

children 22,000 die in work-related accidents *The Nation* annually 12-6-03

BY OUR STAFF REPORTER

LAHORE- Like other parts of the world, the day against child labour is being observed in Pakistan on Thursday (today) with the aim to root out the menace.

While the total elimination of child labour is a long-term goal in many countries as well as in Pakistan, certain forms of child labour must be confronted immediately.

One out of six children in the world is involved in child labour, doing work detrimental for their mental, physical and emotional development.

According to the National Survey of Child Labour conducted in 1996 by the Federal Bureau of Statistics in collaboration with the ILO, the total number of children in Pakistan at the age of 5 to 14 were 40 million and the total number of economically active children was found to be 3.3 million (or 6.3 per cent of the total

Child labour day

children in the country).

Majority of the child workers (73 per cent) were found to be boys, while 27 per cent were girls.

During the survey it also came to light that majority, 58.6 per cent of the child workers or 1.94 million was found in Punjab.

Significant urban-rural differentials are observed in their employment status.

In rural areas, three fourth of the working children are working as unpaid family members while in the urban areas it is one third. According to a report more than 246 million children are child labourers in the world and 73 million working children are less than 10 years old that means no country is immune.

These children work in a variety of industries, and in many parts of the world. The vast majority works in the agricultural sector, where they may be exposed to dangerous chemicals and equipment as every year 22,000 children die in work-related accidents.

An estimated 1.2m children are trafficked, moved within and across national borders through force, coercion or deception, into situations involving their economic and sexual exploitation.