CHAPTER IV

NEGLECTED OR ABANDONED CHILDREN:
NEED FOR SPECIAL CARE AGAINST
ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION

Neglect or abandonment of children is identified as the problem\(^1\) behind abuses, delinquency and all types of irrational behaviour on the part of the children. Neglect occurs when a parent or other primary caretaker chooses not to fulfill their obligations to care for, provide for, or adequately supervise and monitor the activities of their child. Parental and caregiving obligations include the physical, emotional, and educational well-being of the child\(^2\). Thus, for example, neglect can also occur when the parent or caretaker does not seek adequate medical care for the child. Another instance of neglect is when the parental figure does not provide sufficient food, clothing, or shelter.

Parents are also expected to provide for the emotional needs of the child. Thus, neglect can occur when parents abandon the child, or simply have no time to spend with the child, in essence leaving the child to raise himself. If the child is actually left without supervision, this certainly constitutes neglect as well. Emotional neglect includes such actions as marked inattention to the child's needs for affection, refusal of or failure to provide needed psychological care, spouse abuse in the child's presence, and permission of drug or alcohol use by the child.

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\(^1\) "Neglected Child" means a child less than 18 years of age whose physical, mental or emotional condition has been impaired or is in danger of becoming impaired as a result of the failure of the child's legal guardian to exercise a minimum degree of care in supplying the child with adequate food, clothing, shelter, or education or medical care. Neglect also occurs when the legal guardian fails to provide the child with proper supervision or guardianship by allowing the child to be harmed, or to be at risk of harm which includes when the guardian misuses drugs or alcohol him/herself. http://www.safechild.org/childabuse4.htm visited on 11.08.2010

\(^2\) http://www.minddisorders.com/Kau-Nu/Neglect.html visited on 26-03-2010
Child neglect is the failure to provide for the shelter, safety, supervision and nutritional needs of the child. Child neglect may be physical, educational, or emotional neglect.

Physical neglect includes refusal of or delay in seeking health care, abandonment, expulsion from the home or refusal to allow a runaway to return home, and inadequate supervision.

Educational neglect includes the allowance of chronic truancy, failure to enroll a child of mandatory school age in school, and failure to attend to a special educational need. The final feature of neglect includes educational neglect, which often occurs when coming of a new child is responsible for lack of care of other children in the family. Shifting the responsibility of caring for younger children to another child in the family prevents the caregiving child from participating in age-appropriate activities for themselves, such as attending school. This is a relatively common situation that makes it difficult for the oldest—and perhaps all of the children—to attend school. Parental responsibility includes providing adequate guidance and supervision for the children to regularly attend school. Truancy is not only a problem for children, but may be part of the picture of neglect as well.

Effects of Neglect

Consequences of neglect³ are generally cumulative, and often negatively affect the child's development.⁴ For example, poor nutrition⁵ has negative consequences on the child's physical and psychological development. If proper nutrients are not available at critical growth periods, the child's development will not follow the normal and usual pattern. Common physical and psychological reactions to neglect include stunted growth, chronic medical problems, inadequate

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³ see Rowena Fong, Margaret G. Smith, *The Children of Neglect: When No One Cares*, Brunner-Routledge, New York, 2004 at pp.75-99
⁵ According to the National Family Health Survey III (2005-2006) 45% of the children below 3 years in India are victims of malnutrition.
bone and muscle growth, and lack of neurological development that negatively affects normal brain functioning and information processing. Processing problems may often make it difficult for children to understand directions, may negatively impact the child's ability to understand social relationships, or may make completion of some academic tasks. Lack of adequate medical care may result in long-term health problems or impairments such as hearing loss from untreated ear infections.

Long-term mental health effects of neglect are inconsistent. Effects of neglect can range from chronic depression to difficulty with relationships; however, not all adults neglected as children will suffer from these results. Some individuals are more resilient than others and are able to move beyond the emotional neglect they may have experienced. Characteristics of resilient individuals include an optimistic or hopeful outlook on life, and feeling challenged rather than defeated by problems.

All types of child abuse and neglect leave physical and emotional results\textsuperscript{6}. The emotional effects are long lasting throughout life, damaging a child’s sense of self, ability to have healthy relationships, and ability to function at home, at work and at school. Some effects include lack of trust and relationship difficulties, core feelings of being “worthless” or “damaged, trouble regulating emotions\textsuperscript{7} etc.

**Factors associated with neglect**\textsuperscript{8}

Although each family's situation is unique with regard to stressors and characteristics that might precipitate neglect, there are some general factors that have been associated with neglect of a child. These factors include characteristics of the parental figure, and socio-economic status.

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\textsuperscript{6} http://www.medterms.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=8358 \textbf{visited on 28-03-2010}

\textsuperscript{7} Abused children cannot express emotions safely. As a result, the emotions get stuffed down, coming out in unexpected ways.

Parental figures who neglect may have been neglected or abused themselves. There is a tendency for parental figures that neglect their children to have low self-esteem, poor impulse control, and to experience anxiety or depression. Other factors associated with neglect often include inadequate information about child development, including age-appropriate expectations of what children may be able to do. The parents may also feel overwhelmed by parenting responsibilities, and feel negatively about the child's demands on them. Such parents may never have fully adopted the role of parent or the caregiving the parental role requires. Internal pressures often push the caregivers to take care of their own needs (perhaps inappropriately), while ignoring the needs of the child. Abuse is often associated with neglect, particularly for those parents who are more self-absorbed and focused on their needs rather than their child's. This characteristic is also consistent with the finding that some neglectful parents have an inability to be empathic, or to understand the feelings and needs of others.

Although abuse may occur across all levels of income and education, neglect is more often associated with severe levels of poverty and lower educational level. The external stressors may feel more extreme in single parent families as well, leading to neglectful behavior. Even in families where the parent is attempting to provide for the children, absence due to multiple work demands may lead to a neglectful situation. Families that are disorganized and socially isolated are more likely to neglect the children in their care

Prevalence

The number of children nationwide who are harmed or endangered by neglect is greater than any type of abuse. Neglect is consistently reported in more than half of the substantiated reports of mistreatment handled by the authorities.

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**Prevention and treatment**

Interventions are usually aimed at two levels: community prevention efforts and individual parenting skills. A community-based program that actually combines the two facets of intervention is the "Parents as Teachers" program, which is available through many local school districts throughout U.K. and is free of charge. Benefits of the program include its accessibility—parents simply need to call for the free service—and the in-home interventions provided by the program. Although the program is not part of the social service network of agencies, the fact that workers go into the home replicates that aspect of caseworker interventions. The simple act of having a paraprofessional in one’s home can reduce the likelihood of neglect. Specific interventions that further reduce the likelihood of neglect include focusing on the parent-child relationship, reviewing appropriate expectations for the child's behavior (based on child development principles), and teaching basic parenting skills.

Other treatment options are generally more formal, and may be initiated by a call from a mandated reporter with concerns about neglect. Mandated reporters may include physicians, teachers, and counselors. Any of these professionals may make the initial call if neglect is suspected. Concerned individuals may also call social services to report suspected neglect. In these cases of forced treatment, parents may be less willing participants in treatment efforts aimed at behavioral change for themselves and their families. In other instances, the parent or child may already be in treatment, and the focus on reducing neglectful behaviors may be incorporated into the existing treatment relationship. Factors to focus on in formal treatment aimed at reducing the likelihood of neglect may include specific parenting skills, home visits to allow monitoring of the relationship, as well as other individual needs such as substance abuse treatment, or empathy skill training.

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10 Presently in India, the Commission for Protection of Child Rights can do much in this regard. Rule 17 of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights Rules, 2006 entrusts the Commission under the 2005 Act, the power to undertake this responsibility, including the responsibility to call for reports where concern has been expressed either by children themselves or by concerned persons on their behalf.
Treatment efforts for the child should include family counseling aimed at communication skills and appropriate expression of affection and emotion within the family. Assertiveness skills training may be helpful for older adolescents in asking for their perceived needs.

The results or effects associated with neglect can be categorized as (i) economic exploitation (ii) sexual exploitation (iii) developmental exploitation. It is discussed below, in the light of the international and national attempts how the state can prevent these abuses.

**Economic Exploitation**

The Convention on the Rights of the Child represents the most comprehensive international instrument for the promotion and protection of the rights of the child which, if effectively implemented, can significantly contribute to the elimination of childlabour.

The UN has called upon governments to take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the protection of children from economic exploitation, in particular the protection from performing any work that was likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. The General Assembly also urged governments to take all

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11 See Chapter V
12 article 32, Convention on the Rights of Child, 1989;
See also, Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), Minimum Age Convention 1973 (No. 138) of ILO;
article 10, paragraph 3, of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; Article 8 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
The Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others, 1949; The 1956 Supplementary
Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and
Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery; The Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action (1993); programme of action adopted by the regional seminar on the subject of children in bondage was held at Islamabad, Pakistan, from 23 to 26 November 1992 organized by the ILO in collaboration with the Centre for Human Rights
necessary measures to eliminate all extreme forms of child labour, such as forced labour, bonded labour and other forms of slavery.\footnote{13 The General Assembly resolution 50/153 of 21 December 1995 on the Rights of the Child}

In the same resolution\footnote{14 Id., paragraph 22}, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other relevant actors, to report on current initiatives and programmes of the United Nations and its affiliated agencies addressing the exploitation of child labour and on how to improve cooperation at the national and international levels in this field.

According to the International Labour Organization, the extent of child labour in figures is hard to gauge, since the necessary statistics are scarcely available anywhere. However, surveys carried out in several countries and available statistics indicate that there are tens or even hundreds of millions of children working today throughout the world. The lack of reliable and comparable statistical data also makes it impossible to assess the trend of child labour over time. According to some experts, the proportion of working children has increased in various parts of the world in the last 15 years owing to factors encouraging the supply of child labour. Child labour is a problem not only in terms and proportion of children affected, but also, and more importantly, in terms of the risks and abuse to which those children are exposed at work. First, many children are put to work at a very early age, often as young as they are 5 or 6 years. Secondly, work is often a permanent activity, takes up long hours each day and is therefore difficult to reconcile with school attendance. While it is true that many children who work continue to attend school, it is just as true that many others, 30 to 50 per cent of the working children, depending on the country, stop going to school altogether. Thirdly, many children work under conditions that seriously impair their dignity and physical and/or emotional development. In recent years, the international and national communities have regularly denounced the bonded labour to which millions of children are subject, the trafficking in
children from rural areas or neighbouring countries for employment or prostitution in cities and the severe ill-treatment of street children\textsuperscript{15}.

A number of the international instruments adopted under the auspices of the International Labour Organization\textsuperscript{16} have established monitoring bodies to scrutinize the situation at the national level and to seek preventive and remedial measures against exploitative child labour. The ILO has also created several mechanisms to supervise compliance of its various conventions and to consider complaints filed by employer or worker organizations\textsuperscript{17}.

**Commission on Human Rights**

Based on the recommendation of the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, the Commission on Human Rights in 1990 appointed a Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, who has contributed and continues to contribute, through reports to the Commission on Human Rights and field missions to various countries, to an increased awareness about problems concerning, inter alia, the exploitation of child labour.

\textsuperscript{15} The World Congress against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, held at Stockholm from 27 to 31 of August 1996

\textsuperscript{16} Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138); Copenhagen Declaration adopted by the World Summit for Social Development in March 1995; Discussion at the Informal Tripartite Meeting at the Ministerial Level on 12 June 1996; 1998 session of the International Labour Conference with a view to adopting new international standards on child labour; International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC). Convention No.5 of 1919(Prohibits the employment of person below 14 years of age); 6 of 1919(Prohibits the employment during night of person below 18 years of age); 15 of 1921(Prohibits a person who is below 18 years of age from being employed on Vessel as Toimmer or Stockers); 16 of 1921(Compulsory medical examination of child being employed on Vessel as Toimmer or Stockers); 90 of 1948(Revised the Convention 6 of 1919 and put 12 consecutive hours); 123 of 1965(Prohibits the employment in mines of a child below the age of 16 years); 124 of 1965(Compulsory medical examination of child working in mine); 138 of 1973(Prohibits employment of a child below the age of 15 years but allows after obtaining permission above the age of 14 years); 182 of 1999(Prohibits worst forms of child labour as including all forms of slavery, trafficking, child prostitution, child pornography; use of children for illicit activities below 18 years of age should not be involved)

The Commission adopted the Programme of Action for the Elimination of the Exploitation of Child Labour\textsuperscript{18}, and requested all States periodically to report to the sub commission on measures adopted to implement the Programme of Action and on the effectiveness of such measures, the sub commission has established, through the working group, a follow-up of the implementation of the programmes of action by States\textsuperscript{19}.

**Committee on the Rights of the Child**

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, through its monitoring of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, has a unique role to play as a focal point within United Nations system-wide action. Through its reporting system, the Convention ensures a periodic assessment and evaluation of progress achieved by States parties in the implementation of the Convention. It provides the opportunity for identifying, together with other relevant United Nations organs and agencies and other competent bodies, gaps and shortcomings in the realization of the rights of the child and for mobilizing international cooperation in order to provide technical advice or assistance when needed.

**UNICEF**

In accordance with article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF supports a number of country-specific programmes which address child labour. These include education, health, street children, legislative review and programmes addressing the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Particular attention is paid to the condition of minority children, who more frequently find themselves afflicted. Initiatives such as rug-mark and a UNICEF procurement policy which bind producers of goods to a commitment not to employ child labour are being complemented by public awareness-raising efforts.

\textsuperscript{18} The Commission on Human Rights resolution 1993/79 of 10 March 1993

\textsuperscript{19} Id., paragraph 7
Recommendations at the National Level

The general discussion on child labour held by the UNICEF Committee on the Rights of the Child produced a number of recommendations\(^{20}\) aiming at the establishment of a national mechanism for coordinating policies with regard to protection from economic exploitation, in order to ensure a global and multidisciplinary approach in this area; the launching of wide information campaigns addressed to children, and to the public in general, and the initiation of training of special professional groups; the recognition of education as an essential preventive measure to counter situations of economic exploitation of children through making primary education compulsory and free for all children and using the Convention as an incentive to encourage the participation of children in school and social life; the protection of children against economic exploitation by strictly forbidding a number of particularly harmful activities, formulating standards or revising existing legislation in order to ensure the legal protection of the child from any form of exploitation; and the adoption of measures to ensure the rehabilitation of children who, as a result of economic exploitation, are exposed to serious physical and moral danger\(^{21}\).

Economic exploitation and the child’s economic, social and cultural rights

Poverty is, without doubt, the root cause of economic exploitation of children, an exploitation which at the same time perpetuates poverty. In other words: the best way to prevent the economic exploitation of children is to reduce and eradicate poverty. In legal terms it means, the full implementation of the economic, social and cultural rights of the child. Article 4 CRC requires States Parties to undertake measures to this end “to the maximum extent of their

\(^{20}\) A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III, paras. 48, 51 and 47

\(^{21}\) International Conference “Stopping the economic exploitation of children: new approaches to fighting poverty as a means of implementing human rights?”, 22 - 24 February 2002, Hattingen (Germany)
available resources and where needed within the framework of international co-
operation”.

In order to meet its obligation to protect children from economic exploitation, the holistic approach requires a State Party to develop a comprehensive policy that *inter alia* focuses also on the implementation of economic-social rights. This means that such a policy – e.g. as part of a Poverty Reduction Strategy – should also include measures for the effective implementation of the right of every child:

1. to a standard of living adequate for the child’s development;
2. to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to access to health care services;
3. to education, that is to have access to free and compulsory primary education of good quality as reflected in the aims of education and other rights.

But it should be clear that children in exercising their right to be protected from economic exploitation should not limit themselves to matters like: minimum age(s), regulations of working hours or working conditions. They can and should insist on more than that and pursue the full implementation of their social, economic and cultural rights. Without such a scheme of implementation their economic exploitation will most likely continue to exist.

The CRC provides an excellent basis for combating economic exploitation of children. Because, it covers the various forms of economic exploitation,

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23 art. 27 CRC
24 art. 24 CRC
25 art. 28 and 29 CRC.
26 e.g. art. 26 on social security; art. 18, 27(3)( the assistance to parents)
27 ILO-Convention 182;
International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)
including inter alia commercial sexual exploitation and sale and trafficking of children. This coverage has recently been strengthened by two optional protocols.

It recognises child as an active participant in the development of policies and programmes for combating economic exploitation, an involvement which can contribute to the effectiveness of those policies and programmes. It requires an approach which is holistic/comprehensive requiring that actions are developed and implemented in the broader context of respect for and ensuring of the rights of the child, in particular of his economic, social and cultural rights. It also provides for a human rights based forceful strategy for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour.

National Initiatives

The problem of child labour continues to pose a challenge before the nation. Our government has been taking various pro-active measures to tackle this problem. However, considering the magnitude and extent of the problem and that it is essentially a socio-economic problem inextricably linked to poverty and illiteracy, it requires concerted efforts from all sections of the society to make a dent in the problem. As long as poverty continued, it would be difficult to totally eliminate child labour and hence, any attempt to abolish it through legal recourse would not be a practical proposition. The only alternative left was to ban child labour in hazardous areas and to regulate and ameliorate the conditions of work in other areas. Hence a multiple policy approach was required in dealing with the problems of working children.

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28 The General Guidelines Regarding the Form and Content of Periodic Reports under Article 44 para 1
(B) CRC, paras 151-154; See also, the Limburg principles on the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (UN Doc. E/CN.4/1987/17) in which the economic, social and cultural rights set forth in the ICESCR is elaborated. See also, General Comment 3 (on Article 2 (1) of the ICESCR) of the UN Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights.

29 M. Hidayatullah, Democracy in India & the Judicial Process- Lajpatrai Memorial Lecture Series, Bombay-Asia, 1966 at p.69

30 Gurupadswamy Committee Report, 1979

31 Ibid
Based on the recommendations of Gurupadaswamy Committee, the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act was enacted in 1986. The Act prohibits employment of children in certain specified hazardous occupations and processes and regulates the working conditions in others. The list of hazardous occupations and processes is progressively being expanded on the recommendation of Child Labour Technical Advisory Committee constituted under the Act.

Again, the National Policy of 1987 on Child Labour envisages adopting a gradual and sequential approach with a focus on rehabilitation of children working in hazardous occupations and processes in the first instance. The Action Plan outlined in the Policy for tackling this problem is as follows:

a) **Legislative Action Plan** for strict enforcement of Child Labour Act and other labour laws to ensure that children are not employed in hazardous employments, and that the working conditions of children working in non-hazardous areas are regulated in accordance with the provisions of the Child Labour Act. It also entails further identification of additional occupations and processes, which are detrimental to the health and safety of the children.

b) **Focusing of General Developmental Programmes for Benefiting Child Labour** - As poverty is the root cause of child labour, the action plan emphasizes the need to cover these children and their families also under various poverty alleviation and employment generation schemes of the Government.

c) **Project Based Plan of Action** envisages starting of projects in areas of high concentration of child labour.

Pursuant to this, in 1988, the National Child Labour Project Scheme\(^32\) was launched in various districts of high child labour endemicity in the country. The Scheme envisages running of special schools for child labourers withdrawn from

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\(^32\) The coverage of the NCLP Scheme has increased from 12 districts in 1988 to 100 districts in the 9th Plan to 250 districts during the 10th Plan
work. In the special schools, these children are provided formal or non-formal education along with vocational training, a stipend of Rs.100 per month; supplementary nutrition and regular health check ups so as to prepare them to join regular mainstream schools. Under the Scheme, funds are given to the District Collectors for running special schools for child labour. Most of these schools are run by the NGOs in the district.

Government has accordingly been taking proactive steps to tackle this problem through strict enforcement of legislative provisions along with simultaneous rehabilitative measures. State Governments, which are the appropriate implementing authorities, have been conducting regular inspections and raids to detect cases of violations. Since poverty is the root cause of this problem, and enforcement alone cannot help solve it, Government has been laying a lot of emphasis on the rehabilitation of these children and on improving the economic conditions of their families.

**Strategies in X Plan**

Some of the salient points of the 10\(^{th}\) Plan Strategy are as follows:

a) Focused and reinforced action to eliminate child labour in the hazardous occupations by the end of the Plan period.

b) Expansion of Child Labour Projects to additional districts.

c) Linking the child labour elimination efforts with the Scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan of Ministry of Human Resource Development to ensure that children in the age group of 5-8 years get directly admitted to regular schools and that the older working children are mainstreamed to the formal education system through special schools functioning under the NCLP Scheme.
d) Convergence with other Schemes of the Departments of Education, Rural Development, Health and Women and Child Development for the ultimate attainment of the objective in a time bound manner.

The Government and the Ministry of Labour & Employment in particular, are rather serious in their efforts to fight and succeed in this direction.\textsuperscript{33}

**Constitutional Mandate**

Article 24 of the Constitution of India prohibits employment of children below 14 years in any factory or mine or any other hazardous employment. It was held in *People’s Union for Democratic Rights v. U.O.I.*,\textsuperscript{34} that this right of a child is enforceable even in the absence of an implementing legislation and in a public interest proceeding.

Article 39 (e) directs the state towards ensuring that the tender age of children are not abused and that they are not forced by economic necessity to enter avocations unsuited to their age or strength.\textsuperscript{35}

**Judicial response**

The Indian judiciary has emphasized in unequivocal terms the right of children to be protected from exploitations of any kind and to be provided with the opportunities to have a decent and dignified life of development.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{33} INDUS, is adopted as a similar scheme for rehabilitation of child labour in cooperation with US.

\textsuperscript{34} AIR 1982 SC 1473

\textsuperscript{35} To protect the children of prostitutes from the neglect and all types of abuses the Supreme Court directed for the constitution of a Committee for formulate a scheme for their rehabilitation, see Gaurav Jain v. U.O.I, (1997) 8 SCC 144

\textsuperscript{36} *People’s Union for Democratic Rights v. Union of India*, [(1982) 3 SCC 235: AIR 1982 SC 1473] Also known as the Asiad Workers’ case. The Supreme Court held that though the Employment of Children Act, 1938 did not include the construction work on projects because the construction industry was not a process specified in the Schedule to the Act, yet, such construction was a hazardous occupation and under Art.24 children under 14 could not be employed in a hazardous occupation. The right of a child against exploitation under Art.24 was enforceable even in the absence of implementing legislation.
In *People’s Union for Democratic Rights v. Union of India*[^37], the Supreme Court held that no child below 14 can be engaged in construction work and the union of India and the state governments must ensure that this constitutional mandate is not violated in any part of the country. Whenever the Central Government undertakes a construction project which is likely to last for a long time, it should ensure that the children of workers are given facilities for schooling.[^38] Many a time the apex court had intervened to protect children from employing in hazardous employment[^39].

[^37]: *Lakshmi Kant Pandey v. Union of India* [(1984) 2 SCC 244: AIR 1984 SC 469]. There was no law to regulate inter-country adoptions and such lack of legal regulation could cause incalculable harm to Indian children. Considering the possibility of child trade for prostitution as well as slave labor, legal regulation of such adoptions was essential. The Supreme Court held that any adoption in violation of or non-compliance with may lead adoption to be declared invalid and expose person concerned with to strict action including prosecution. See also *Indian Council for Social Welfare v. State of A.P.*, (1999) 6 SCC 365.

[^38]: *M.C. Mehta v. State of T.N.*, [(1991) 1 SCC 283] The Supreme Court directed that children should not be employed in hazardous jobs in factories for manufacture of match boxes and fireworks, and positive steps should be taken for the welfare of such children as well as for improving the quality of their life.


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[^37]: AIR 1982 SC 1480


Conclusion

It is clear that none of the actors in the fight against child labour is able to solve it alone, and that the fight concerns everyone. Although non-governmental organizations have taken numerous initiatives, sometimes with the support of municipal authorities, the number of child workers they have reached represents an infinitesimal proportion of those needing protection. Therefore, Governments should be mobilized, through such ministries as education, health, the family, public information, and economic and social development planning. Furthermore, initiatives should not be limited to government institutions at the central State level, but should closely involve the municipal level as well. Employers’ and workers' organizations also have an essential role to play (in that regard, Governments should also cooperate with trade unions and employers' organizations to address the problem of child labour) as do other NGOs, the media, universities, members of parliament and teachers. All groups of society have to be involved in the fight against child labour.