

Telangana ready with action plan to end child labour

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HYDERABAD: With over 12 lakh children and adolescents labouring for livelihood in 31 districts, Telangana government has come out with an action plan to eliminate child labour. The plan's focus is more on rehabilitation of rescued child labour so that they can continue education.

Towards achieving this endeavour, the government has also constituted a high level committee headed by the labour department principal secretary.

According to 2011 census, the number of working children in Telangana was 3.39 lakhs in the age group of 5-14 and 9.01 lakhs in the 15-19 age group (This includes both main and marginal workers). As per 2011 Census, child labour was more prevalent in the (old) districts of

Mahabubnagar, Hyderabad, Ranga Reddy and Adilabad districts.

Deputy commissioner of labour E Gangadhar said there has been a declining trend in child labour in the state since 2001. The new guidelines in the action plan have been discussed at length and are in tune with the central government's Act to eliminate child and adolescent labour.

"During 2001, Telangana accounted for 5.73 lakhs of working children in the age group of 5-14 and 12.5 lakhs in the age group of 15-19. Now, this has come down considerably and the trend is expected to continue further," he said. Officials said the child labour is almost two times more in rural areas compared to urban areas. The number of working children among girls is marginally less than boys.

Representatives from various NGOs working in the field said child labour in recent years is moving from visible to invisible work areas. Children are now being employed in backyards of many establishments. Inter-district and inter-state migration is also increasing.