

Nearly 100,000 child workers in Philippines

There are nearly 100,000 child labourers, aged between five and nine, in the Philippines, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) said Thursday.

'Despite all efforts, the fight against child labour in the country remains a challenge,' Philippine TV network GMA News quoted Keiko Niimi, deputy director of ILO's Manila office, as saying.

Niimi Thursday urged the government on the occasion of the World Day Against Child Labour to improve access for children to quality education in order to effectively combat the problem.

'We have to ensure that child labourers are successfully integrated in schools and that they do not return to work until they grow up and acquire education and training,' he said.

Recent data released by the Philippine department of education showed a decline in net school enrolment from 96.77 percent in 2000-2001 to 83.22 percent in 2006-2007, the lowest in seven years.

Labor secretary Marianito Roque said that they will implement a four-year project aimed at sending child workers to school, particularly in areas of the country where there is high incidence of child labour.

Roque said his department is set to sign an agreement with the World Vision Development Foundation and the Christian Children's Fund Friday to help in the implementation of the project that would give child workers access to educational opportunities.

(© IANS / India eNews)