemployed Youth (SEEUY)’. Under the scheme the educated youth are encouraged to establish self employment units in different activities through grant of capital and interest subsidies besides technical know how etc. However it is complained that the various self employment schemes launched by the Government have not helped in absolute terms and the field study has shown that many self
employment units have ended up in liquidation for want of technical know how, marketing problems, raw materials problems, inadequate financial support from the government etc.

The position of self employment schemes under “Self Employment” and “Prime Ministers Rozgar Yojna” is presented below:

Table 3.13

Self Employment Scheme in J&K, Year 2004-05

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Sponsorship cases</th>
<th>Self Employment</th>
<th>Loans sanctioned</th>
<th>Loans Disbursed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No of cases</td>
<td>Amount</td>
<td>No of cases</td>
<td>Amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Srinagar</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>738.02</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>215.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anantnag</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>863.86</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>434.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baramulla</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>281.58</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>284.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgam</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>961.07</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>234.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulwama</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>464.36</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>317.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kupwara</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>216.99</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>91.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leh</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>275.14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>37.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kargil</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>117.00</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>111.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Kmr. Div</td>
<td>2608</td>
<td>39918.00</td>
<td>1115</td>
<td>1725.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jammu</td>
<td>696</td>
<td>451.81</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>327.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Udhampur</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>268.00</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>170.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuthua</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>150.43</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>99.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doda</td>
<td>548</td>
<td>343.89</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>107.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poonch</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>402.31</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>299.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajouri</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>191.57</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>208.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Jammu Div</td>
<td>2332</td>
<td>1808.09</td>
<td>892</td>
<td>1212.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total J&amp;K</td>
<td>4940</td>
<td>5726.09</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2937.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3.14

PMRY Scheme In J&K, Year 2004-05

(In lakhs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Sponsorship cases</th>
<th>Prime Ministers Rozgar Yojna</th>
<th>Loans sanctioned</th>
<th>Loans disbursed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No of cases</td>
<td>Amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Srinagar</td>
<td>492</td>
<td></td>
<td>252</td>
<td>213.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anantnag</td>
<td>565</td>
<td></td>
<td>261</td>
<td>273.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baramulla</td>
<td>625</td>
<td></td>
<td>197</td>
<td>196.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgam</td>
<td>177</td>
<td></td>
<td>58</td>
<td>57.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulwama</td>
<td>278</td>
<td></td>
<td>147</td>
<td>181.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kupwara</td>
<td>275</td>
<td></td>
<td>95</td>
<td>87.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leh</td>
<td>69</td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
<td>53.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kargil</td>
<td>65</td>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>43.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Kmr.Div</strong></td>
<td><strong>2546</strong></td>
<td><strong>1075</strong></td>
<td><strong>1106.37</strong></td>
<td><strong>831</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jammu</td>
<td>667</td>
<td></td>
<td>291</td>
<td>278.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Udhampur</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
<td>116</td>
<td>130.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuthua</td>
<td>219</td>
<td></td>
<td>101</td>
<td>95.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doda</td>
<td>276</td>
<td></td>
<td>89</td>
<td>94.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poonch</td>
<td>174</td>
<td></td>
<td>166</td>
<td>147.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajouri</td>
<td>206</td>
<td></td>
<td>114</td>
<td>153.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total JammuDiv</strong></td>
<td><strong>1842</strong></td>
<td><strong>877</strong></td>
<td><strong>898.80</strong></td>
<td><strong>689</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total J&amp;K</td>
<td>4388</td>
<td></td>
<td>1952</td>
<td>2005.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Digest of Statistics (2004-05) published by Directorate of Economics and statistics

J&K Govt. quoting J&K Directorate of Employment.

The perusal of above table 3.13 and 3.14 reveals that out of 9328 sponsored cases under self employment and PMRY in J&K State, only 3527 cases have been granted loans to start the venture. The remaining 62% cases seem to have been left in cold storage. This may be due to red tapism and the rigorous formalities to be fulfilled by the aspirants as a result of which they are deprived of self employment after denial of State employment. This state of affairs is affecting the mindset of masses in favour of early employment of children into the labour sector.
National Child Labour Projects and J&K State:

In order to pull out children from work situations, the Government of India has a national programme for establishment of Child Labour Projects (NCLP) for rehabilitation of child workers. A major activity undertaken under the NCLP is the establishment of special schools to provide non formal education, vocational training, supplementary nutrition etc. to children withdrawn from employment. So far 100 child labour projects under the NCLP covering 2.11 lakh children have been sanctioned in 13 States where the child labour use is relatively high.

In Jammu and Kashmir three child labour projects have been sanctioned by Government of India for the rehabilitation of child workers being one each for Srinagar, Jammu and Udhampur. It is quite unfortunate that none of these projects could takeoff in Kashmir valley. Child labour in Kashmir seems to be a neglected area on the part of government and it lacks any concrete commitment, will, determination and effort to curb the menace. In spite of having the possibility of acquisition of funds from the Central Government, the State government is in no mood to acquire and utilize the grants to benefit the working children who are caught into the worst forms of labour. The child beggars, trash collectors, little workers in automobile industry and those working in restaurants and dhabas besides private handicrafts work centres are being seen in open air losing their future prospects to lead a dignified and respectable way of life.

Child labour and Law Enforcement in Kashmir:

Many laws have been promulgated to curb the menace of child labour all over the world. Many international conventions have been passed by the International Labour Organization (ILO) to regulate and protect the rights of children to flourish and grow in a growth friendly environment. The ILO has shown much concern about the sub-human treatment meted out to children in their work life. The governments of different countries have also enacted laws to regulate the child labour so that these tender hands are treated as human beings at their work place. India has also framed laws to prohibit and regulate child labour in the right earnest. Under these enactments the enforcement machinery has been conferred with powers to enforce child labour laws to end the social evil and also to meet the
commitments at international level. The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986 being one such legislation the application of which also extends to the State of Jammu and Kashmir. In Jammu and Kashmir the Labour Department is empowered besides other things to keep an eye on the growing menace of child labour and bring those to book who circumvent law. The department is headed by a Commissioner and has its offices in both the divisions' of Jammu and Kashmir.

The organization chart of the Department is presented below:

Fig. B

Organization Chart of State Labour Department

Source: Annual Administrative Report of the J&K Labour Department

The above organization chart makes it crystal clear that the law enforcement machinery is inadequate especially at district level to lay hands on the violators of laws and thus giving them a free reign to exploit the little children the way they like so as to meet their commercial interests.
Conclusion:

The forgoing discussion and the facts and figures reveal that child labour which is a grave problem in the valley of Kashmir is not being taken much seriously at government level. There are no direct attacks on the problem of child labour. The measures to bring about universalisation of elementary education are, however, under way. The presence of handicraft work centres in every far and near area of the valley oblivious of public attention, the unsound economic position of people due to general depression in the field of trade, industry and commerce as a result of ongoing armed struggle, the vagaries of weather, the lack of proper enforcement of laws, absence of adequate monitoring and vigilance, the growing unemployment has culminated into a situation in which mass violations are taking place in so far as employment of tender hands in work centres is concerned. This speaks volumes about the fact that efforts at mere governmental level are neither effective nor can be dependable. To enable the budding buds to bloom in the life’s garden, there shall be concerted efforts from all sections of society so that trend of growing employment of children in hazardous and non hazardous jobs depriving them of education is reversed.
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