

World Day Against Child Labour, Theme, Significance

June 12, 2026 • vajiramandravi.com



World Day Against Child Labour is observed every year on June 12. The day serves as a reminder of the urgent need to protect children from exploitation and uphold their rights.

The **World Day Against Child Labour 2026** comes at a crucial time in the global effort to eliminate child labour. The **6th Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour**, held in **Marrakech**, highlighted the need for stronger and faster action to transform commitments into measurable results. The conference introduced the **Marrakech Global Framework for Action against Child Labour**, which provides a practical roadmap to address the root causes of child labour and safeguard the rights of every child.

World Day Against Child Labour

World Day Against Child Labour is a global observance marked on June 12 every year, serving as a crucial reminder to build a world free of child labour, where children worldwide are not forced into work at the expense of their education and well-being.

- **History:** The **International Labour Organization (ILO)** first observed World Day Against Child Labour on June 12, 2002, at its Geneva headquarters.

- Since then, it has been marked globally to shine a light on this ongoing crisis.
- In India, the government has implemented a National Policy on Child Labour since 1987. This policy emphasises both the rehabilitation of affected children and the need to tackle the root cause of poverty by improving the economic well-being of their families.

World Day Against Child Labour Theme

The **World Day Against Child Labour 2026** is observed under the theme **“Red Card to Child Labour: Fair Play for Children, Decent Work for Adults.”** The theme emphasizes the need to eliminate child labour by ensuring quality education, social protection, and safe childhoods for all children. It also highlights the importance of providing decent employment opportunities and sustainable livelihoods for adults so that families do not rely on child labour.

Child Labour Latest Data and Trends

- **Global Child Labour:** In 2024, nearly 138 million children were engaged in child labour worldwide, with 54 million in hazardous work. Africa has the highest child labour rates (72 million children), followed by Asia and the Pacific (62 million children).
- **India:** In 2011, India’s Census data showed that 10.1 million children, or 3.9% of the total child population aged 5-14, were working, either as “main workers” or “marginal workers”.
 - This data represents a decrease from the 1.26 crore working children in 2001, but the issue persists, with poverty, lack of education, and economic distress identified as key drivers.
- **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** SDG Target 8.7 aims to end child labour in all its forms by 2025, but this target is unlikely to be met due to persistent challenges.

World Day Against Child Labour Significance

World Day Against Child Labour highlights the global commitment to protecting children from exploitation, ensuring their rights, and promoting access to education, safety, and a better future.

- Raises awareness about the harmful effects of child labour on children’s health, education, and development.
- Promotes the protection of children’s rights as recognized by international conventions and laws.
- Encourages governments to strengthen policies and enforcement against child labour.
- Supports access to quality education as a key tool for preventing child labour.
- Mobilizes communities, organizations, and businesses to take collective action.
- Highlights the need for decent work opportunities and fair wages for adults.
- Draws attention to vulnerable children engaged in hazardous and exploitative work.
- Monitors global progress toward the elimination of child labour.
- Encourages responsible practices in supply chains and industries.
- Contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly the goal of ending child labour in all its forms.